



Department of Planning and Economic Development

Staff Report to the Planning Commission

March 12, 2025

PSP2024-0034 and PTP2025-0002

Office Retail Building

3200 S. Rochester Rd.

REQUEST	Site Plan Approval Tree Removal Permit
APPLICANT	Steve Robinson Broder Sachse Real Estate 3663 Woodward Ave. Detroit, MI 48201
LOCATION	3200 S. Rochester Road, west side of S. Rochester Road, north of Hickory Lawn.
FILE NOS.	PSP2024-0034 and PTP2025-0002
PARCEL NOS.	15-34-227-040
ZONING	NB Neighborhood Business and R-3 One Family Residential, with the FB Flex Business Overlay
STAFF	Chris McLeod, AICP, Planning Manager

Summary

The applicant is proposing to redevelop the existing site with a 8,593 square foot retail and office building. The site itself is approximately 1.22 acres in size and is zoned primarily NB Neighborhood Business District with the FB Flex Business District. The far western portion of the site is zoned R-3 One Family Residential. Within the NB Neighborhood Business District, general retail uses and office uses are a permissible use and therefore only require site plan approval. The current site plan does not propose a drive through facility. The site does also require a tree removal permit but there are no other additional planning reviews or approvals that would require additional City Council action at this time.

The applicant is proposing to construct a new, modernized 8,593 square foot retail and office building and demolish the existing residence that is currently located on the site. The site will be serviced by a singular driveway that will be located on Hickory Lawn. Hickory Lawn is proposed to be paved for a distance of approximately 200 feet from S. Rochester Road as part of this project. In regard to pedestrian accessibility, the site plan proposes two (2) separate pedestrian connections to the pedestrian pathway system: one along S. Rochester Road (existing) and one to Hickory Lawn (proposed).

The building architecture provides for a modern design and the building materials include a mix of masonry brick material and wood composite siding. The building materials vary from some of the more traditional building materials seen in the City and should be closely reviewed by the Planning Commission.

Currently, the site has a pylon type sign that is located at the rear of the site. This sign does not comply with any City regulations regarding height/size. As a part of the proposed redevelopment, the applicant is proposing the removal of that sign and the construction of a new sign, along the Rochester Road frontage that complies with City requirements.

The site plan does not currently propose the installation of a bicycle rack. It may be advantageous for a bicycle rack to be added to the site plan to be consistent with the City's proposed ordinance amendment currently being considered. The parking island at the south end of the building may be an appropriate location. The bicycle rack should be consistent with the City's adopted streetscape plan.

The landscape plan provides for a total of fifty-one (51) total trees onsite. This is in addition to a variety of plants

and shrubs that will also be planted throughout the site. Currently, the site has landscaping that is old and has not been maintained. However, there are trees that fall under the City's tree regulations and therefore a Tree Removal Permit is required for this project.

The applicant is seeking modifications to the right-of-way landscaping requirements along both S. Rochester Road (1) and Hickory Lawn (2); modifications for the parking lot perimeter landscaping along both S. Rochester Road and Hickory Lawn (3 and 4); and a modification for the required greenbelt between the proposed site and residential property to the west (5), as discussed further below.

Landscape Modification 1 – Rochester Road right-of-way landscaping

The Zoning Ordinance requires a total of seven (7) shade trees and four (4) ornamental trees along the 254 feet of S. Rochester Road frontage. The applicant has provided one (1) shade tree at this time, so they are requesting a modification of a total of six (6) shade trees and four (4) ornamental trees for the Rochester Road right-of-way frontage. The required hedge row along the majority of S. Rochester Road has been provided. There appears to be conflicts with the City's required clear vision area and the existing pathway extending onto the subject property which affect the applicant's ability to provide the required number of trees in this location. The clear vision area is a result of the access drive from the property to the north and the clear vision area required from the intersection of Hickory Lawn and S. Rochester Road. The applicant has proposed to pay six (6) trees into the City Tree Fund.

Landscape Modification 2 – Hickory Lawn right-of-way landscaping

The Zoning Ordinance requires a total of twelve (12) shade trees and seven (7) ornamental trees along the 429 feet of frontage along Hickory Lawn. The landscape plan proposes a total of three (3) shade trees and no ornamental trees. Therefore, the applicant is requesting a modification of a total of nine (9) shade trees and seven (7) ornamental trees for the Hickory Lawn frontage. This frontage also is somewhat impacted by the presence of clear vision areas along with the proposed sidewalk extending onto the subject site. In addition, it should be noted that the westernmost portion of the site is zoned residential which would not necessarily require the planting of right-of-way landscaping. The applicant has proposed paying nine (9) trees into the City Tree Fund.

Landscape Modification 3 – Parking lot perimeter landscaping along S. Rochester Road

The perimeter parking lot planting requirements with the Zoning Ordinance require a total of seven (7) shade trees and five (5) ornamental trees based on the current site plan configuration. Of these required trees, a total of six (6) shade trees have been provided and five (5) ornamental trees (planted along the north property line instead of along S. Rochester Rd.), therefore, the applicant is requesting a modification of one (1) shade tree to not be planted and the five (5) ornamental trees to be planted along the north property line instead of along S. Rochester Rd..

Landscape Modification 4 – Parking lot perimeter landscaping along Hickory Lawn

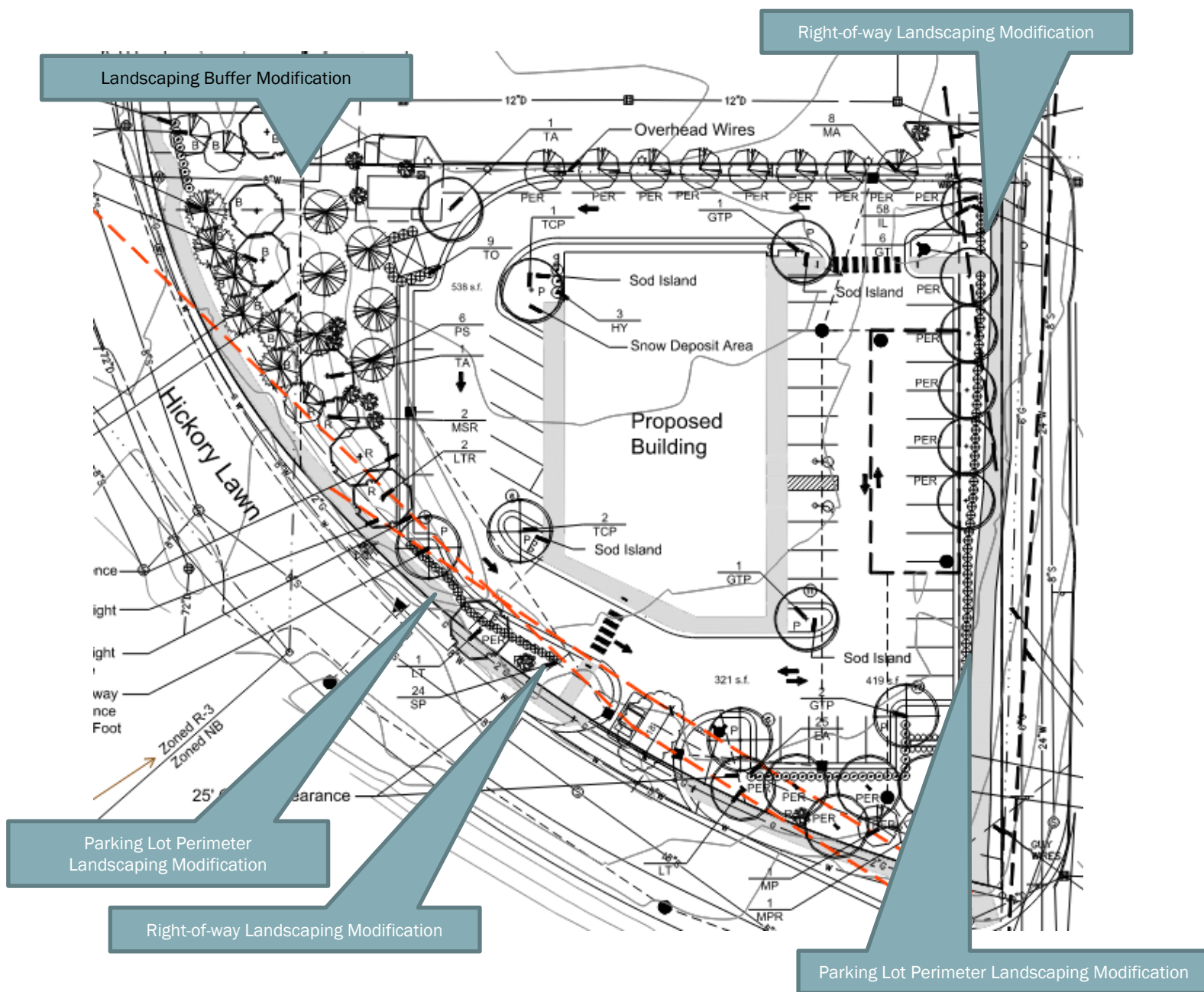
The perimeter parking lot planting requirements with the Zoning Ordinance require a total of six (6) shade trees and four (4) ornamental trees based on the current site plan configuration. Of these required trees, all have been provided, however, three (3) of the required ornamental trees have been planted along the north property line, therefore requiring a modification.

Landscape Modification 5 – Landscape Buffer D – Fence versus Wall

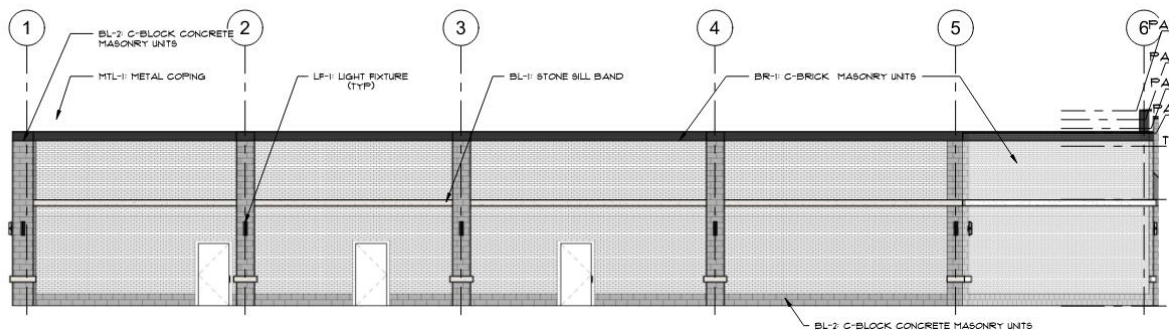
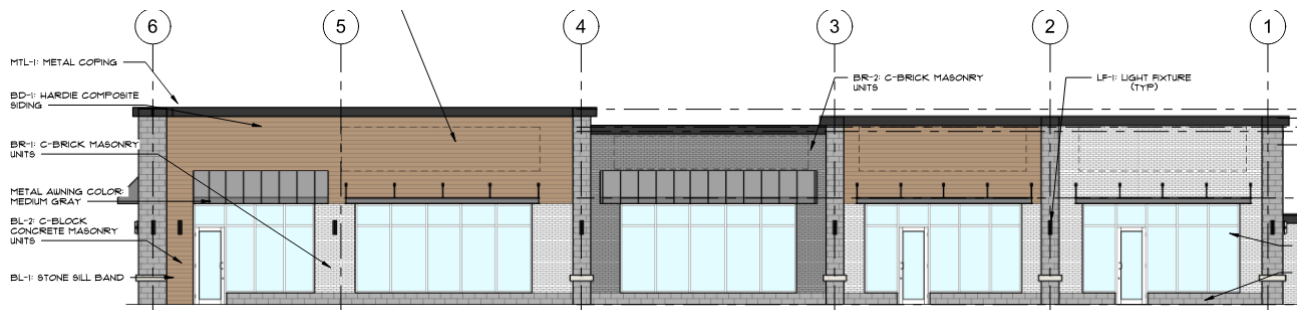
The buffering requirements for when a nonresidential site abuts a residential property requires the installation of a six (6) foot tall masonry wall. The applicant is proposing a six (6) foot tall vinyl privacy fence. The subject site is currently split zoned. The majority of the site is zoned NB Neighborhood Business, however, the westernmost portion of the site is zoned R-3 One Family Residential. The applicant has provided extensive landscaping along the western portion of the site, on both the Business and One Family Residentially zoned portions of the property. The applicant has proposed a privacy fence amongst the landscaping proposed rather than a masonry wall. The fence proposed follows the zoning line which transects the property in a north/south fashion from the northern property line, extending south to within 10 feet of the right-of-way for Hickory Lawn.

In total, the site is deficient sixteen (16) shade trees and eleven (11) ornamental trees. As previously noted, the site is currently void of any landscaping that would specifically meet landscaping requirements since the site has never been developed. The proposed landscape plan includes a total of fifty-one (51) trees, including right-of-way, perimeter, buffer and parking lot landscaping and will provide a significant improvement in terms of overall landscaping and landscape aesthetic onsite.

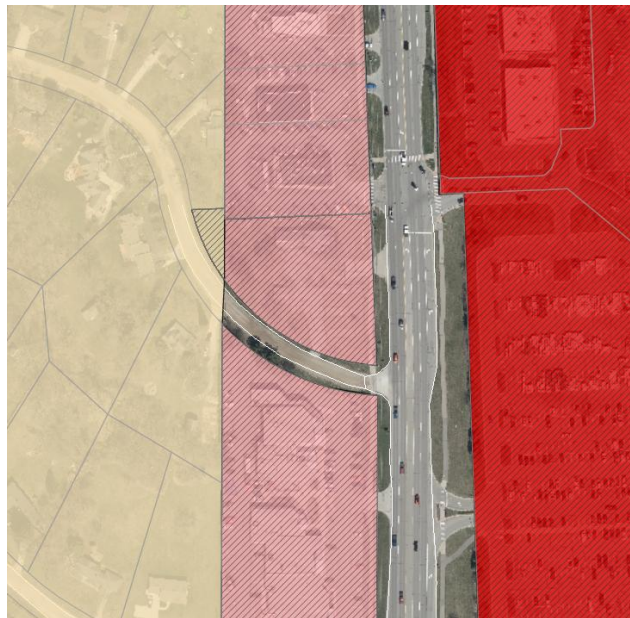
Site Plan



Renderings / Elevations



Zoning Map **Master Land Use Plan**



	Zoning	Existing Land Use	Future Land Use
Site	NB Neighborhood Business District and R3 One Family Residential District with FB Flex Business District	Vacant Residential	Commercial Residential Flex 2
North	NB Neighborhood Business District with FB Flex Business District	Alex's Family Restaurant	Commercial Residential Flex 2
South (across Hickory Lawn)	NB Neighborhood Business District with FB Flex Business District	Oakridge Plaza	Commercial Residential Flex 2
East (across S. Rochester Road)	CB Community Business District with FB Flex Business District	Lowes/Meijer	Commercial Residential Flex 3
West	R3 One Family Residential District	Residences	Residential 3

Tree Removal Permit

The site plan indicates that there is a total of twenty-one (21) regulated trees on the site. It also includes a request to remove eleven (11) regulated trees and zero (0) specimen trees, with eleven (11) replacement trees required. The applicant is proposing to plant eight (8) replacement trees with three (3) trees to be paid into the City's Tree Fund.

Staff Recommendations

Department	Comments & Waivers/Modifications	Recommendation
Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Modification to the right-of-way planting requirements along S. Rochester Road – 10 trees total• Modification to the right-of-way planting requirements along Hickory Lawn – 16 trees total• A modification for the parking lot perimeter landscaping along S. Rochester Road – 1 tree and revised planting location of five (5) trees• A modification for the parking lot perimeter landscaping along Hickory Lawn – Revised planting location of three (3) trees• A modification of the required buffering along west property zoning line, fence vs. wall• The Planning Commission to determine if the building façade materials and design are appropriate• Finalization of easements for cross access during LIP Process.	Approval
Engineering	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Land Improvement Permit is required• Seal and Signature on Page 2• Determining extent of MDOT approval for stormwater drainage connections	Approval
Traffic	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• MDOT Permit to be secured prior to construction plan approval	Approval
Fire		Approval
Building	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Securing appropriate demolition permits for existing structures	Approval
Forestry		Approval

Department	Comments & Waivers/Modifications	Recommendation
Assessing		Approval
Streets review		N/A

The application has been notified to the general public via the City's website and information distribution outlets. The Planning Department has received one email regarding the proposed development which is attached.

Review Process

The site plan review and Tree Removal Permit require Planning Commission action only.

Motion for Site Plan Approval

MOTION by _____, seconded by _____, in the matter of City File No. PSP2024-0034 3200 S. Rochester Road Retail/Office Building, the Planning Commission **approves the Site Plan**, based on plans received by the Planning Department on January 24, 2025, with the following findings and subject to the following conditions.

Findings

1. The site plan and supporting documents demonstrate that the proposed development will promote the intent and purpose of the ordinance, as well as other City Ordinances, standards, and requirements; and those requirements can be met with the exception of the acceptable modifications shown below and subject to the conditions listed below.
2. The site plan and supporting documents demonstrate that the proposed development 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 project will be accessed from Rochester Rd. and Hickory Lawn, thereby promoting safety and convenience of vehicular traffic both within the site and on adjacent roadways. The preliminary plan represents a reasonable street, building and lot layout and orientation.
3. The development will be served adequately by essential public facilities and services, such as major roadways, streets, police and fire protection, drainageways, refuse disposal, and utilities.
4. The proposed development will not be detrimental, hazardous, or disturbing to existing or future neighboring uses, persons, property or the public welfare.
5. The proposed development will not create additional requirements at public cost for public facilities and services that will be detrimental to the economic welfare of the community.
6. The proposed improvements should have a satisfactory and harmonious relationship with the development onsite as well as existing development in the adjacent vicinity and act as a transitional use from the nonresidential development to the west and the residential development to the east.
7. The proposed modification to the required right-of-way landscaping requirement, of a total of 10 trees, along S. Rochester Rd. has been found to be acceptable since the number of trees proposed onsite overall greatly increases the number of plantings onsite, the overall site aesthetic, and potential for tree canopy onsite.
8. The proposed modification to the required right-of-way landscaping requirement, of a total of 16 trees, along Hickory Lawn has been found to be acceptable since the number of trees proposed onsite overall greatly increases the number of plantings onsite, the overall site aesthetic, and potential for tree canopy onsite.
9. The proposed modification to the required parking lot perimeter landscaping requirement, of one tree and the revised planting location of 5 trees, has been found acceptable since the number of trees proposed onsite overall greatly increases the number of plantings onsite, the overall site aesthetic, and potential for tree canopy onsite.

10. The proposed modification for the parking lot perimeter landscaping along Hickory Lawn for the revised planting location of 3 trees has been found acceptable since the number of trees proposed onsite overall greatly increases the number of plantings onsite, the overall site aesthetic, and potential for tree canopy onsite.
11. The proposed modification to the required buffering along the west property zoning line to allow for a fence instead of the required wall has been found acceptable since the site currently does not provide any greenbelt area and the proposed greenbelt significantly increases the greenspace onsite.

Conditions

1. Address all applicable comments from other City departments and outside agency review letters.
2. A bicycle rack consistent with the City's Gateway and Streetscape Master Plan must be provided.
3. Provide a landscape bond in the amount of \$53,282.00, plus the cost of inspection fees, as adjusted by staff as necessary, prior to the preconstruction meeting with Engineering.

Motion to Approve a Tree Removal Permit

MOTION by _____, seconded by _____, in the matter of File No. PTP2025-0002 (3200 Retail/Office Building) the Planning Commission **grants a Tree Removal Permit**, based on plans received by the Planning Department on January 24, 2025, 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 eleven (11) regulated trees and zero (0) specimen trees, with eleven (11) replacement trees required. The applicant is proposing to plant of eight (8) replacement trees with three (3) trees to be paid into the City's Tree Fund

Conditions

1. Tree protective fencing, as reviewed and approved by the City staff, shall be installed prior to temporary grade being issued by Engineering.
2. Provide the cost of three (3) trees (\$1,002.00) into the City's Tree Fund prior to a Land Improvement Permit being issued.
3. Address all applicable comments from other City departments and outside agency review letters, prior to final approval by staff including all comments noted on the site plans and staff reports contained within the Planning Commission packets (as may be amended by this motion).