

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

**STAFF REPORT TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION
March 18, 2008**

Medical Office Building Site Plan Approval Request	
APPLICANT	GAV Associates, Inc. 31471 Northwestern Hwy., Suite 2 Farmington Hills, MI 48334
AGENT	Charles Marchetti
PARCEL NO.	15-28-476-067
ACREAGE	1.02± Acres
LOCATION	1220 Auburn - North side of Auburn, West of Livernois
CITY FILE NO.	07-015
ZONING	B-1, Local Business
STAFF	Derek L. Delacourt, Deputy Director
REQUESTS	Buffer Modification Site Plan Approval

SUMMARY

The applicant proposes to construct a two-story, 7,873 square-foot medical office building on one acre located on the north side of Auburn, west of Livernois. The existing office and parking lot on the site will be demolished for the new building. The site will be accessed from both Woodelm and Walsh Drives; currently it has one access from Woodelm.

Specific actions requested for consideration by the Planning Commission are Site Plan and Buffer Modification Approvals.

ADJACENT LAND USES AND ZONING

The property directly to the south, across Auburn, is zoned R-4 and is developed with homes. The property directly to the north is zoned R-4. The property to the east is zoned B-1 and is developed with a glass business. To the west, the parcel is zoned B-2 and developed with a retail center. The current Master Plan zoning for the subject parcel is single-family residential.

Landscaping/Tree Removal

The Tree Conservation Ordinance does not regulate the site; however, the City's Landscape Architect feels that due to the buffer requirements, the site will have a significant number of trees.

Buffer Requirements

A Type B Buffer (25' width, 6-foot high opaque screen wall and IVO tree plantings) is required along the northern property line, where it abuts residential, and a Type C Buffer (10' width and IVO tree plantings) is required along the southern property line adjacent to Auburn and across from residential. The 10' Type C Buffer along the southern limit has been met, but the 25' wide portion of the Type B Buffer width has not been met. The applicant is requesting a Buffer Modification of four feet, six inches, and is showing a buffer width of 20'-6". There will also be a 6-foot high block wall with concrete cap and sufficient tree plantings to meet the IVO on the northern border. No buffers are required along western or eastern property lines, adjacent to commercial zoning.

Section 138-1218 of the City's Ordinance allows the Planning Commission to modify, reduce, or waive the required buffer based on the following criteria:

1. The landscape/screening plan shall protect the character of new and existing residential neighborhoods against negative impacts such as noise, glare, light, air pollution, trash and debris, and hazardous activities.
2. The planning commission shall determine the screening, width and type of buffer zone needed to ensure compatibility based upon the following criteria:
 - a. The development is compatible with and sensitive to the immediate environment of the site and neighborhood relative to architectural design, scale, bulk, building height, identified historical character, disposition and orientation of buildings on the lot and visual integrity.
 - b. The site has natural existing vegetation and/or topography, natural bodies of water or wetland areas or other existing conditions which offer screening consistent with the standards set forth in this chapter. The planning commission shall require the retention of these natural features as a condition of site plan approval.
 - c. The arrangement, design and orientation of buildings on this site lends itself so as to maximize the opportunity for privacy and isolation from negative impacts of this project.

Parking Calculations

A total of 42 parking spaces are required, according to the useable floor area reported for the medical office building, and 42 are being provided, including nine handicap spaces. They are proposing four tenants for the building. The applicant states that the required parking area is the reason the buffer area they have provided could not be the full 25' wide. Parking island planters and trees are sufficient per the Ordinance.

Wetland Use Permit/Natural Features Setback Modification

There are no regulated wetlands or natural features impacts on the site.

Lighting

The photometric plan shows zero footcandles at the lot lines and below one at the perimeter of the parking lot. Lightpoles will be no higher than 15 feet.

Architecture

The building will be primarily brick with cast concrete stone accents, with an asphalt-shingled roof. The applicant will bring colored renderings the night of the meeting.

RECOMMENDATION

As part of the technical review for this project, the plans and supplemental documentation have been reviewed by all applicable City departments and consultants, and the project has been recommended for approval. Based on the review comments included in this report or contained within the enclosed information, staff recommends approval of the following motion relative to City File No. 07-015 (Medical Office Building).

Attachments: *Plans dated received 02/11/08 –Cover Sheet T.001, Sheets C1 thru C3 prepared by Land Engineering Services, Inc.; Sheets P1 thru 4 prepared by Contech Stormwater Solutions; Sheet L.100, prepared by GAV Associates; Sheet L.101, prepared by John Deere Landscapes; Sheets A.100, A.100A, A.100B, A.101, A.102 and A.103, prepared by GAV Associates.*

Planning and Development Department memo dated 02/25/08; Building Department Memo dated 01/02/08; Letter from HRC dated 02/28/08; Fire Department memo dated 02/26/08; Parks and Forestry Memo dated 02/22/08; Letter from OCDC dated 09/20/07; Letter from Oakland County Health Division dated 09/20/07; Assessing Department memo dated 10/08/07; Environmental Impact Statement dated 09/12/07; Development Application dated 09/13/07.

Buffer Modification:

MOTION by _____, seconded by _____, in the matter of City File No. 07-015 (1220 W. Auburn Medical Building), the Planning Commission **grants a Buffer Modification** to reduce the buffer width along the northern property line to 20’-6”, based on plans dated received by the Planning and Development Department on February 11, 2008 with the following findings:

Findings:

1. The applicant is supplementing the buffer area with plantings to be consistent with the intent of the “Type B” buffer requirement for the subject site.
2. The landscape/screening plan will protect the character of new and existing residential neighborhoods against negative impacts such as noise, glare, and light pollution.

3. The parking requirements have required a reduction in the buffer width of six inches.
4. The proposed plan meets the criteria of Section 138-1218 to allow the Planning Commission to modify or waive the buffer requirements for the proposed development.

Site Plan:

MOTION by _____, seconded by _____, in the matter of City File No. 07-015 (Medical Office Building), the Planning Commission **approves** the **Site Plan**, based on plans dated received by the Planning and Development Department on February 11, 2008, 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, as well as other City ordinances, standards and requirements can be met subject to the conditions noted below.
2. The proposed development will be accessed by ingress to and egress from both Woodelm Dr. and Walsh Dr.
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 and adjacent neighborhoods.
5. The proposed development 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. The applicant shall obtain a Land Improvement Permit prior to starting any work on site.
2. All off site drainage easements, stormwater agreements, drive approach paving and calculations regarding the underground detention system must be reviewed and approved by Engineering Services, prior to Construction Plan Approval.
3. Appropriate approvals from the Oakland County Drain Commissioner must be obtained prior to issuance of a Land Improvement Permit for this project.
4. Tree protective fencing, as reviewed and approved by the City's Landscape Architect, shall be installed prior to issuance of the Land Improvement Permit.
5. A performance guarantee in the amount of \$58,237.00, as adjusted if necessary by the City's Landscape Architect, shall be provided 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.

6. Parking lot island planter calculations on Sheet L.100 shall be corrected, per the Landscape Architect's memo of February 25, 2008, prior to Final Approval by Staff.