

**City of Rochester Hills
 Department of Planning and Development**

**STAFF REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION
 January 16, 2007**

St. Paul's Albanian Catholic Community Church Parking Lot Addition	
APPLICANT	Paulin Modi, PE Giffels-Webster Engineers, Inc. 407 E. Fort St., Suite 600 Detroit, MI 48226
PARCEL NOS.	15-34-127-006 & 15-34-201-014
ACREAGE	25± Acres (.5 ± acre being developed)
LOCATION	South of Auburn, West of Rochester Road
CITY FILE NO.	98-037.3
ZONING	R-3, One Family Residential
STAFF	Ed Anzek, Director of Planning and Development
REQUEST	Revised Conditional Land Use Recommendation Revised Site Plan Approval

SUMMARY

The applicant proposes to add 42 parking spaces and associated landscaping to the northwesterly end of the existing church on Auburn Road, north of M-59. According to the applicants and as offered by the neighbors when the Sikh Temple was recently considered by the Planning Commission, there has been a demonstrated need for the extra spaces for various services and events, and the additional 42 spaces would provide a total of 472 parking spaces, without adding another entrance/exit onto Auburn. The parking addition, connecting the lots on the north and south sides of the church also provides better flow on the site for cars and emergency equipment if needed. In addition to the Revised Site Plan approval, the request also requires Revised Conditional Land Use Recommendation by Planning Commission and Approval by City Council

Specific action requested for consideration by the Planning Commission is Revised Conditional Land Use Recommendation and Revised Site Plan Approval.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The applicant received approval for a Conditional Land Use from City Council in May 1999 to construct a church, with a condition that Site Plan approval be obtained, which was granted by the Planning Commission in January 2000. At that time the parking was discussed in detail and parking was reduced to slightly over what was required by Ordinance, to maximize the aesthetics of the natural features. Due to the large community and events held at the church, additional parking and better flow is needed at certain times to keep side streets clear.

In keeping with past practice and policy of the Planning Department, the Planning Commission and City Council must grant any approvals for any activity that can result in an increase in intensity of a Conditional Land Use.

Landscaping/Tree Removal

The Tree Conservation Ordinance does not regulate the development, but all 18 trees being removed must be replaced one for one. According to the City's Landscape Architect, the planter island square footage and planter island trees for the entire development significantly exceeds the requirements. The City's Landscape Architect recommends approval with three conditions included in the motion.

Buffer Requirements

Additional buffer with the expansion of the parking lot is not required; the existing buffer will be maintained.

Wetland Use Permit/Natural Features Setback Modification

According to the ASTI letter dated September 19, 2006, no permits from the City or DEQ regarding wetlands are required for the proposed project. The Natural Features Setback areas are labeled properly on the plans and will not be negatively impacted; and as requested by ASTI, the plans note that the areas must be restored to original grade with original soils or equivalent, and seeded with approved seed mix or sodded, as approved by the City.

Conditional Land Use

Section 138-1306[d] of the Zoning Ordinance details the general requirements for a conditional land use, which are as follows:

1. *Will promote the intent and purpose of this ordinance.* Church uses are allowed in residential districts upon special approval. Therefore, the use is consistent with the intent and purpose of the Zoning Ordinance in general, and of Section 138-933 in particular.

2. *Will be designed, constructed, operated, maintained, and managed so as to be compatible, harmonious, and appropriate in appearance with the existing or planned character of the general vicinity, adjacent uses of land, the natural environment, the capacity of public services and facilities affected by the land use and the community as a whole.* The proposed parking lot addition is designed to blend in with the existing parking lot and located so as to not impact the natural environment. There will not be an additional driveway from Auburn Road to access the new parking addition.
3. *Will be served adequately by essential public facilities and services, such as highways, streets, police and fire protection, drainage ways, refuse disposal, or that the persons or agencies responsible for the establishment of the land use or activity shall be able to provide adequately any such service.* The church is adequately served by essential public facilities and services.
4. *Will not be detrimental, hazardous, or disturbing to existing or future neighboring land uses, persons, property, or the public welfare.* The proposed addition will be not detrimental, hazardous, or unreasonably disturbing to existing land uses, persons, property, or the public welfare.
5. *Will not create additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services that will be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.* The proposal does not create additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services that will be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.

As part of the technical review for this project, the plans and supplemental documentation have been reviewed by all applicable City departments and consultants. Based on the review comments included in this report or contained within the enclosed information, staff recommends approval of the following motions relative to City File No. 98-037.3 (St. Paul's Albanian Catholic Community Church).

Conditional Land Use

MOTION by _____, seconded by _____, in the matter of City File No. 98-037.3 (St. Paul's Albanian Catholic Community Church Parking Lot Addition), the Planning Commission **recommends** to City Council **approval** of the **Revised Conditional Land Use**, based on plans dated received by the Planning Department on November 2, 2006, with the following findings.

Findings:

1. The proposed parking lot addition is being developed to help alleviate parking problems.

2. The proposed parking lot addition will be accessed by using existing ingress to and egress from Auburn Road, thereby not increasing the number of driveways.
3. The proposed addition will not be located within 50 feet of any roadways.
4. The use is consistent with the intent and purpose of the Zoning Ordinance in general, and of Section 138-1337 in particular. Further, the proposed parking lot addition will improve access for the church attendees.
5. The proposed parking lot addition is designed and will be constructed, operated, maintained, and managed so as to be compatible, harmonious, and appropriate in appearance with the existing and planned character of the general vicinity, the natural environment, the capacity of public services and facilities affected by the use, and the Albanian Catholic Church community.
6. The proposed parking lot addition is part of the larger church development, which is served adequately by essential public facilities and services.
7. The proposed parking lot addition will not be detrimental, hazardous, or disturbing to existing or future neighboring land uses, persons, property, or the public welfare.
8. The proposed parking lot addition will not create additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services that will be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.

Revised Site Plan

MOTION by _____, seconded by _____, in the matter of City File No. 98-037.3 (St. Paul's Albanian Catholic Church Parking Lot Addition), the Planning Commission **approves** the **Revised Site Plan**, based on plans dated received by the Planning and Development Department on November 2, 2006, with the following findings and subject to the following conditions.

Findings:

1. The applicant is proposing landscaping and the preservation of existing vegetation to enhance the aesthetic quality of the site and the neighborhood.
2. The site plan and supporting documents demonstrate that all applicable requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, as well as other City ordinances, standards and requirements can be met subject to the conditions noted below.
3. Off-street parking areas have been designed to avoid common traffic problems and promote safety.
4. There appears to be a satisfactory and harmonious relationship with existing contiguous development.

5. The proposed parking lot addition should not have an unreasonably detrimental nor an injurious effect upon the natural characteristics and features of the site or those of the surrounding area.

Conditions:

1. That all grading, retaining walls, storm sewer design information, and calculations for the existing storm sewer design must be reviewed and approved by Engineering Services, prior to Construction Plan Approval.
2. Install tree protective fencing, as reviewed and approved by the City's Landscape Architect, prior to issuance of the Land Improvement Permit.
3. Provide a performance guarantee in the amount of \$17,620.00, as adjusted if necessary by the City's Landscape Architect, to ensure the proper installation of replacement trees and other landscaping. Such guarantee to be provided by the applicant prior to issuance of a Land Improvement Permit.
4. Revise the size of the evergreen trees to a minimum height of 8-9 feet in lieu of 6-8 feet, prior to Final Approval by Staff.
5. The applicant shall obtain a Land Improvement Permit prior to starting any work on site.
6. Address request from the Assessing Department (memo of November 17, 2006) regarding combining parcels, prior to Final Approval by Staff.
7. Incorporate ASTI finding 5c from their letter dated September 19, 2006 to ensure there is no activity in the natural features setback, prior to Final Approval by Staff.
8. Staff to review the asphalt limits of the Auburn Road paving to verify compliance with the original Site Plan and implementation of the passing lane.

Attachments: *Plans dated received 11/02/06 – Cover Sheet and Sheets SP-1, Sp-2, LI-3, E-1, prepared by Giffels WebsterEngineers*

References: Planning and Development Department memo dated 11/20/06; Building Department Memo dated 09/20/06; Letter from ASTI Environmental, dated 09/19/06; Letter from HRC dated 09/27/06; Fire Department memo dated 11/16/06; Parks and Forestry email dated 04/14/05; Assessing Department memo dated 11/17/06.
