



Department of Planning and Economic Development

Staff Report to the Planning Commission

April 13, 2012

Avon Wellness Center Site Plan	
REQUEST	Site Plan Approval
APPLICANT	JW Design Architectural Studio 412 S. Washington Royal Oak, MI 48067
AGENT	Daniel F. DeRemer, AIA
LOCATION	North side of Meadowfield, west of Rochester Rd.
FILE NO.	05-016.2
PARCEL NO.	15-22-226-016
ACREAGE	9.58 Acres
ZONING	SP, Special Purpose
STAFF	Jim Breuckman, AICP, Manager of Planning

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Summary

The applicant is proposing to construct a one-story 79,680 square-foot nursing home facility at the above noted site. The proposed nursing home will initially contain 100-beds and will be licensed by the State (per the application). There is the possibility that the applicant could secure a license for an additional 26 beds in the facility, although according to the applicant’s architect that occurrence is not likely to happen in the near future. Nonetheless, the application has been prepared with the ultimate 126 bed possibility in mind. The applicant’s EIS provides extensive details about the physical and operational characteristics of the facility.

The current applicant purchased the property from the previous owner who had received Planned Unit Development approval for a 58-unit attached condominium project.

Background

The site was previously approved for Sheffield PUD (formerly Meadowfield PUD), a 58-unit site condo development. The PUD was vacated by City Council in September 2011 and the property returned to Special Purpose zoning, which permits the proposed nursing home use. You might recall that the City owned and traded the Meadowfield site for ten acres on Adams Road as an addition to Nowicki Park. The prior landowner was granted Final PUD Approval and Rezoning in 2005. In addition, a Tree Removal Permit was granted to

remove up to 415 trees and replace them with tree credits. The replacement credits were never planted but the applicant did deposit funds into the City's tree fund equal to the equivalent value of the trees.

Adjacent Land Uses and Zoning

Surrounding uses include the KinderCare Learning Center at the southeast corner of the site, which is fenced and screened by an evergreen buffer, the Northridge Apartment complex to the west, Home Depot to the north, and attached residential units to the south across Meadowfield. The site is zoned SP – Special Purpose. Land to the north is zoned B-3 Shopping Center Business, land to the east is zoned B-2 General Business and B-3 Shopping Center Business, and land to the west and south is zoned RM-1 Multiple Family Residential.

Site Plan Review Considerations

1. **Tree Preservation.** Most of the previously existing trees on the site were removed by the previous owner, and the replacement requirement for those trees has been satisfied by that previous owner. Therefore, the new owner is not responsible for providing replacement tree credits. The 16 trees that remain are located along the east and west property lines, and have been incorporated into the landscaping plan.
2. **Traffic Generation.** The applicant has submitted a traffic analysis based on trip generation rates. The traffic analysis was completed using the potential 126-bed buildout of the site, so it will overstate the traffic impact of the use when it is limited to 100 beds. The proposed use at maximum 126 bed occupancy will generate fewer peak hour and daily trips than the previously approved PUD. Further, as noted in the traffic statement, the traffic generation rates do not meet the thresholds for a traffic analysis or impact study listed in the "Evaluating Traffic Impact Studies – A Recommended Practice for Michigan Communities" publication.
3. **Parking.** The parking requirement for the site is 50 spaces, while 180 are proposed. The ordinance establishes a soft cap of 125% of the minimum parking requirement which may be exceeded if the applicant can provide evidence that the maximum parking permitted will not be sufficient to accommodate the use. The applicant has provided justification for the proposed 180 parking spaces on pages 1 and 2 of their EIS. The EIS notes that approximately 120 caregivers and therapists will work at the site spread over multiple shifts. The 180 parking space demand is based on a 126-bed facility.

Alternate options that could be considered include banking parking in greenbelt areas for future construction should the need arise. The Planning Commission may also take into consideration the immediate 100-bed capacity of the site and the potential ultimate 126 bed capacity in determining the justification for exceeding the maximum parking cap and the possible use of banked parking areas.

4. **Landscaping.** The landscape plan is extensive and meets Ordinance requirements. The site is densely planted with trees.
 - a. One item of discussion at City Council when the previous PUD was abandoned was the possible provision of trees over and above ordinance minimums at this site to help compensate for the prior clear cutting of the site. While the proposed plan meets ordinance minimums, there is the potential to incorporate a reasonable number of additional trees at the front portion of the site. One possible method that could be used would be a planned reforestation of selected portions of the front yard area. This can be accomplished by planting small 1" caliper park-grade trees in dense clusters spaced approximately 10 feet on center.

Park grade canopy trees are inexpensive and so can be planted in dense clusters for a reasonable cost. Over time some trees will die, but many will survive creating new natural-appearing tree clusters. An added benefit is that smaller trees have faster growth rates after transplanting.

There is opportunity to incorporate reforestation areas along the west side of the entrance drive and also on the south and north sides of the detention ponds.

- b. The applicant must provide a per-unit cost estimate for landscape materials (for bond purposes). The applicant's cover letter indicates that this will be provided with the final site plan.
5. **Building Design.** The proposed building is attractive, emphasizing horizontal lines in the design and materials. The building materials include brick and fiber cement siding, which are both durable materials that will break up the mass of the building when combined. The roof has an appropriate height and proportion relative to the eaves line of the building.

The applicant has provided a sample board showing the proposed materials which will be available for your review at the meeting.
6. **Wetlands and Natural Features.** This proposal does not impact a wetland or natural feature setback.
7. **Lighting.** The lighting plan complies with Ordinance standards.
8. **Stormwater Management.** Engineering has approved the plans subject to conditions in their memo to Staff. Those conditions will not impact the site layout.
9. **Fire Department Comments.** The fire department has denied the submitted pursuant to 3 detail items that may be addressed on a revised and dated set of plans submitted for approval. The comments in the Fire Department memo will not impact the site design or site layout, and so Staff recommends that the Fire Department's comments be included as conditions of approval with Fire Department re-review and approval being required prior to final site plan approval.

Site Plan Summary

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 finds that the plans for City File No. 05-016.2 (Avon Wellness Center) are approvable.

Site Plan Approval Motion

MOTION by _____, seconded by _____, in the matter of City File No. 05-016.2 (Avon Wellness Center), the Planning Commission **approves** the **Site Plan**, based on plans dated received by the Planning and Development Department on March 20, 2012, 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. Off-street parking areas have been designed to avoid common traffic problems and promote safety and to accommodate pedestrian circulation with crosswalks.
3. There appears to be a satisfactory and harmonious relationship with existing contiguous development and adjacent neighborhoods.
4. The proposed development should not have an unreasonably detrimental or 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 and all other required permits prior to starting any work on site.
2. Incorporation of reforestation areas if directed by the Planning Commission.
3. Provide landscape bond cost estimate for replacement trees, to be adjusted by Staff as necessary, prior to issuance of a Land Improvement Permit for this development.
4. Planning Commission approval of the maximum parking adjustment or revisions of the plans consistent with Planning Commission direction regarding maximum parking permitted on the site.
5. Address comments from Parks and Forestry memo dated 2/29/12 and Fire Department memo dated 4/9/12.
6. Address comments from Building Department memo dated 4/4/12, prior to obtaining Building Permits.

Reference: *Site Plans, dated received March 20, 2011: Overall Site Plan, Sheet A5; Colored Renderings (3); Architectural Site Plan, Sheet A-1; Overall Floor Plan, Sheet A-2; Exterior Elevations, Sheet A-3; Life Safety Plan, Sheet A-4; Existing Conditions, Sheet C-1; Layout & Utility Plan, Sheet C-2; Storm Water Management Plan, Sheet C-3; Landscape Planting Information/Details, Sheet L101; Site Planting Plan, Sheet L102; Site Irrigation Plan, Sheet L103; and Site Photometric Plan, Sheet EP01.01, prepared by JW Design Architectural Studio*

Attachments: Assessing Department memo dated 02/17/12; Building Department memo dated 04/4/12; Fire Department memo dated 04/09/12; Public Services Department memo dated 04/03/12; Parks and Forestry Department memo dated 2/29/12; Letter from OCWRC, dated 2/27/12; Traffic Impact Study dated 03/15/12; and Environmental Impact Statement dated 3/12/12.
