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Date: July 29, 2020

**Final Site Plan Review  
For  
City of Northville, Michigan**

<b>Applicant:</b>	156 N. Center, LLC 42300 W. Nine Mile Road Novi, MI 48375
<b>Project Name:</b>	150-156 N. Center St.
<b>Plan Date:</b>	Cover and Architectural Sheets: May 10, 2020 Engineering Sheets: March 17, 2020
<b>Latest Revision:</b>	June 22, 2020 (All sheets have the same date)
<b>Location:</b>	Southeast corner of the N. Center and Dunlap intersection
<b>Zoning:</b>	CBD– Central Business District
<b>Action Requested:</b>	Final Site Plan Approval
<b>Required Information:</b>	As noted within this review

**PROJECT AND SITE DESCRIPTION**

The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing one-story building on the southeast corner of N. Center and Dunlap (156 N. Center St.), and demolish an addition on the rear of the adjacent building to the south (Tuscan Café building – or 150 N. Center St.). They are proposing to construct a new 3-story building at the corner, and build a three-story addition onto the rear of the Tuscan Café building. They are also proposing to build a third floor on top of the existing Tuscan Café building. Both addresses will have interior access to one another. The new building will be occupied by a restaurant on the first floor, and four (4) residential units on the upper floors. The Tuscan Café building will continue to be occupied by the restaurant on the first floor, and have two (2) residential units on the upper floors. The applicant is proposing to use existing and new parking credits to provide parking for this building.

The uses proposed on the first floor are considered permitted uses in the CBD District. The residential uses on the upper floors are considered Special Land Uses in the CBD District.

An aerial of the subject site is shown below.



Google Maps

The Special Land Use and Preliminary Site Plan were discussed at the June 2, 2020 meeting, where the Planning Commission provided comments to the applicant, and also scheduled a Public Hearing for the Special Land Use. The Public Hearing was held on July 7, 2020. After considering comments provided and discussing the project, the Planning Commission moved to approve the Special Land Use and Preliminary Site Plan, with the following conditions:

1. Any final site plan approval will be conditioned on the applicant receiving 10.8 parking credits from City Council.
2. Applicant to provide pedestrian amenities, such as public benches, bike racks, etc. at final site plan review.
3. Applicant to continue to work with the DDA and the City Engineer to ensure that the loading/unloading zone as proposed will be no more problematic than currently exists, and the City Engineer be asked to provide suggestions for improving the situation without placing an undue burden on the applicant.
4. All sheets of the final site plan contain the same date.
5. The Planning Commission waives the rear yard requirement, as it would serve no useful purpose.
6. Landscaping and lighting information be provided on the final site plan.
7. Utility connections be reviewed and approved by the Director of Public Works.

8. Building design as approved by the Historic District Commission be included in the final site plan submittal.
9. Final site plan contains details of screening for rooftop mechanical and electrical equipment and show location of venting residential and restaurant uses on elevations.

We will discuss how these conditions were addressed by the applicant throughout this review.

**AREA, WIDTH, HEIGHT, SETBACKS**

The proposed development must conform to the schedule of regulations as provided in Section 15.01, Central Business District. We have included regulations for this zoning district in the table below:

	Required CBD	Provided
Lot Area	N/A	150 N. Center (Tuscan Café): 1,588 s.f. 156 N. Center (Corner): 3,795 s.f. Total: 5,383 s.f.
Lot Width	N/A	150 N. Center (Tuscan Café): 19.90 feet 156 N. Center (Corner): 40.66 feet Total: 60.56 feet
Setbacks		
Front	N/A	0 feet (Both Dunlap and N. Center St.)
Side	N/A (Because south elevation has no openings)	0 feet south side
Rear	20 feet	0 feet (See below)
Max. Floor Area Ratio	3.0	2.79
Max. Building Height	3 stories, 42 feet	3 stories, 34.5 feet to flat roof 41.5 feet to top of tower feature

**Rear Setback:** The applicant is proposing to construct the building on the rear property line, with no rear setback. The ordinance allows the planning Commission to modify or waive the rear-yard requirement when the setback would serve no useful purpose. The Planning Commission approved elimination of the rear setback as part of the Preliminary Site Plan approval. See the Parking section of this review for comments on loading/unloading.

All other zoning requirements for area and placement of the building are met.

During the discussion at the July 7 Planning Commission meeting, it became evident that the pedestrian access ramp into the rear of the building is proposed on City-owned property. The applicant will need to

obtain City Council approval to locate the ramp as proposed. We would suggest that any Final Site Plan approval be conditioned upon the applicant obtaining this approval.

**Items to be Addressed:** *Recommend condition of any approval on the applicant obtaining approval from City Council to locate the pedestrian ramp at the rear of the building on City-owned property.*

## NATURAL RESOURCES

As mentioned above, the site doesn't have any natural features, except for two street trees along Dunlap St. The plans propose to replace only one street tree because of two parking spaces that are proposed in this location.

**Items to be Addressed:** *None.*

## BUILDING LOCATION, SITE ARRANGEMENT, AND PEDESTRIAN AMENITIES

The new building occupies the entire site, and is located directly adjacent to all property lines. This orientation is appropriate, as it is consistent with the orientation of other buildings along N. Center St. and Dunlap St.

The new building has entryways on all sides of the building, allowing access into the ground floor restaurants from N. Center, Dunlap, and the parking lot to the rear. However, it was noted in previous meetings that the access to N. Center Street is through the "outdoor dining" area, and not directly on the street itself. The applicant stated that they don't have a tenant for this space yet, but the layout of the access points on N. Center St. (via additional doorway or large operable windows) could be preferred by the tenant.

The second floor residential units are accessible from the parking lot to the rear. One unit on the second floor has a second means of access directly from N. Center St. The third floor residential units are accessible via the parking lot side of the building.

The Preliminary Site Plan approval was conditioned upon the applicant providing additional pedestrian amenities that anyone could use, such as benches, bike racks, etc. Sheet A101 shows three benches (one on N. Center and two on Dunlap), a bike rack on Dunlap, and a new street tree. We consider these amenities to be positive.

**Items to be Addressed:** *None.*

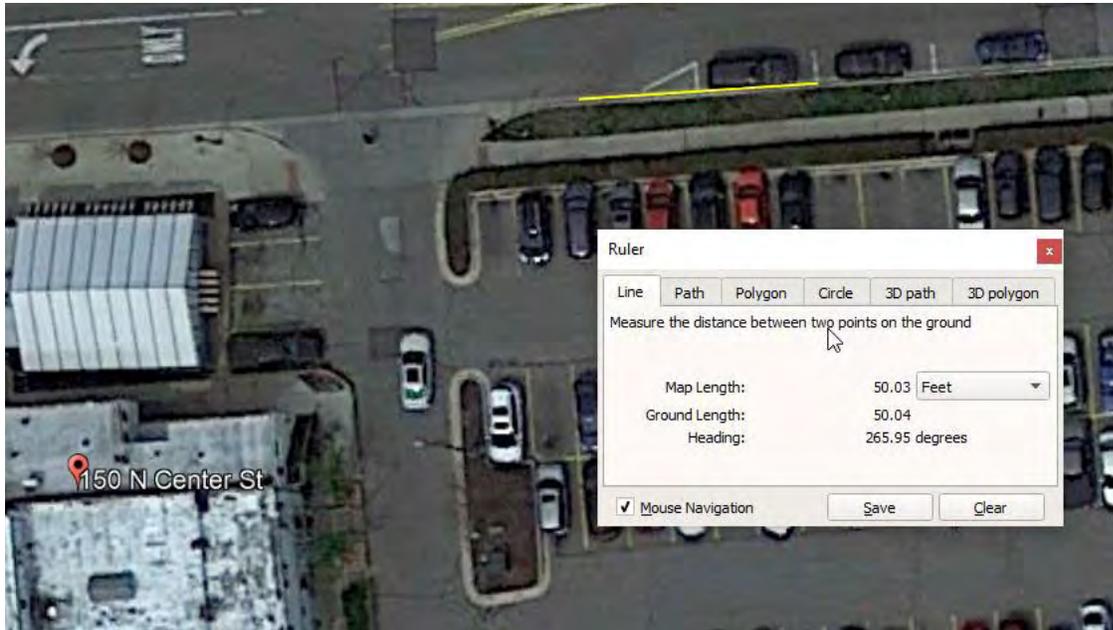
**PARKING**

We have calculated required parking based on Section 17.01.13(a), as described above.

	Parking Requirement for Expanded Uses	Allocation of Parking Credits for Expanded Uses & Parking Space Removal	Difference
150 N. Center (Tuscan Cafe)	Restaurant Use: 1,091 s.f. / 150 s.f. = 7 spaces	Previously purchased parking credits = 10.2 spaces	+8.2 parking credits
	Residential Use: 2, 1-bed unit = 2 spaces 1, 2-bed unit = 2 spaces	Credits allocated for remaining existing building = 9 spaces	
156 N. Center (Corner building)	Restaurant Use: 2,434 s.f. / 150 s.f. = 16 spaces	Previously purchased parking credits = 9 spaces	-19 parking credits
	Residential Use: 4, 2-bed unit = 8 spaces	Removal of 4 parking spaces	
	Total = 35 spaces	Total = 24.2 space credits	-10.8 parking credits

The Preliminary Site Plan approval was conditioned upon the applicant obtaining 10.8 additional parking credits to meet the parking requirement. City Council will consider this request. We recommend also making this a condition of the Final Site Plan approval, if granted.

Regarding loading/unloading, the Final Site Plan documents suggested locating this activity directly behind the building, as currently occurs for the Tuscan Café. However, since the time of their submission, the applicants have talked with the City Engineer about this. In response to this discussion, the City Engineer provided a memo (dated July 23, 2020) outlining her assessment, which is included in the Planning Commission packet. She does not recommend maintaining loading/unloading directly behind the building, as it would cause traffic issues to the parking lot driveway. She recommends locating the loading/unloading area on Dunlap St., but to the east of the parking lot driveway. This way, a truck parked at this location will not block any sight lines of cars entering/exiting the parking lot drive. This space could also be reserved for loading/unloading until 10am daily, and then revert to on-street parking for the remainder of the day. This location also eliminates the possibility that parked trucks would block the parking lot driveway or maneuvering lane. The applicant should respond to these recommendations, and how they will ensure trucks use the on-street loading/unloading area. We have included the illustration of the proposed location (shown by the yellow line) from the City Engineer's memo below.



We concur with the City Engineer’s assessment. In our opinion, it meets the Preliminary Site Plan approval condition of not worsening the loading/unloading situation in the area, and is not overly burdensome on the applicant. If agreed to, we would recommend conditioning any Final Site Plan approval on this loading/unloading location.

**Items to be Addressed:** 1. Recommend conditioning any approval on City Council granting 10.8 parking credits to meet the parking requirements for the expanded uses. 2. Applicant to respond to City Engineer’s recommendation for loading/unloading space on Dunlap St. (on the east side of the parking lot driveway), and how they will ensure trucks use the on-street loading/unloading space. 3. Recommend conditioning any approval on locating loading/unloading on Dunlap St., to the east of the parking lot driveway, as illustrated in the City Engineer’s review memo of July 23, 2020.

#### SITE ACCESS AND CIRCULATION

This project is proposing to use the public parking lot to accommodate vehicular access to the building. As discussed above, they are proposing to accomplish this by purchasing additional parking credits, and requesting approval of this from City Council.

Loading/unloading is discussed in the “Parking” section of this review.

In our previous review, we asked how trash will be handled. The applicant explained that the new restaurant and residential uses will use the existing dumpster in the public parking lot. This dumpster is currently used by the businesses in the area, and maintained by the DDA.

**Items to be Addressed:** None.

## LANDSCAPING

Landscaping information is required upon Final Site Plan Review.

Sheet A101 of the Final Site Plan set includes proposed plant material in two locations:

1. One street tree along Dunlap St. frontage.
2. Planters on the east (rear) of the building that contain ornamental grasses.

The plans state that the one replacement street tree will meet the DDA's requirements for street trees. The DDA has a list of acceptable street tree species, minimum size requirements, and tree grate and planting specifications. The species, size, and other details will be confirmed during the building permit process. However, the Planning Commission could condition any approval on the details of the streetscape amenities be consistent with the DDA specifications.

Regarding the one removed street tree, the Tree Preservation Ordinance only requires replacement of removed trees that are six-inches diameter at breast height or larger. The street tree to be removed is not that large, and therefore, no replacement is required by this ordinance. However, the Special Land Use standards require conformance with the Master Plan, which calls for continuation of streetscape amenities (street trees being one of them). With the addition of two parking spaces along Dunlap, there isn't enough room for a second street tree. We would consider the parking spaces to be of more importance than a second street tree.

Regarding the planters, Section 18.10.2 requires an underground irrigation system or readily available and acceptable water supply for any proposed landscaped area. Given the amount of hardscape around the planters, we would recommend some type of irrigation system to ensure that anything planted here survives. While the proposed ornamental grass will have some winter interest, we would suggest some type of evergreen shrub that will have a more substantial presence throughout the year.

Section 19.04 allows the Planning Commission to alter a landscape plan if it can show cause.

**Items to be Addressed:** *1. Recommend conditioning any approval on streetscape amenities (including street tree planting) to meet DDA specifications. 2. Provide irrigation or source of water, as determined by the Planning Commission. 3. Consider evergreen shrub alternative in planters along the rear of the building.*

## LIGHTING

Lighting information is required upon Final Site Plan Review. The Final Site Plan submittal includes manufacturer cut sheets of the proposed building-mounted lighting, and an illustration of an in-ground "guide light" fixture located in the pedestrian ramp at the rear of the building. A photometric plan has also been provided. The proposed light fixtures were approved as part of the Historic District Commission review on June 17, 2020.

Section 18.05 requires that the light source of proposed fixtures be shielded so that the source of light does not adversely affect driver or pedestrian visibility, or adjacent properties. It also limits the height of

light fixtures to 25 feet. Lastly, light levels cannot exceed 0.5 foot candles at the property line, but must provide one (1) foot candle of illumination in a parking lot.

The light source of the building-mounted light is shielded by the fixture design, and shouldn't impact people using the street, or neighboring properties. The light source of the ground-mounted fixture is also shielded by the fixture design.

The building-mounted lights are mounted at eight feet above the grade. The proposed height is well within the maximum of 25 feet.

Regarding lighting levels on the site, the photometric plan shows lighting levels in black text and red text. It is not clear what the figures apply to (i.e. one applies to grade, and the other to the building?). This should be clarified. We notice that several fixtures have light levels above the 0.5 maximum permitted, and need to be adjusted:

1. On N. Center, the most southerly fixture on N. Center shows light levels at 9.2 (in black text), and the middle fixture shows light levels at 4.4 (in red text).
3. On Dunlap, the fixture second from the western end of the building shows a light level of 2.1, and the next fixture to the east shows a light level of 4.4.

Note that the area has considerable ambient lighting provided by streetlights, and a large overhead light in the parking lot at the rear.

The ordinance also states that building mounted lighting intended to attract attention to the building and/or use and not strictly designed for security purposes shall not be permitted. Given the amount of ambient lighting, it appears that these fixtures are intended to attract attention to the building. The Planning Commission will need to make a determination.

Information about lighting the doorways on Dunlap and at the rear of the building should be provided. What type of lighting will be installed in the outside dining area, or on the balconies?

**Items to be Addressed:** 1. Adjust light levels of building-mounted fixtures that exceed the maximum 0.5 foot candle maximum. 2. Planning Commission to determine if building-mounted fixtures are intended to attract attention to the building rather than strictly designed for security purposes. 3. Provide information about proposed lighting at the doorways on Dunlap and the rear of the building, and describe lighting installed in the outdoor dining area and balconies.

## UTILITIES

The DPW Director has stated that a full engineering review will be required for this project once the Planning Commission has made its decision.

We defer to the DPW Director for comments regarding connection to utilities.

**Items to be Addressed:** Defer review of utility connections to DPW Director.

## FLOOR PLANS/ ELEVATIONS

Floor plans and elevations have been provided.

The second-floor floor plan has been modified to show one, two-bedroom residential unit above the Tuscan Café. This change was made due to the minimum unit size requirement in the Zoning Ordinance. This unit now complies with these regulations.

This project is within the Historic District. The Historic District Commission approved demolition of the building and rear addition, as well as the new construction at their June 17, 2020 meeting. The Final Site Plan submittal shows the plans approved by the Historic District Commission (elevations and perspective renderings), which meets the Preliminary Site Plan condition of approval.

The elevations show a three-story brick building with a tower accent feature at the corner, and an alcove below that can be used to accommodate out-door seating. This lot represents an entryway into downtown Northville, and in our opinion, the design creates a significant presence and opportunity for an active streetscape at this entryway. The street-front lower façades provide considerable “transparency” to enhance a restaurant use. Another condition of Preliminary Site Plan approval was to show the location of venting for the residential and restaurant uses on the elevations. This information needs to be provided.

The residential units on the upper floors have large windows and balconies. The addition over the Tuscan Café is set back so as not to compete with the historic façade below. The mechanical equipment and elevator shaft on the roof are screened and set back from the building street facades. The most recent submittal includes plans showing how the mechanical equipment will be screened, and illustrations showing sight-lines from the sidewalk. A pedestrian on either Dunlap or N. Center will not be able to see the mechanical equipment screens.

The majority of the façade is clad in brick, with stone caps. Engineered wood is used in various locations, which gives the building contemporary accents.

As requested, the applicant has provided perspectives and renderings of the proposed elevations from angles experienced by a pedestrian.

***Items to be Addressed:*** Location of venting for residential and restaurant uses shown on the elevations.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

We consider the proposal to be consistent with the vision for this area of the City as a mixed-use building with commercial uses on the first floor, and residential uses above. The form, height, and massing of the new building complements the downtown in our opinion, and provides a significant presence that announces a gateway into the downtown.

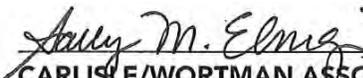
The Final Site Plan contains much of the required information to determine compliance with zoning requirements. We would recommend Final Site Plan approval, conditioned upon the items listed in “A”

150-156 N. Center St.  
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below, and after the applicant addresses the remaining comments (“B” – “H”) below to the Planning Commission’s satisfaction.

- A. We recommend conditioning any approval on the following:
  - 1. Applicant obtains approval from City Council to locate the pedestrian ramp at the rear of the building on City-owned property.
  - 2. Council grants 10.8 parking credits to meet the parking requirements for the expanded uses.
  - 3. locate loading/unloading on Dunlap St., to the east of the parking lot driveway, as illustrated in the City Engineer’s review memo of July 23, 2020.
  - 4. Streetscape amenities (including street tree planting) meet DDA specifications.
- B. Applicant to respond to City Engineer’s recommendation for loading/unloading space on Dunlap St. (on the east side of the parking lot driveway), and how they will ensure trucks use the on-street loading/unloading space.
- C. Provide irrigation or source of water, as determined by the Planning Commission, in planters along rear of building.
- D. Consider evergreen shrub alternative in planters along the rear of the building.
- E. Adjust light levels of building-mounted fixtures that exceed the maximum 0.5 foot candle maximum.
- F. Planning Commission to determine if building-mounted fixtures are intended to attract attention to the building rather than strictly designed for security purposes.
- G. Provide information about proposed lighting at the doorways on Dunlap and the rear of the building, and describe lighting installed in the outdoor dining area and balconies.
- H. Show location of venting for residential and restaurant uses on the elevations.
- I. Defer review of utility connections to DPW Director.

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