

PLANNING REPORT

Planning and Zoning Commission

Thursday, June 11, 2026

St. John's Memorial Preserve 25-047CP, 25-046Z-PDP

<https://dublinohiousa.gov/pzc/25-046/>

<https://dublinohiousa.gov/pzc/25-047/>

Case Summary

Address	6001 & 6041 Rings Road
Proposal	Rezoning 10.83 acres from R-2, Limited Suburban Residential and R1B (WTWP) to a Planned Unit Development (PUD)
Request	Review and feedback on a Concept Plan and recommendation of Rezoning/ Preliminary Development Plan (PDP)
Zoning	R-2 – Limited Suburban Residential District R1B (WTWP)
Planning Recommendation	<u>Discussion of Concept Plan (CP)</u> <u>Recommendation to City Council of approval of a Rezoning and Preliminary Development Plan with conditions</u>
Next Steps	Upon review and a recommendation of approval of the Rezoning and PDP by the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC), the applicant will be eligible to move forward with the request to City Council.
Applicant	Dave Guappone, G2 Planning Ernie Robertson and Darlene Becker, St. John's Lutheran Church
Case Manager	Sarah Tresouthick Holt, AICP, ASLA, Senior Planner (614) 410-4662 sholt@dublin.oh.us

Community Planning and Development



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Site Location Map

25-046Z-PDP/25-047CP - R-2/R-1B (WTWP)
 St John's Memorial Preserve



Site Features

- 1 Cramer Ditch
- 2 Existing House, 6041 Rings
- 3 Existing Church
- 4 Trinity Park/Brighton Park Neighborhoods



1. Request and Process

Request

The applicant is requesting simultaneous discussion of a Concept Plan and review and recommendation of a Rezoning/Preliminary Development Plan for a church-related PUD to allow a cemetery and memorial gardens. The applicant narrative states:

- Goal is expansion of the church's ministry by providing spiritual care for its members from cradle to grave.
- Existing cemetery, now off-site, has no room for expansion.
- Rezoning to a PUD to accommodate the uses.

The illustrative site plan is below.



Process

Recent Code updates, Case 25-005ADMC, have reclassified Concept Plans (CP) as non-binding feedback. Non-binding feedback was previously provided on this project by PZC via an optional Informal Request (INF) in April 2024. In order to not duplicate efforts, and with support from the Law Office, this applicant has provided the City with a CP application to meet the technical requirements of the new Code, recognizing that feedback has already been provided. Case History, below, elaborates on that feedback. The Commission is first requested to provide any additional comments relative to the CP.

Rezoning/PDP is the second step in a three step process heard by both PZC and City Council. The final determination for this step is made by City Council. Below are the key considerations for Rezoning and PDP:

- Alignment with the Community Plan, Future Land Use Plan, and Thoroughfare Plan.
 - Development text with regulations, site layout, open space, & street design.
1. Concept Plan (CP) – PZC Consideration (non-binding feedback)
 2. Rezoning/PDP -PZC Recommendation, City Council Determination
 3. Final Development Plan (FDP) -PZC Determination

No subdivision is needed or requested with this application.

2. Background

Site Summary

The 10.83-acre site consists of two parcels, one zoned R-2, Limited Suburban Residential District and the other R1B, a no-longer-used zoning category from Washington Township. It is located south of Rings Road, between Avery and Wilcox Roads. The church building and related parking lots are directly to the west of this site, and a City-owned historic cemetery, Sandy Corners, is at Avery and Rings Roads. Please note that Sheet C 1.0 in each submittal erroneously includes a parcel to the east of the rezoning request. A condition of approval is recommended to remove this parcel prior to City Council determination.

Case History

April 2024 - 24-026INF

PZC reviewed INF and made the following non-binding comments: overall support for project, concern for traffic, need for more screening around existing residence. Public comment included: need to preserve residential quality along Rings Road, cemetery screening on Rings, access/traffic, and parking impacts. Minutes are attached. *Changes since INF: removed previously-proposed second house on property; added screening; redirected second driveway for 6041 Rings Road to serve the memorial area; removed shelters from site; added potential for chapel; reconfigured access drive from west.*

Neighborhood Engagement

Neighborhood engagement started in early 2024 with staff attending. Since then, emails have been exchanged and additional neighborhood meetings, including staff, with minutes have been conducted. Initial, and subsequent, meetings were held with the adjacent owner directly east of the project, Matthew Garrido, and his neighbor to the east, Nelson Yoder.

Recently, homeowners at 5661 Wilcox, Bill and Judy Yoder, have made their concerns known to staff, including property values, the "commercial" use of the property, the proposed intensity

(perceived to be 50,000 interments), and lack of buffering. Staff has met with them twice, delivered application materials to them, and exchanged numerous phone calls. They were encouraged to put their issues in writing. Since raising their concerns, additional neighborhood concerns have been presented (attached); many letters are from residents in the Brighton Park and Trinity Park neighborhoods, east of Wilcox Road.

As a result, the church held another community meeting on May 20, 2026 to address concerns, which staff attended. Those who sent emails were specifically invited so as to dispel any misinformation. Approximately 20 people attended. A number of residents from Trinity Park spoke against the cemetery, saying that they simply do not want it in their neighborhood and they would suffer loss of real estate value. Residents from the Village of Balgriffen, across the street from the project site supported the proposal because it would be quiet.

The church again met with Matthew Garrido on May 19, 2026 and he made a number of requests that could potentially mitigate the project, which the applicant has made. Staff understands that nevertheless Mr. Garrido remains opposed to the project. A summary email to Mr. Garrido is attached.

Both the Development Text and the PDP have been updated to incorporate community feedback and clarify issues of concern. Revised submittal documents are posted on the City's website and included herein. This report reflects those updates. A recommended condition of approval seeks to address outstanding concerns.

After the community meeting and subsequent updates, on May 21, staff received notebooks for each Commissioner from the Yoders outlining their concerns for the project. Despite the community meeting clarifications to the contrary, the previous perceptions remain in these documents. The notebooks were hand-delivered to PZC members, along with packet materials, on the 5th of June; pertinent staff was also supplied the documents. The materials were also scanned and added to the Public Comments .pdf, attached. Since the May 20 neighborhood meeting, numerous comments in favor of the project have also been submitted, which are attached.

RLUIPA

The Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Department of Justice notes that Religious Land Use and Institutionalized Persons Act (RLUIPA) of 2000 is a Federal law that protects religious institutions and individuals from discrimination in zoning and landmarking laws. Specifically, churches cannot be treated on less than equal terms with nonreligious uses, meaning that any religious application shall be handled and enforced in exactly the same manner as nonreligious uses. The St. John's church was established at this location over 120 years ago.

3. City Plans and Policies

Future Land Use Plan

The west portion of the church ownership where the current church and parking lot exist has an *Envision Dublin* recommended Future Land Use (FLU) of Civic/Community to recognize the current church use. This location is not a part of the proposed PUD but would work in concert with the PUD. The eastern ownership, the subject of this request, is identified as Residential Low Density, which includes places of worship as a supporting use. A note (page 47 of *Envision Dublin*) that applies to all land use categories states that while supporting uses are to be combined with principal uses, some uses that do not alter the intent of the district may be

located without a listed principal/particular use. Further descriptors of the Residential Low Density FLU include that buildings are intended to be 1-2 stories and integrated into natural settings, set back from the road. Open space is to be preserved and generally passive in nature. Staff believes that this proposal is a supporting use that is in keeping with the intent of the FLU.

The site is not located within a Special Area Plan nor does it have new road connections or expansions identified in the *Envision Dublin Multimodal Thoroughfare Plan*. Rings Road in this location is not identified as having a special corridor character.

4. Site

Cramer Ditch and its floodplain bisect the site, running east-west. The ditch is treed and forms a natural division between the north and south portions of the site. The southern edge of the site is adjacent to Ted Kaltenbach Park, and a shared use path roughly parallels this southern property line. The east side of the site is adjacent to privately-owned residential land, separated intermittently with a vegetated border. The west side of the property is bounded by church land, including a ballfield and community gardens.

Access to the subject site is currently gained via two driveways to 6041 Rings Road and another driveway at 6001 Rings Road. No vehicular or pedestrian access exists from the south. Cara Road, an extension of Rings Road from the west, turns to allow access to the church's ballfield, but does not touch the subject property.

5. Project

A stated main goal of the project is to preserve the existing character of the land, while being able to use it as a memorial preserve that would utilize both traditional and low-impact burial methods. The applicant states that 65% of the site will be kept green, largely as it exists today, with 35% developed for the cemetery uses. Several subareas are proposed as elaborated below and in the proposed Development Text. Each subarea is detailed separately, where preservation, permitted uses, locations, setbacks, and specific design criteria are identified.

The recently-modified Text emphasizes that the project is intended for this church's members only with the potential use by local sister congregations: no non-member burials are permitted. A total of 2850 ground burials are permitted (2800 in Subarea B, 50 in Subarea E), plus a total number of 120 columbaria. These numbers were clarified and reduced in response to the latest community meeting. The total number of burials per year is anticipated to remain at approximately 10-12. The Text limits the timing of memorial services to off-peak traffic hours: between 9:00 am and 4:30 pm Monday – Friday and times Saturday or Sunday when not conflicting with mass schedules. This commitment addresses the traffic concerns discussed at INF, as does the new main access through church property and the one-way driveway loop described below.

Additional structures include a chapel in the center of the site, the columbaria, memorial marker options, and sculptures/religious markers. Throughout the Text, these elements are identified by maximum size, to provide a conservative assumption plus a specific review requirement for the City. Further, the different types of burial markers are intentionally grouped together for a cohesive, aesthetic appearance, as shown on the PDP.

Also throughout the Text are provisions that refinement to the chapel architecture and design of hardscape/landscape in a variety of locations may be considered administratively based on applicable Code criteria, allowing for independent funding and timing. When in keeping with the original intent of the Rezoning/PDP, and the approved FDP (final step), administrative approvals are effective and efficient, as reflected in the Code changes adopted in Ordinance 01-24. Code § 153.048(K)(1) and (2) specifically addresses this approach relative to PUDs, where the original intent of the PUD is met and the modifications do not alter the basic design or conditions imposed upon the rezoning. Should staff find that a potential change does alter intent and/or conditions, the applicant would be required to amend their application or submit an Amended Final Development Plan (AFDP) application for review and consideration by PZC.

Layout

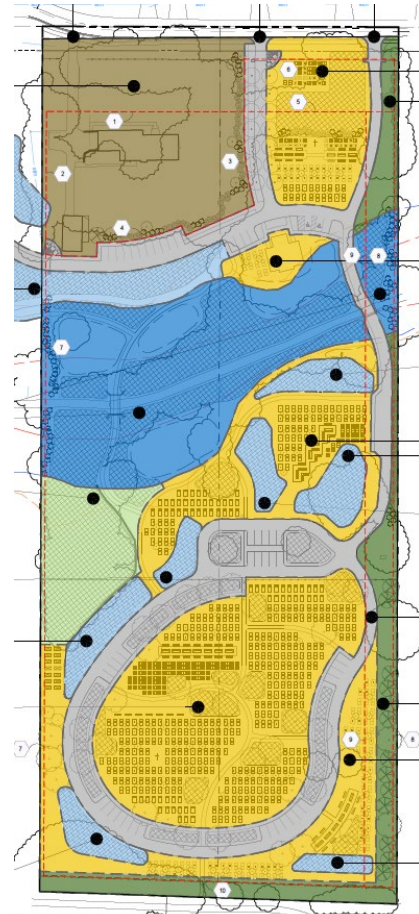
The applicant is showing preservation of the Cramer Ditch floodplain area and related vegetation as an environmental feature and organizing element for the proposal. Buffer areas are located along the eastern edge of the property, adjacent to 5965 Rings Road, and the south edge, adjacent to the City's park.

To provide direct vehicular and pedestrian access from the existing church to the proposed memorial preserve, a new, gated private driveway and walkway is shown from the church parking lot into the subject site. This access leads to a network of private drive loops with occasional parking to serve the various planned memorial areas. Access along Rings Road will also be gated: see more detail in the Transportation and Mobility section. A 5' wide public sidewalk is shown along Rings Road to add to the overall area's pedestrian network.

Moving south, below Cramer Ditch, are additional memorial areas, a preserved natural green space on the west side, and the southern buffer. A small area of additional community gardens is shown along the west edge of the site, just below the natural green space. Most required detention ponds are appropriately located near Cramer Ditch.

Subareas

Below is a detailed matrix of the proposed Subareas, including the uses for each, associated setbacks, and more specific notes. Briefly, Subarea A (brown) is for the existing residential structure at 6041 Rings Road, with setbacks and uses remaining the same. Subarea B (yellow) is the main portion of the cemetery, and has a number of discrete sites on the Subarea Plan and in the Development Text. This Subarea contains the ground plots, columbaria, scatter gardens, art/sculpture, and the chapel. Columbaria structures and raised markers have the same setback requirements as the existing house in Subarea A to minimize impacts on Rings Road and neighboring properties, as discussed at INF.



Subarea Map

Subarea C (dark blue) is the floodplain and is set aside specifically for appropriate management, pedestrian circulation, and scatter gardens. Subarea D (dark green) is only for landscape buffering, with varying widths as shown on the Buffer Sections, Sheet L4.01. Subarea E (light green) is an existing natural green space, reserved for the church's current gatherings and events, pedestrian facilities, scatter gardens, and limited ground and columbaria plots. Subarea F (light blue) is specifically for stormwater facilities, so that they can be managed appropriately.

Subarea Descriptions				
Subarea	Uses	Size	Setbacks	Notes
A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Residence • Small church gatherings • New entry drive/gate from west 	1.4 ac	Front: 75' (existing) West: 5' East: 13' from curb cut 2 Rear: 5' from new access driveway	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • House is used as a residence associated with the church, often for missionaries. Classes and gatherings also held here. • Fencing permitted to match existing. • Landscape buffer provided in response to INF comments. • East and rear setbacks based on internal location, not adjacent to external uses/ownership.
B	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Traditional, urn, and natural burials (max 2800 plots) • Columbarium (max 120 structures) • Flush markers, pillow markers, headstones permitted • Scatter Gardens permit benches, pillow markers, urns, and small columbaria (< 4' high, w/ < 4 niches) • Memorial markers, sculpture, art limited to 1 > 3' tall for each zone, 20' max ht • Seating/benches • Retaining walls • Pedestrian walks • Open space 	3.89 ac	Front raised markers/columbarium: 75' Front flush markers: 10' West: 5' East pavement: 5' (subject of condition) East columbarium/raised markers: 40' South: 20'	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of ground burial is permitted to be flexible, where total max plots are not exceeded. • Fencing permitted to match existing. • Columbaria/raised markers on Rings Road have deeper setbacks to match existing residential; although shown beyond that setback and behind additional vegetated buffer. • Flush markers permitted to have 10' setback on Rings; will be minimally visible. • Columbaria on east side have deeper setbacks to minimize impact. • Chapel construction dependent on funding; may occur in any phase.

Subarea Descriptions				
Subarea	Uses	Size	Setbacks	Notes
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open-air chapel (area B2 only, max 1725 SF) 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chapel noise subject to adopted City Noise Ordinances. • Chapel design to be finalized at FDP; adjustments permitted administratively. • Scatter garden landscape/hardscape to be approved administratively on as-needed basis.
C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Floodplain • Vehicular circulation • Pedestrian circulation • Open space • Seating areas • Scatter gardens • Landscape buffer • Environmental limitations 	1.74 ac	None Location determined by FEMA maps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East edge has min 8' wide landscape buffer (subject of condition). • No burial structures permitted. • One additional pedestrian bridge may be permitted administratively.
D	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape buffer 	.67 ac	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • East buffer = 36" min ht. w/natural characteristics, 5-45' wide (subject of condition). • South buffer = existing trees, fencing to match existing, min 20' wide.
E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Natural green space • 50 urn plots • Church gatherings/ events (existing) • Seating/benches • Vehicular drives, parking • Pedestrian walkways • Open space • Scatter gardens 	.46 ac	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains existing church uses and events. • Urn plots allow only flush and pillow markers to minimize tree impacts. • Memorial markers, sculpture, art < 3' ht.

Subarea Descriptions				
Subarea	Uses	Size	Setbacks	Notes
F	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stormwater facilities • Pedestrian boardwalks • Scatter gardens • Riparian plantings • Open spaces 	.94 ac	NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details to be finalized at FDP.
G	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private drives • Parking and parking lot islands • Sidewalks • Entry/exit features/gates • Landscape • Lighting • Signage 		NA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gates locked w/Knox Box dusk to dawn. • Gates to be wrought iron appearance, max 6' tall; details finalized at FDP. • Lighting to be approved administratively, if desired based on Code requirements.

Phasing

Phase 1 is largely north of Cramer Ditch and includes most vehicular/pedestrian routes, plus all site buffering; Phase 2 is proximate and south of Cramer Ditch; and Phase 3 is in the southern third of the site. See Phasing Plan, page L7.01 in Text. No timeframes are provided, or known, for these phases because they will be need-driven. The church currently has 10-12 burials per year remotely, and this is expected to remain consistent. Since no public improvements are required as a result of this request, timing is not a concern.

The Development Text General Provisions indicates that the third phase will not be available for burials until such time as the previous phases are full.

Phasing and Ownership/Maintenance		
Phase	Items Included	Ownership/Maintenance
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ped/veh circulation • Entry features/gates • Parking, sidewalks • Rings Road sidewalk • All landscape screening/buffering • Some stormwater facilities • Floodplain plantings • Ingress/egress gates • Fencing, temp along Phase 2/3 line and permanent • Subarea E improvements, incl. outdoor program space 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All privately owned/maintained by church. • Gates/property access managed in Phase 1 to address INF comments. • Buffering provided in Phase 1 to address INF comments (subject of condition).
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Memorial spaces • Open-air chapel (funding permitting) • Pedestrian walkways • Plantings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All privately owned/maintained by church. • Chapel permitted to be built in any phase.

Phasing and Ownership/Maintenance		
Phase	Items Included	Ownership/Maintenance
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Memorial spaces: not available until all spaces within Phases 1 and 2 are occupied Roads, parking, walks in south portion of site Demo of temp fence Permanent fencing, south site Remaining stormwater facilities/retention wall Plantings Open-air chapel (funding permitting) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All privately owned/maintained by church. Developed if/as demand dictates.

Development Standards

Chapel Architecture and Materials

The applicant describes the outdoor chapel as a “contemporary interpretation of a religious structure”. Maximum footprint is noted at 1725 SF, with a maximum height to the top of the roof of 35’. The PDP indicates 26’ to the roof peak. The applicant intends to maintain some flexibility with this building, and 35’ is the same as rural residential zoning categories in the City, including 6041 Rings Road’s current zoning. The structure will be generally open-air without typical doors, and have minimal windows. See page A 2.4 for more elevations. The Development Text indicates that any noise coming from the chapel will be subject to the City’s Noise Ordinance. As memorial services are solemn occasions, staff has no concerns.



Northwest façades

Materials are described as either smooth or textured CMU, ranging in tone from light to dark. Standing seam metal, slate, or asphalt shingles are anticipated for the roof in a range of black, grey, or natural colors. The slatted walls would be metal or preserved wood. A wood burning fireplace is incorporated, with a bold chimney and wood storage feature on the exterior of the structure. The windows proposed on the south side of the structure will be aluminum frame, colored to match the wall slats.

CMU is not typically a material permitted by the City, either in the Residential Appearance Standards or in specific PUD texts. The applicant states that they are seeking a timeless, durable, and natural pavilion-like structure where the focus remains on the activity within. The Commission is permitted to favorably recommend alternative materials via the PUD process. Staff supports the architecture as shown, especially since the structure is small, is located well-within the site, and will be unobtrusive to neighbors or public streets.

The design and materials will be refined at FDP and will inform any future amendments, if necessary. Lighting, if desired, should be included at FDP.

Fencing, Gates, Headstones/Pillow Markers, Columbaria, Art

These elements are not considered true structures; however, they will play an important visible part in the project character. To that end, the applicant will be retaining, repairing, and expanding the existing 4-rail wood fence along the Rings Road frontage. Future locations for this fencing type include a temporary installation between Phases 2 and 3, running east-west. This will be removed once Phase 3 commences. At that time, permanent fencing of the same design will be installed along the southern edge of the property in concert with the previously-provided landscaped buffer. Staff supports the use of this fence type in order to help maintain neighborhood character and privacy for the project.

Metal gates and columns are proposed at the private drive access points. Materials are intended to have a wrought iron appearance and may be made of aluminum, steel, and/or wood. The columns are described as masonry: details will be refined at FDP. Installation of these features will be in Phase 1.

Plot marker types may be used for each burial type according to the language for each Subarea; however, each marker type will be confined to specific, designated areas per the PDP/FDP, thus creating a cohesive design. Where headstones are used, they are limited to a maximum of 48" long, 18" wide, and 36" tall. Pillow markers shall be a maximum of 18" tall and no larger than 6 SF. Flush markers are limited to 7 SF and a maximum of 4" tall. All markers will be limited in color range, which will be determined at FDP.

A maximum of 120 columbaria for all phases and sizes are permitted by the Development Text. Maximum size is indicated at 20' long, 3' wide, and 8' in height, and a more typical size is indicated on Sheet A-2.6. As previously noted, this maximum size allows flexibility for the church to choose from a variety of options as the design is finalized and needs are understood, yet caps the size to ensure neighborhood and contextual compatibility. Small columbaria are permitted in the scatter gardens, and their number is included in the 120 maximum. As previously noted, the columbaria have additional setbacks along both Rings Road and the east property line to ensure compatibility with public and private views. Anticipated materials are steel, concrete, brick, stone, glass, and/or aluminum. Further refinement of sizes and materials will occur at FDP.



Potential columbaria option

Art, religious markers, and/or sculpture is permitted within each area identified in Subarea B. The tallest pieces, at 20', are limited to one per identified site, for a total of five. Other sculptures, such as inscribed boulders, shall be less than 3' tall. Installation is dependent upon funding. Staff originally thought we should review these elements; however, under further examination, this would prove burdensome to everyone, and the FDP will identify where these elements would be located. Therefore a recommended condition states that this requirement may be removed from the Development Text.

Lighting

Any new lighting, if desired, shall meet the requirements of the City's Code, per the Development Text. At FDP, the applicant should provide a general idea of where any lighting may be requested. Staff will review fixtures, lamps, and photometrics prior to any installations.

Signage

No signage is proposed at this point, and is not included as a permitted use in the Development Text.

Landscape/Hardscape

Phases 1 and 2 indicate a combination of manicured lawn around 6041 Rings Road to maintain a residential appearance, no-mow seed mixes in a majority of the grassed areas under trees and between burial groupings, and a native prairie seed mix in the detention and buffer areas. In Phase 3, a mix of all three types of grass is shown, with a majority being the manicured lawn in the burial groupings. This approach is appropriate to maintain the existing character of the site and neighborhood.

The provided Tree Preservation Plan has been reviewed in accordance with Code § 153.140, and is acceptable. The applicant will preserve 90% of the existing trees. Subareas C and E contain the majority of trees, and the permitted uses within each area focus on environmental preservation.

Planted landscape and hardscape areas will be further defined at FDP, per that process. For the scatter garden locations, either in Subarea B or in Subarea C, any hardscape or landscape details may be further refined in an Administrative Approval as they are needed and/or clarified. The permitted additional pedestrian bridge over Cramer Ditch shall have an Administrative Approval to ensure that floodplain requirements are adequately addressed.

A topic of discussion at the May 20 community meeting was that the east buffer shown between the project and the Garrido property is too narrow and not tall enough. In order to mitigate, staff is recommending that this buffer be increased to a 20' width, including a row of 6' tall evergreen trees/shrubs at installation. Additional shrub materials within this buffer are anticipated to provide a layered effect and maintain the desired natural appearance. This would then force the easternmost driveway farther from the property line, and based on floodplain limitations, it is recommended that the driveway move as far west as practical.

6. Stormwater Management, Utilities, and Easements

The applicant has set aside Subarea C for the sole protection of Cramer Ditch, including the 100-year floodplain. Additionally, Subarea F is specifically for the detention facilities. This approach ensures clarity of uses, including prohibited uses, and proper management.

The proposal meets the requirements of the City of Dublin Chapter 53 Stormwater Management and Stream Protection Code for the PDP level of review. The applicant will continue to work with the Division of Engineering to demonstrate further appropriate compliance at FDP, and minor comments have been provided to that end.

No utilities or easements are required for this project.

7. Traffic and Circulation

The existing church, outside the project area, has two access points off of Rings Road, which lead directly to their parking lots. There are approximately 164 parking spaces, plus 8 handicap spaces. The project site currently has two driveways for 6041 Rings Road and another driveway at 6001 Rings Road.

A Trip Generation Memo fulfilled the traffic study requirements for this rezoning because the proposed use generates fewer trips than the existing Sunday services (typically 52+/- vehicles), and no new curb cuts are added to Rings Road. The Memo states that typically 30-40 vehicles are anticipated for memorial services, and that one memorial service per month is expected. As previously noted, the Development Text limits the timing of funerals to off-peak hours, and staff is satisfied with this approach.

Primary access to the project site will be through the church's parking lot via a new connector driveway. The premise behind creating this new internal access, at significant expense to the church, is to ensure that Rings Road will be minimally impacted; otherwise, funeral access could use curb cuts 2 and 3 on Rings. Nevertheless the church did state that they would direct funeral traffic to use the existing western parking lot access off Rings Road at the May 20 meeting. The west driveway at 6041 Rings Road will remain as access for Subarea A only. Curb cut 2 on the east side of 6041 Rings Road is to be converted to entry-only for the memorial grounds, and curb cut 3 will be converted to exit-only for the same. Gates will be open from dawn to dusk. Since the drives are relatively narrow to maintain a rural character, 8-foot-wide pulloffs are located periodically to allow vehicles to pass one another within the memorial area. These also serve as drop-off points for pedestrians.

Driveway construction details will be determined at FDP. These drives will be private: they are wholly on church property, not serving the general public. The applicant is fully responsible for the ownership and maintenance of these facilities, and the Washington Township Fire Department requires that they be maintained 365 days per year for safety and access. The Development Text confirms this.

Pedestrian access from the church will be adjacent to the new vehicular access drive from the parking lot. Additional sidewalks and paths will be provided within the site as shown. Concrete sidewalks will be provided around the open-air chapel in the center of the site, and a new 5' sidewalk will be added along the Rings Road frontage as part of Phase 1.

8. Plan Review

Preliminary Development Plan	
Criteria	Review
1. The proposed development is consistent with the purpose, intent and applicable standards of the Zoning Code.	Criterion Met: This proposal is consistent with the purpose, intent and applicable development standards of the Zoning Code requirements. Establishment of a PUD successfully addresses the unique desired use of the site, as well as the site conditions. The standards are met, as elaborated below.

2. The proposed development is in conformity with Community Plan, Thoroughfare Plan, Bikeway Plan, and other adopted plans or portions thereof as they may apply and will not unreasonably burden the existing street network.
3. The proposed development advances the general welfare of the City and immediate vicinity and will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding areas.
4. The proposed uses are appropriately located in the City so that the use and value of property within and adjacent to the area will be safeguarded.

Criterion Met: The proposed PUD conforms with the *Envision Dublin* FLU map and the Residential Low Density category intent. It is not affected by the Thoroughfare or Bikeway Plans, and the new Rings Road sidewalk will meet Plan goals. A Trip Generation Memo confirms no unreasonable burden on the existing street network, especially when combined with the Development Text commitment limiting funerals to off-peak hours and not during weekend church services.

Criterion Met with Conditions: The proposed PUD promotes orderly development that, when combined with the recommended conditions, is respectful to the surrounding neighborhood character and environmental conditions. Use is limited to church members. No impediment to anticipated development or improvement exists.

Criterion Met with Conditions: The applicant has conducted numerous neighborhood meetings to understand concerns and dispel misinformation. The proposed uses are located such that the existing rural character of the surrounding area is preserved. Existing building setbacks along Rings Road are maintained and applied to the columbaria and raised markers in this location. Flush markers are permitted a 10' setback from Rings, based on their minimally-visible nature. The buffer to the adjacent residence is recommended to be increased, with the height of trees/shrubs also increased and the related driveway moved away from the property line to the greatest extent practicable. 65% of the site, and 90% of the trees will be preserved.

Neighbors have expressed concerns about a 12% drop in property values, based on an AI search. The same search also mentions that there may be hidden benefits, including the presence of quiet, protected green space, good maintenance, open sightlines, and privacy. A specific article found at <https://www.homelight.com/blog/property-value-next-to-cemetery/> provides more data. Closer neighbors at the Village of Balgriffen expressed support, due to the quiet nature of the use.

5. Proposed residential development will have sufficient open space areas that meet the objectives of the Community Plan.

Not Applicable. The PUD will not be residential in nature; however, an existing residence will remain for living and small church gathering purposes as it is currently used. Existing setbacks will be maintained along Rings Road to further maintain character and open space.

6. The proposed development respects the unique characteristic of the natural features and protects the natural resources of the site.

Criterion Met: Cramer Ditch, its floodplain, and vegetation have been shown as a separate Subarea to ensure that only appropriate uses are permitted.

Further, existing and future buffer plantings and a tree stand are also set aside as specific Subareas to ensure their protection and appropriate use. The Tree Preservation Plan is acceptable as presented.

The existing rural-character fence will be used throughout the site. The chapel architecture is unobtrusive and of similar size to adjacent residences. Preservation of 90% of the existing trees, combined with the use of native grass mixes will further maintain rural character.

7. Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, retention and/or necessary facilities have been or are being provided.

Criterion Met: The proposal will meet the requirements of the City of Dublin Chapter 53 Stormwater Management and Stream Protection Code by constructing multiple stormwater management detention basins, storm sewer pipes, and associated structures. Access driveways are acceptable as shown. All internal driveways are to be private. No additional utilities are required.

8. Adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress designed to minimize traffic congestion on the surrounding public streets and to maximize public safety and to accommodate adequate pedestrian and bike circulation systems so that the proposed development provides for a safe, convenient and non-conflicting circulation system for motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians.

Criterion Met: Ingress and egress locations on Rings Road are essentially unchanged, and their use will be diminished by conversion to gated one-ways. Primary access to the site will be via the internal driveway from the existing church parking lot, so impacts on surrounding roads will be minimal and less than Sunday services.

The project will add a sidewalk to the Rings Road frontage of the two subject parcels to improve neighborhood pedestrian and bike circulation.

9. The relationship of buildings and structures to each other and to such other facilities provides for the coordination and integration of this development within the PUD and the larger community and maintains the image of Dublin as a quality community.

Criterion Met: The open-air chapel has a small footprint and uses the same height requirements for single family residential structures in the current zone and surrounding areas. Further, this structure is located well within the development area, away from neighboring homes. 6041 Rings Road will maintain its setbacks and height, and therefore, will not cause additional impacts on the community.

The columbaria, raised markers, and art pieces are also limited in number, size, and location. These elements match existing residential setbacks, on both the north and east sides of the project to help maintain community character. They will be grouped together in a designed fashion to provide an orderly aesthetic.

10. The density, building gross floor area, building heights, setbacks, distances between buildings and structures, yard space, design and layout of open space systems and parking areas, traffic accessibility and other elements having a bearing on the overall acceptability of the development plans contribute to the orderly development of land within the City.

Criterion Met with Conditions: Density, GFA, and yard space, do not apply to this proposal; however, building and element heights, setbacks, and distances to adjacent uses are all found to be appropriate as previously described. All site buffering is to be installed in Phase I. The east buffer is recommended by staff to be enhanced in both width and height to provide further compatibility.

Traffic and parking is well laid out and will function appropriately for the intended use and phasing plan. The open space is appropriately arranged around the preserved Cramer Ditch floodplain.

11. Adequate provision is made for storm drainage within and through the site so as to maintain, as far as practicable, usual and normal swales, water courses and drainage areas.

Criterion Met: The proposal will meet the requirements of the City of Dublin Chapter 53 Stormwater Management and Stream Protection Code by constructing stormwater management detention basins, storm sewer pipes, and associated structures using a naturalized aesthetic. Details will be finalized at FDP.

12. The design, site arrangement, and anticipated benefits of the proposed development justify any deviation from the standard development regulations included in the Zoning Code or Subdivision Regulations and that any such deviations are consistent with the intent of the PUD regulations.

Criterion Met with Conditions: The proposed site layout is responsive to surrounding context and in accordance with the intent of the Community Plan, especially when combined with the recommended condition of approval regarding buffer width and height. The flexibility provided by the PUD process allows for deviations from building materials for the chapel, as described herein, and staff is supportive. The PUD intent has been met. No further subdivision is needed, so Subdivision Regulations do not apply.

13. The proposed building design meets or exceeds the quality of the building designs in the surrounding area and all applicable appearance standards of the City.

Criterion Met: The Development Text includes material and design standards for the one proposed building. Proposed materials vary from the traditional; however, in this context and as an open-air structure that needs to be durable, the requested CMU block is appropriate. Supporting materials of wood and metal will provide a high-quality, timeless appearance.

Columbaria are limited in size, as described in the Development Text. Likewise are the headstones, pillow markers, and flush markers. Materials are appropriate.

14. The proposed phasing of development is appropriate for the existing and proposed infrastructure and is sufficiently coordinated among the various phases to ultimately yield the intended overall development.

Criterion Met: The proposed phasing has been determined to be reasonable and appropriate, including for circulation and stormwater facilities. Key required elements for compatibility, such as access gates and buffering, are in Phase 1. Future phases are to be determined by need and are not opened for burial until initial phases are full.

15. The proposed development can be adequately serviced by existing or planned public improvements and not impair the existing public service system for the area.

Not Applicable: All public improvements in this location are adequate, and public services will not be impaired with this development. No additional services or improvements are needed.

16. The applicant's contributions to the public infrastructure are consistent with the Multimodal Thoroughfare Plan and are sufficient to service the new development.

Not Applicable: The project will build a new sidewalk along the south side of Rings Road to support the Multimodal Thoroughfare Plan. No additional infrastructure is needed.

Recommendation

Discussion question for Concept Plan:

- 1) Does the Commission have additional comments beyond the Informal discussion of April 2024?

Planning Recommendation: Recommendation to City Council of Approval of Rezoning and Preliminary Development Plan with conditions:

- 1) Prior to the City Council Rezoning/PDP hearing, the applicant shall correct the Vicinity Map, Sheet C 1.0, to reflect the correct rezoning request.
- 2) Prior to the City Council Rezoning/PDP hearing, the applicant shall make the following changes to all documents:
 - a. Increase the east landscape buffer to 20' wide, with continuous evergreen elements that are 6'-tall at installation, to be installed during Phase 1;
 - b. Subsequently move the easternmost driveway location away from the buffer, more interior to the site to the greatest extent possible; and
 - c. Remove the Development Text statement that administrative approvals are required for all art, religious markers, and sculpture in G of Subarea B.