



Department of Planning and Economic Development

Staff Report to the Planning Commission September 14, 2022

Serra Ford Site Plan and Tree Removal Permit

REQUEST	Site Plan Approval Tree Removal Permit
APPLICANT	Vic Habersmith, Bloom General Contracting 25601 W. Eight Mile Rd. Redford, MI 48240
LOCATION	2890 S. Rochester Rd., northwest of Rochester and Auburn Roads
FILE NO.	JNRNB2021-0034
PARCEL NOS.	15-27-477-073 (formerly Parcel Nos. 15-27-477-032/120-122 W. Auburn Rd, 15-27-477-062/74 W. Auburn Rd., 15-27-477-063 and 15-27-477-064/94 W. Auburn Rd., and. and 15-27-477-066/2890 S. Rochester Rd.)
CURRENT ZONING	B-2 General Business District with FB-3 Flex Business Overlay, B-3 Shopping Center Business District with FB-3 Flex Business Overlay and R-3 One Family Residential
REQUESTED ZONING	Portions of the newly consolidated parcel are proposed to be rezoned from B-2 General Business District with an FB-3 Flex Business Overlay to B-3 Shopping Center Business District with FB-3 Flex Business Overlay. The R-3 One Family Residential portion of the parcel will remain, resulting in a split zoned parcel.
STAFF	Sara Roediger, Planning and Economic Development Director

Summary

The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing three auto dealership buildings and the Rochester Lawn Equipment building onsite and to construct an expanded building for Serra Ford Rochester Hills car dealership and parking areas, in association with a rezoning request discussed under a separate file. The site, if rezoned, would allow for the use and construction of an automobile dealership as a permitted use in the B-3 Shopping Center Business District and therefore the proposed (re)development does not require the FB Overlay District and can be considered at this time.

The plans include the proposed construction of a one-story 61,441 sq. ft. technical center building with associated vehicle display/storage areas. The proposed building will be utilized for sales offices, showrooms, customer seating areas, employee and administrative areas, parts storage, and auto service and repair areas. The auto service and auto repair can be viewed as an ancillary use to an automobile dealership in the B-3 Shopping Center District, particularly since the dealership and its associated uses have been ongoing on the original portion of the site since the 1970s. The applicant plans for the development to occur in two phases of construction, the first being, the construction of the proposed building while the existing facility is in operation, and phase 2 would include the demolition of the existing structures after occupancy of the new building is obtained and the remainder of the associated site work. As noted in the rezoning report, the former five parcels were recently combined into one parcel. Note that the area identified as parcel 1 on the plans is the residentially zoned land that is to remain in its natural state, with additional landscaping being installed to enhance the buffer between the dealership and the residential neighborhood to the west.

The plans show the removal of the existing northernmost driveway approach on Rochester Rd. along with the replacement of the two southernmost approaches consistent with City standards. Additionally, the multiple driveway approaches on Auburn Rd. will essentially be consolidated into one main central drive servicing the site. These improvements should increase efficiency and safety coming to and from the site.

The site exceeds parking maximums by 513 spaces, however the Planning Commission may grant a modification of the parking maximum based on the use of the site. Based upon the area of the building, 205 total spaces are required. The Zoning Ordinance does not recognize the need of operations such as auto dealerships for additional parking for the display/storage of stock vehicles for sale and similar requests have been approved for other dealerships in the City.

A second modification is requested regarding right-of-way trees, which the applicant is unable to install fully in the required location due to utility locations and road and pathway sight distances. The landscape plans show the installation of trees, ornamental grasses, shrubs and trees directly adjacent to the parking lot, in lieu of the required right-of-way trees, in an effort to meet the intent of the requirements as space allows.

	Zoning	Existing Land Use	Future Land Use
Site	B-3 Shopping Center Business District with FB-3 Flex Business Overlay, B-2 General Business District with FB-3 Flex Business Overlay, and R-3 One Family Residential District	Serra Ford Auto Dealership, Rochester Lawn Equipment, and vacant residential land (house was demolished)	Commercial Residential Flex 3 and Residential 3
North	B-3 Shopping Center Business District with FB-3 Flex Business Overlay	Barnes & Noble store (approved site plan for Bebb Oak Meadows mixed use development)	Commercial Residential Flex 3
South	B-2 General Business District with FB-3 Flex Business Overlay and B-3 Shopping Center Business District with FB-2 Flex Business Overlay south of Auburn Rd.	Hampton Corners shopping center and Sukho Thai Cuisine, with other detail developments to the south	Commercial Residential Flex 3, and Commercial Residential Flex 2 south of Auburn Rd.
East	B-3 Shopping Center Business District with FB-3 Flex Business Overlay	Hampton Village Centre shopping center	Commercial Residential Flex 3
West	R-3 One Family Residential District	Single family residences	Residential 3

Aerial Photograph



Staff Recommendations

All staff have recommended approval or approval with conditions. If the Planning Commission feels that the proposed use and development will be compatible with its surroundings, below are motions for consideration.

Department	Comments & Waivers/Modifications	Recommendation
Planning	Approved with conditions, modification to parking maximum & right of way landscaping	Approval
Fire	Approved with conditions	Approval
Assessing	Approved	Approval
Engineering	Comments to be handled at construction plan review	Approval
Parks & NR	No outstanding comments	Approval
Building	Comments to be handled at Building permit review	Approval

Motion to Approve a Tree Removal Permit

MOTION by _____, seconded by _____, in the matter of File No. JNRNB2021-0034 (Serra Ford) the Planning Commission **grants** a **Tree Removal Permit**, based on plans received by the Planning Department on June 15, 2022 with the following findings and subject to the following conditions:

Findings

1. The proposed removal and replacement of regulated trees is in conformance with the City's Tree Conservation Ordinance.
2. The applicant is proposing to remove thirty (30) regulated trees and no specimen trees, with twenty seven (27) replacement trees required, and with twenty seven (27) replacement trees proposed to be installed.

Conditions

1. Tree protective fencing, as reviewed and approved by the City staff, shall be installed prior to temporary grade being issued by Engineering.

No payment to the City's tree fund is required.

Motion to Approve Site Plan

MOTION by _____, seconded by _____, in the matter of File No. JNRNB2021-0034 (Serra Ford) the Planning Commission **approves** the **Site Plan**, based on plans received by the Planning Department on June 15, 2022 with the following findings and subject to the following conditions:

Findings

1. The site plan and supporting documents demonstrate that all applicable requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, with the exception of the modifications requested, as well as other City Ordinances, standards, and requirements, can be met subject to the conditions noted below.
2. The proposed project will be accessed from Rochester Rd. and Auburn Rd. with reductions in access points along both roads, thereby promoting safety and convenience of vehicular traffic both within the site and on adjoining streets.
3. The proposed improvements should have a satisfactory and harmonious relationship with the development on-site as well as existing development in the adjacent vicinity.
4. The proposed development will not have an unreasonably detrimental or injurious effect upon the natural characteristics and features of the site or those of the surrounding area.
5. The applicant has demonstrated that a modification to allow for the site plan exceeding the permitted maximum number of parking spaces, with 205 spaces required and 513 spaces approved, is appropriate based on the fact that vast majority of the number of spaces proposed in excess of the Zoning Ordinance are specifically for the display/storage of vehicles for sale and not typical parking spaces necessary for the operation of the business.
6. The applicant has demonstrated that a modification to not meet the right-of-way landscape requirements, that includes eighteen (18) canopy trees and eleven (11) ornamental trees along Rochester Rd. and eleven (11) canopy trees and six (6) ornamental trees along Auburn Rd., is appropriate due to the location of the existing underground utilities, limited road and pathway sight distance clearances on Rochester Rd. and due to the location of existing overhead and underground utilities, and limited road and pathway sight clearances on Auburn Rd. To offset the requested modification, the applicant has provided a variety of ornamental grasses and shrubs with some trees along the parking lot as a replacement.

Conditions

1. Address all applicable comments from other City departments and outside agency review letters, prior to final approval by staff.
2. Provide a landscape bond in the amount of \$126,375, plus inspection fees, as adjusted by staff as necessary, prior to the preconstruction meeting with Engineering.

Reference: Reviewed plans, Floor plans & elevations, Photometrics, Response letter, Rezoning letter, Survey, WRC letter, PHN