

19-063MPR – GERMAIN HONDA, PHASE II

Summary

This is a request for review and approval of a Minor Project Review with Parking Plan and one Administrative Departure. The proposal is for parking lot and landscape modifications for an existing car dealership located on a 12.7-acre site.

Site Location

Southwest of the intersection of Sawmill Road and Dublin Center Drive.

Zoning

BSD-SCN, Bridge Street District - Sawmill Center Neighborhood

Property Owners

CAR GER OH DUB LLC

Applicant/Representative

Mike Close, Esq. and Tom Hart, Esq., Isaac Wiles

Applicable Land Use Regulations

Zoning Code Section 153.066

Case Manager

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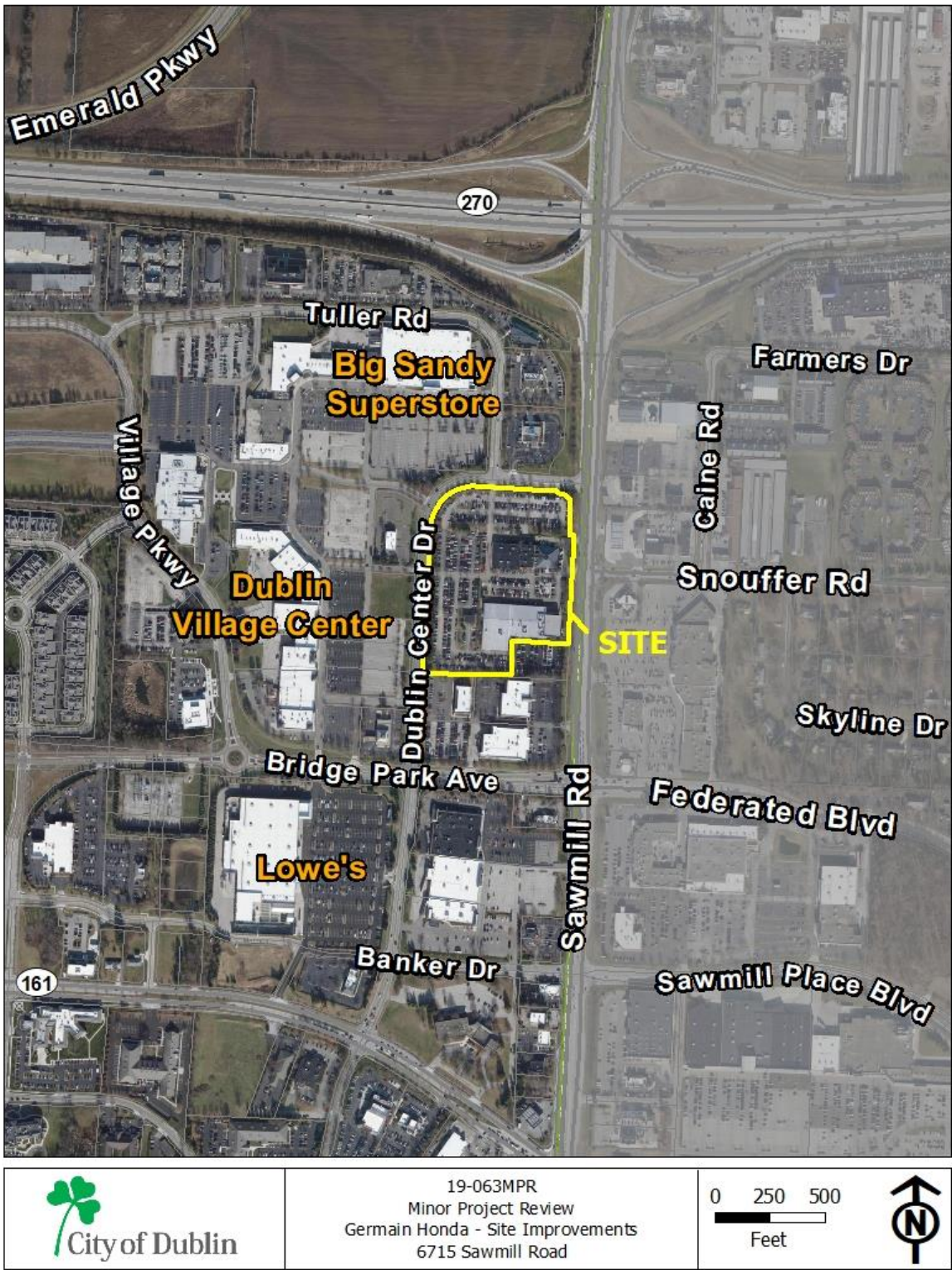
Next Steps

Upon review and approval of a Minor Project Review by the Administrative Review Team (ART), the applicant will be eligible to submit to Building Standards for a Site Only Permit.

Zoning Map



1. Context Map



2. Overview

Background

Originally, the dealership campus developed as multiple separate sites including a gas station, office, and automotive sales facility. As a result, the configuration of buildings, access points, and parking lots is not as functional for the daily operation of the existing single-use automotive sales campus as desired.

Most recently in 2018, the Administrative Review Team (ART) reviewed and approved the demolition of a vacant 2,000-square-foot building located in the southeast portion of the site, and modifications to parking, landscaping, and lighting for a .64-acre portion of the campus.

Previously in 2012, the site was rezoned as part of an area rezoning (Ord. 08-12) from CC, Community Commercial, to BSD-SCN, Bridge Street District – Sawmill Center Neighborhood. The BSD Code and area rezoning permitted pre-existing uses and structures to remain within the district, and provides limited guidance on treatment of existing structures and sites.

In this case, the proposed parking, landscaping, lighting, and ancillary site modifications fall within the limits of a Minor Project, which is approvable by the ART. The applicant has indicated the proposal before ART is part of a multi-phase plan for site improvements and exterior modifications to establish a cohesive campus character, create parking efficiencies and generally tidy overgrown and outdated landscaping. Approval of a Parking Plan to document types, number, and location of parking and vehicle storage facilities is required with this application.

Site Characteristics

Natural Features

No natural features are present on the site.

Surrounding Land Use and Development Character

North: BSD-SCN: Commercial – Restaurant

East: BSD-SCN: Commercial – Dublin Village Center

South: BSD-SCN: Commercial – Retail

West: Right-of-way: City of Columbus – Sawmill Road

Road, Pedestrian and Bike Network

The automotive campus has approximately 850 feet of frontage with three access points on Sawmill Road (east property line). There are two additional access points located on Dublin Center Drive, which is located north and west of the property.

There are no pedestrian or bicycle facilities along Sawmill Road or Dublin Center Drive. A single pedestrian crossing with no connectivity is provided at the intersection of Sawmill Road and Snouffer Road. The applicant is required, with the final phase, to provide a five foot sidewalk, within an easement dedicated to the City, along the extent of the Phase I (approximately 150 feet), which was previously approved. The City would like to have additional connectivity along the extent of the dealership's Sawmill Road frontage, which will be discussed with the next phase of project.

Utilities

Water service is provided to the building proposed to be demolished via a six-inch line crossing Sawmill Road and running north of the building. A 12-inch storm sewer runs parallel to the water service north of the building. Sanitary sewer is provided via an eight-inch line along the south property line.

Proposal

The Minor Project is requested for a comprehensive parking plan, landscape modifications, site access modifications, and parking lot improvements including pavement, lighting, and the relocation of a dumpster enclosure. The existing buildings are not proposed to be modified with this application. The Sawmill Road frontage landscaping is not proposed to be modified with this application. This application does not result in the expansion of an existing non-conforming site. The proposed modifications result in greater Code compliance with present standards.

Access

The applicant is proposing modified site access with this application. The proposal is to remove the northern most access point on Sawmill Road in exchange for an additional access point along Dublin Center Drive in the southwest portion of the site. The modified access meets the intent of the Bridge Street District (BSD) to limit access points on high volume, high priority Principal Frontage Streets. Sawmill Road is identified as a Corridor Connector Street in the Thoroughfare Plan, which is the highest volume, highest priority Street Family classification within the BSD. The City's Engineering Division has reviewed the proposed modification and is supportive. Continued coordination with the City Engineer throughout Building Permit review and Construction process is essential.

Parking Plan

The BSD Code applicability for Site Development Standards, which include the Parking standards provides an exception for existing sites and existing structures that are non-conforming. Compliance with standards of the zoning district is required "to the extent practicable" by Zoning Code Section 153.004. In the case of parking, the BSD Code allows the required reviewing body to assess and approve alternate parking needs as part of a Parking Plan.

Required parking for vehicle sales, rental and repair is 2 per 1,000 square feet of building plus 1 per 2,000 square feet of outdoor display, and limited to 150-percent of the maximum parking permitted. In this case, the existing campus as a whole exceeds the parking permitted for new development within the BSD.

The applicant has indicated a primary objective of the proposed site modifications is to increase efficiency of the site layout to allow for safer vehicular circulation and greater inventory storage. Presently, the applicant stores some vehicles off-site to accommodate the dealership's inventory fluctuations. The applicant has indicated it is the goal to eliminate off-site vehicle storage with implementation of the proposed improvements.

The applicant is requesting review and approval of a Parking Plan for the entire remaining portion of campus that was not previously reviewed and approved as part of Phase I. Today the

site contains 838 parking spaces, inclusive of Phase I. At the time the site was originally developed, 665 parking spaces would have been required given the sales area, service area, and outdoor vehicle display. Under the BSD regulations, 170 parking spaces are required plus an additional 4 bicycle parking spaces. Based on the existing use of the property, demonstrated need, and application of the BSD standards to the fullest extent practical, Staff is recommending approval of the Parking Plan to address the multitude of factors unique to use and site.

In detail, the applicant's Parking Plan proposal distinguishes between 'parking spaces' and 'inventory storage area'. The plan notes that parking spaces are provided for customers, employees, service, and display. The plan defines that inventory storage area is only accessible to dealership employees. The parking spaces are proposed to meet the Code required dimensions for full-size and compact vehicles. The inventory area will dedicate less space to each vehicle than would be required for a parking space.

The proposal is to provide a total of 359 parking spaces, over twice the amount required by Code, and to provide 86,602 square feet of inventory storage area, which will accommodate 657 vehicles. Across the two categories, the site will hold $\pm 1,016$ vehicles. The applicant is required to provide a minimum of 4 bicycle parking spaces with the future building modifications.

Parking Lot

To accommodate the proposed parking and inventory storage, the parking lot is proposed to be reconfigured, repaired and repaved. In select areas, landscape islands will be removed and relocated, as required. Additionally, pervious pavement parking spaces are proposed along the Sawmill Road frontage to continue the pervious pavement installed with Phase I. Select inventory storage area will also incorporate pervious pavers.

The north and central parking areas are proposed to undergo the most significant reconfiguration with parking spaces being altered from a north-south orientation to an east-west orientation. The existing vehicle display island with integrated parking, which is located between the new and used car stored is proposed to be removed to allow for more efficient circulation and additional parking. The remaining areas are proposed to follow the existing orientation, but will be modified based on the intended use identified in the Parking Plan.

The Code requires that a landscape island be provided for a continuous run of every 12 parking spaces. With approval of a Parking Plan, an alternate standard can be considered. The applicant is proposing to retain existing runs of parking that exceed the Code allowance particularly in the southern portion of the site. In the newly configured parking areas, no greater than 13 spaces are contiguous, which falls within the permitted 10 percent deviation that is administratively approvable with an Administrative Departure. All the new landscape islands meet the minimum 10-foot width.

Site, Landscaping, Lighting, and Dumpster

The increase in impervious surface area with this proposal is 195 square feet, which does not require additional stormwater analysis. The increased pervious surface area with this application is 20,440 square feet. The total lot coverage permitted for a Large Format Commercial building type, the most similar building type, is 80-percent impervious with an additional 10-percent

semi-pervious. The impervious lot coverage proposed is 76.64-percent with an additional 4.37-percent pervious lot coverage for a total lot coverage of 81.01-percent, which is within the allowable lot coverage.

The applicant is proposing landscape modifications to the existing perimeter landscaping (not including Sawmill Road frontage) as well as interior parking lot landscaping impacted by alterations. The applicant has provided an assessment of the existing condition of the landscaping along the Dublin Center Drive frontages, which indicates the trees and shrubs are overgrown, and are in a variety of conditions: good, fair, and poor health. The assessment of the condition has been confirmed by the City's landscape Zoning Inspector.

The proposal is to remove a number of trees to encourage the healthy growth of existing established trees, and to provide a limited number of intentional views into the site to increase safety and security. Today, there are a total of 3,213 caliper inches of protected trees, greater than 6 caliper inches in size, on site; of which, 1,973 caliper inches are proposed to be preserved and 1,240 caliper inches are proposed to be removed. The applicant will pay a fee-in-lieu of tree replacement to the City's Tree Fund of \$150 per inch removed and not replaced on-site. The applicant is proposing to enhance the three access points along Dublin Center Drive with new shrubs. The applicant should work with the City to select shrubs and grasses that will provide year-round color.

All new lighting is proposed to be incorporated with the parking lot modifications. The applicant has indicated the entire site will have the same light fixtures as the Phase I improvements. With this application, 88 new parking lot light fixtures will be installed, and 15 new building mounted light fixtures will be installed. The light levels are within the lumens permitted by the Code, and will dissipate at the property lines.

The dumpster is proposed to be relocated and reduced in size; however, the applicant has indicated a more frequent pick-up schedule will be implemented. The existing dumpster is located at northwest corner of the new car store. The proposed dumpster will be located in the southwest portion of the site away from customer view. The dumpster enclosure is proposed to be constructed of a precast split face block and will be a total of 8 feet in height with doors constructed of Trex (Winchester Grey) boards on a metal frame. The applicant should revise the design to be a brick masonry enclosure, compatible with the existing building, in lieu of the precast concrete enclosure.

Phasing

The applicant has provided a phasing plan as part of this application indicating the intended timeframe associated with the parking and landscape improvements. The project is divided into four phases that are proposed to be completed during non-peak sales months. Phase 2A (Fall 2019) includes the southwest portion of the parking lot, dumpster relocation, perimeter landscaping, and access modifications. Phase 2B (Winter 2020) includes the northwest portion of the parking lot and interior landscaping. Phase 2C (Spring 2020) includes the northeast portion of the parking lot and interior landscaping. Phase 2D (Fall 2020) includes the central portion of the parking lot and interior landscaping.

3. Criteria Analysis

Administrative Departure [§153.066]

Interior Landscaping – 153.065(D)(5)(c): A maximum run of 12 parking spaces permitted without a tree island (required); A maximum run of 13 parking spaces permitted without a tree island (requested).

- 1) The Administrative Departure is caused by unique site conditions or conditions of surrounding properties, but otherwise complies with the spirit and intent of the Community Plan, BSD Special Area Plan, and other policy documents.
Criteria Met. The request is based on the unique use of the site as an automotive dealership campus.
- 2) The Administrative Departure is not being requested to reduce cost or as simply a matter of convenience.
Criteria Met. The applicant has demonstrated a need for additional parking.
- 3) The Administrative Departure does not have the effect of authorizing a use, sign, building type, or open space type that is not otherwise permitted.
Criteria Met. The Administrative Departure does not authorize a condition not already permitted in the zoning district.
- 4) The Administrative Departure does not negatively impact the pedestrian experience.
Criteria Met. The parking lot continues to provide adequate site circulation for vehicles and pedestrians.
- 5) The Administrative Departure, if approved, will ensure development of equal or greater quality.
Criteria Met. The parking lot will continue to be of the same quality with greater functionality.

Minor Project Review Analysis [§153.066]

- 6) The Minor Project is substantially consistent with the approved Site Plan.
Criteria Met. The changes proposed to the site are minor in nature, in keeping with the existing development pattern, and within the limits of a Minor Project Review.
- 7) The Minor Project is consistent with the approved Development Plan.
Criteria Met. The proposal is consistent with the approved development plan for this site. The general site and building layout remain unaltered with this application.
- 8) The application meets all applicable Zoning Code requirements.
Criteria Met with Condition. The site modifications are harmonious with the existing character of the existing structure of the site and work to meet the objectives of the BSD. The applicant provides dedicated bicycle parking with the future building modifications.
- 9) Internal circulation system and driveways provide safe and efficient access for all.
Criteria Met. The site circulation modifications interior to the campus will result in more safe and efficient maneuvers. The modifications to eliminate the Sawmill Road access point and add a Dublin Center Drive access point is in the best interest of the larger street network.
- 10) Relationship of building and structures to each other provides for development integrated with the surrounding area, and maintains the image of Dublin as a high quality community with a commitment to exemplary quality and design.

Criteria Met with Condition. No primary building modifications are proposed with this application. The proposed dumpster enclosure design should be modified to be brick and complement the brick used for the primary structures.

- 11) Open space suitability and natural feature preservation.

Criteria Met with Condition. This proposal does not impact any required public open space. The applicant is preserving the majority of protected tree inches on site. The applicant will need to continue to work the City's landscape Zoning Inspector to ensure that final plant selections provide year-round color.

- 12) The scale and design of the proposed development allows for the adequate provision of services.

Not Applicable. This proposal does not impact the provision of services.

- 13) Adequate stormwater management facilities are provided.

Not Applicable. This proposal does not increase the total impervious surface area to an extent that requires additional review.

- 14) Phased development is able to be considered as independent phases.

Criteria Met. This proposal will be phased over the next year. The applicant has provided adequate documentation.

- 15) The application demonstrates consistency with commonly accepted principles of walkable urbanism, the Bridge Street District Vision Principles, Community Plan, and other related policy documents.

Criteria Met. This proposal is consistent with the related policy documents and is consistent with the character of the building and adjacent structures.

4. Recommendation

The proposal complies with all applicable review criteria and existing development character of the area.

Staff recommends **approval** of one Administrative Departure:

- 1) To permit a maximum run of 13 parking spaces without a landscape islands.

Staff recommends **approval** of Minor Project Review with Parking Plan with three conditions:

- 1) The applicant work with the City to revise the entry shrub selections to incorporate sections that will provide year-round color;
- 2) The applicant provide a minimum of four bicycle parking spaces with the future building modifications; and,
- 3) The applicant revise the dumpster enclosure to be constructed of brick in a color matching the new car store, subject to Staff approval.