

TO: Planning Commission
FROM: Ben Boike, Assistant Comm. Dev. Dir.
DATE: September 20, 2016
SUBJECT: Site Plan/Plat Review – 963 Robert St.



REQUEST

On behalf of Sherman & Associates, Alliant Engineering is requesting the following zoning applications in order to expand the existing parking lot at 963 Robert St.:

- 1) Site Plan approval for the construction of the parking lot
- 2) Plat approval to combine lots

Attachments:

Applications/Notice

Memos from the Civil Engineer, the Environment Committee, and MnDOT

Copies of submitted plans



EXISTING LAND USES

The subject properties currently consist of a recently constructed retail shell on the south end of the property and vacant land on the north end. Adjacent properties to the north are currently vacant. Adjacent properties to the east are occupied by commercial and multi-family uses. The adjacent property to the south is occupied by

a multi-family apartment building. Adjacent properties to the west are occupied by single-family homes.

ZONING

The subject property and adjacent properties to the north and east are zoned B5, Gateway North Mixed-use. The adjacent property to the south is zoned Planned Residential Development with R4, Multiple-family Residential underlying zoning. Adjacent properties to the west are zoned R1, Single family.

SITE PLAN ANALYSIS

Proposal

The applicant is proposing to develop the vacant land to the north of their recently constructed retail building as a parking lot to support the commercial use of the property. The development of the property is required per a development agreement between the owner and the City of West. St. Paul dating back to the construction of the apartment building to the south.

Access

The proposed parking lot addition will connect to the existing parking lot north of the existing building and also provide new access for the property to the newly aligned Haskell St. The existing parking lot has access to Robert St. (right-in, right-out) and the public ally to the rear of the property.

Parking Requirements

The 8,520 sq. ft. retail building requires a total of 43 parking stalls. The existing parking lot includes a total of 29 stalls. The proposed parking lot addition calls for 40 parking stalls bringing the total number of parking stalls for the property to 69.

Setbacks

The proposed parking addition meets all setback requirements.

Drive Aisle/Parking Stall Dimensions

The submitted plans meet all required minimum drive aisle and minimum parking stall dimensions.

Curbing

The proposed parking lot addition includes B612 curbing as required by the Zoning Ordinance.

Monument Sign

The applicant is proposing a new monument sign for the property to be located adjacent to the Robert St. access. Staff is recommending a condition of approval requiring the applicant to obtain a sign permit for the proposed sign.

Stormwater Pond

The applicant is proposing a stormwater pond at the northeast corner of the property. The proposed pond will treat all stormwater runoff for the parking lot. A decorative maintenance free ornamental fence is proposed to be located adjacent to the northeast corner of the pond to provide enhanced aesthetics at the intersection of

Robert St. and Haskell. In addition to the fence, a variety of plantings and two benches are also proposed.

Screening

The Zoning Ordinance requires screening of commercial property if adjacent to residential uses. The applicant is proposing a combination of 29 shrubs (24 inches in height that grow to 6 ft. in height) and 4 overstory trees (lindens) between the parking lot and the alley. Section 153.032(E)(4) requires screening 6 ft. in height in the form of a maintenance privacy fence, masonry wall, or landscaping. Staff is recommending a condition of approval requiring that the this requirement is satisfied.

Shared Parking Agreement

Overflow parking for 993 Robert St. (apartment to the south) has become an issue with the loss of on-street parking on Robert St. Since the subject property is tied to the residential apartment complex to the south through a previous development agreement with the West St. Paul Economic Development Authority, Staff is recommending a condition of approval requiring the property owner to record a shared parking easement for the subject property benefiting the apartment to the south (993 Robert). In addition, the property owner shall locate signs in the parking lot at 993 Robert stating that overflow parking is provided in the parking lot at 963 Robert.

Lighting

Six additional 20-foot light poles are proposed for the parking lot addition (see plan sheet P-1.0). The proposed lighting plan shows low levels of lighting bleeding across the western and southern property lines. Section 153.032(E)(5) requires all lighting levels be zero-foot candles at the property lines. Staff is recommending a condition of approval requiring the applicant to revise the plans to meet the requirement.

Landscaped Islands

The Zoning Ordinance requires a landscaped curbed island every 20 parking stalls. Staff is recommending a condition of approval requiring the applicant to revise the plans to include a landscaped curbed island in the western row of parking.

Landscaping

Based on the exterior linear feet of the newly created property, code requires a total of 28 trees on-site (1 tree per 20 lineal ft. of property). The applicant is proposing a total of 15 deciduous trees at 2.5 caliper inches and 5 ornamental trees at 2.5 caliper inches for a total of 20 trees.

Environmental Committee Review

The Environmental Committee reviewed the proposed landscape plan at their September 7, 2016 meeting (see attached memo). The Committee liked the selection of trees and the large amount of plants and shrubs being installed. However, the Committee felt that all 28 trees should be required, per the code, especially since this was parking lot development. The Committee unanimously voted to approve the site plan as long as the developer fulfilled the required number of 28 trees for the site plan, with an additional comment that they strongly encourage the developer to use “pollinator friendly” native plants that were not treated with “neonicotinoids”.

Engineering Review

The City Engineer has provided a memo with four (4) recommended conditions pertaining to the Site Plan (see attached memo). Staff is recommending a condition of approval that the applicant adhere to the recommendations in the memo. The conditions are as follows:

1. Permits from the appropriate regulatory agencies must be obtained, including but not limited to the MPCA, Dakota County, MnDOT, etc.
2. Existing storm sewer line that runs underneath the existing driveway abutting Robert St appears to be dead-headed at the existing catch basin. Connect existing CB to proposed CB-4. Approximate distance is 84 LF.
3. Remove and re-space the trees along Robert St to accommodate the recently installed trees as part of the Robert St Landscape Project. Coordinate with city staff to determine exact location of proposed trees along Robert St.
4. Provide the city with a copy of the proposed Stormwater Management Plan.

MnDOT Review

Since Robert St. is a state road, MnDOT reviewed the proposed plans and submitted the attached letter dated June 14, 2016. Staff is recommending a condition of approval that the applicant adhere to the requests of MnDOT per their letter.

PLAT ANALYSIS

Proposal

The applicant is proposing to combine the existing five lots into one lot. In addition, the applicant is dedicating .05 acres of right-of-way for the newly aligned Haskell St. Staff is recommending a condition of approval that the plat be recorded at the Dakota County Recorder's office within one year of City approval.

Parkland Dedication

Parkland Dedication is not required for parking lot additions. The applicant has already paid parkland dedication when the building plans were approved.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends APPROVAL of the SITE PLAN subject to the submitted site plan and to the following conditions:

1. Council approval of the corresponding Plat application.
2. The applicant shall obtain all applicable building and sign permits for the approved site improvements.
3. The applicant shall meet the screening requirement for the west property as outlined in Section 153.032(E)(4).
4. The property owner shall record a shared parking easement benefitting 993 Robert St. for overflow parking. In addition, the property owner shall include signage in the parking lot of 993 Robert St. stating that overflow parking is available in the parking lot at 963 Robert.

5. The applicant shall revise the lighting plan to meet the zero-foot candle requirement at the south and west property lines.
6. The applicant shall revise the site plan to include a landscaped curbed island in the western row of parking.
7. The applicant shall adhere to the recommendations outlined in the attached memos provided by the City Civil Engineer, the Environmental Committee, and MnDOT.

Staff recommends APPROVAL of the PRELIMINARY/FINAL PLAT subject to the submitted plat drawings and to the following conditions:

1. Council approval of the corresponding Site Plan application.
2. The applicant shall record the plat at Dakota County within one year of City approval.