



19-113MPR and 19-114MSP GERMAIN LEXUS OF DUBLIN

Summary

This is a request for a Minor Project Review and a Master Sign Plan for an existing car dealership. The proposal is for a renovated plaza with a wing wall, pedestrian canopy, two new wall signs, removal of one wall sign, and minor landscape modifications.

Site Location

At the intersection of West Dublin-Granville Road and Dublin Center Drive.

Zoning

BSD-O, Bridge Street District-Office District.

Property Owner

Germain Properties of Columbus, Inc.

Applicant/Representative

John Oney, Architectural Alliance, LTD.

Applicable Land Use Regulations

Zoning Code Section 153.066

Case Manager

Nichole M. Martin, AICP, Planner II

(614) 410-4635

nmartin@dublin.oh.us

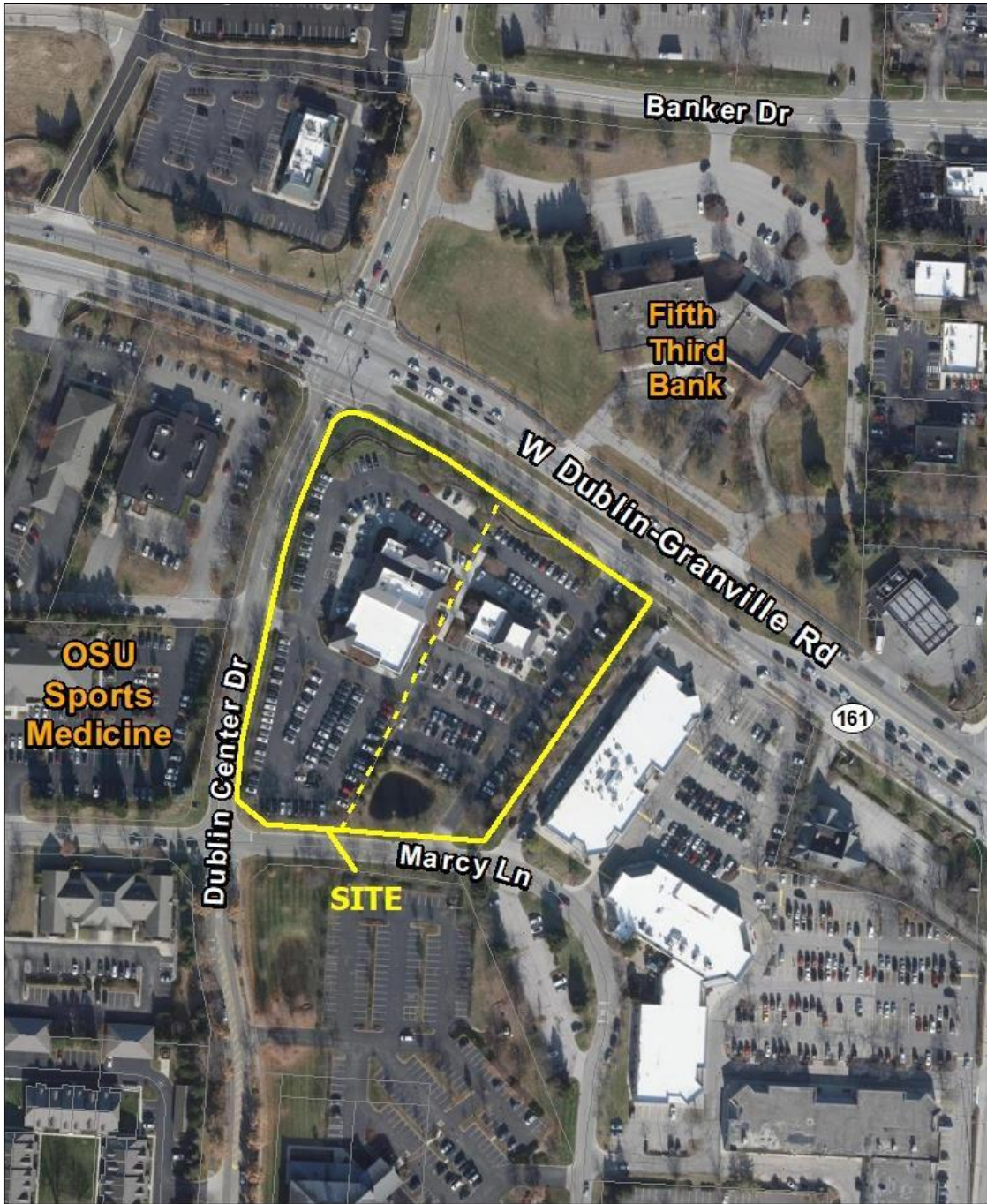
Zoning Map



Next Steps

Upon review and approval from the Planning and Zoning Commission, the applicant may proceed to submit Building and Sign Permits.

1. Context Map



City of Dublin

19-113MPR/19-114MSP
Minor Project Review/Master Sign Plan
Germain Lexus of Dublin
3855 & 3885 W. Dublin-Granville Road

0 75 150
Feet



2. Overview

Background

The site consists of two parcels totaling 5.6 acres located on the south side of West Dublin Granville Road, immediately east of the intersection with Dublin Center Drive. Marcy Lane runs along the south side of the site. The site currently includes two buildings that accommodate new and used vehicle sales.

The new vehicle sales building is 14,000 square feet and is located in the western portion of the site. The used vehicle sales building is 3,800 square feet and is located to the east of the site. All servicing of cars occurs off-site in the Shamrock Crossing Service Center located on the east side of Shamrock Boulevard north of Banker Drive.

A detention basin located in the southeast portion of the site. Parking, display areas and inventory storage are located along the perimeter of the site and along the sides of the buildings and in the rear of the site. There are walking paths connecting the two buildings in the center of the site.

The architectural style of the existing buildings is similar in character. The buildings primarily consist of brick and stone facades with EIFS along the top portion of the buildings.

Case History

In January 2020, this case was before the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC). The Commission encouraged the applicant to keep two trees the applicant proposed to remove in order to soften the look of the building from W. Dublin-Granville Road. The Commission also encouraged the applicant explore creative signage to more closely resemble the intent Bridge Street Code; although the Commission was supportive of the logo design as it is a more modest approach to signage. The applicant requested that the case be tabled.

In 2019, the Planning and Zoning Commission (PZC) provided non-binding feedback on an Informal Review for the proposal. At the time, the Commission supported the proposal including the new wing wall and plaza improvements. The Commission encouraged the applicant to reduce the total number of signs proposed to fewer than the five shown.

In 2012, the site was rezoned from PUD, Planned Unit Development District, to BSD-O, Bridge Street District – Office District. Most recently, in 2017, the BSD Code was amended relative to pre-existing structures to permit signs in accordance with the standard Sign Code, which is more restrictive than the BSD Sign Code with respect to number of signs and types of signs.

In May 2008, an Amended Final Development Plan was approved that allowed three wall signs (this approval pre-dates the Bridge Street District zoning of the site). Two wall signs for the new car dealership, one on the north façade and one on the west façade; and, one wall sign for the pre-owned sales building on the north façade. The signs are internally illuminated, individual channel letters in black.

Updates

In response to PZC's feedback, the applicant has revised the design to preserve the two trees located between the wing wall and the parking lot, north of the building. Additionally, the wing wall is now a full masonry design with the elimination of the ACM panel that previously sliced through the wing wall.

The canopy area has been revised to be more indicative of the original design presented informally to the Commission in 2019. The ACM canopy provides additional covered seating area with skylight elements to allow natural light to penetrate the seating area.

Site Characteristics

Natural Features

No natural features are present on the site.

Surrounding Land Use and Development Character

North: BSD-SCN, BSD Sawmill Center Neighborhood (Fifth-Third Bank)

East: BSD-C, BSD Commercial District (Shopping Plaza)

South: R-2, Limited Suburban Residential District (Church)

West: BSD-O, BSD Office District (Gordon Food)

Utilities

There is a 10-inch sanitary sewer line on the north side of West Dublin-Granville Road, and a 12-inch storm sewer line north and south of the site. The site is also served by water. The proposal will not modify or extend any of the existing utilities.

Process

This request includes two applications: a Minor Project Review and a Master Sign Plan. In the BSD, Minor Projects are reviewed and approved by the Administrative Review Team (ART) except in cases where unique conditions warrant PZC review. Master Sign Plans always require review and approval by the PZC. Based on the integration of Minor Project and Master Sign Plan it is appropriate for the Commission to review the cases in unison.

Proposal

The proposal is for a renovated plaza with a wing wall, pedestrian canopy, two new wall signs, removal of one wall sign, and minor landscape modifications for an existing car dealership. The applicant has updated the proposal since January to respond to the Commission's feedback.

The two most significant improvements associated with the project are an 82-foot long engineered stone clad wing wall that will be located between the two buildings and a metal canopy that will extend between the new and used car buildings for covered pedestrian circulation and seating area.

The wing wall is proposed to include two integrated wall signs (Lexus logos). The applicant is also proposing a new enclosure for an existing transformer, which is a Cityscapes slat wall in a black finish to coordinate with the canopy.

Development Standards

The proposed wing wall with integrated canopy is an accessory structure to the two primary structures. The wall is proposed to be located on the eastern parcel adjacent to the property line. The canopy is proposed to cross the property line, which does not meet the minimum required building setback of five feet. The applicant is aware that the properties must be combined for the proposed accessory structure to meet setback requirements. Combination of the two parcels is a condition of approval associated with this application.

Architecture

In detail, the proposed modifications are designed to be compatible with the existing two buildings and utilize materials that include stone and metal while updating the appearance to be consistent with current manufacturer standards.

The wing wall is 82 feet in length, four feet in width, and a variable height of 23-25 feet. The wall contains several openings: the smaller opening provides a built-in bench area and the larger opening is designated for vehicle display. The larger openings and canopy will be accented with LED lighting.

An approximately 2,000-square-foot covered canopy with an open trellis is proposed to be finished in a dark bronze ACM to complement the existing storefront windows. The canopy is offset from each building. The height of the canopy is 12 feet to the underside of the canopy.

Hardscape & Landscaping

The proposal will remove small landscape areas along the sides of both buildings, which are proposed to be replaced primarily with new shrubs and hardscape. The new shrubs proposed include 83 Everlow Yews, 54 Hydrangeas, 12 Threadleaf Blue Stars, and 19 Anthony Waterer Spireas. The applicant is proposing two brick pavers in the plaza: a red brick, similar to the existing brick, and a black brick. At Staff's request, the applicant has inverted the applications of the two brick selections to prioritize the red brick. Now, the black brick is shown beneath the canopy and in line with the axis of the wing wall. The red brick is shown for the plaza space framed with a concrete edge. Additionally, decorative tables and chairs are shown in plaza area. The furniture selections are identified as Catena by LandscapeForms on the landscape plan.

In response to the Commission's feedback, the applicant has revised the design to preserve the two trees located north of the buildings between the wing wall and the parking lot. The plans should be updated to show the tree preservation consistently on all sheets. Tree protection fencing is required around the trees given the proximity to the proposed site modifications. Two pear trees, centrally located in the existing plaza, are proposed to be removed to accommodate the wing wall and canopy, which total 19.5 caliper inches in size. The applicant is requesting to pay a fee-in-lieu for these inches as the site is heavily planted with mature trees.

As part of the site plan review, Staff has conducted a landscape inspection. As part of the landscape inspection, several deficient items were identified including algae growth in the detention basin and dead dying arborvitae hedge on the east side of the property as well as hazardous large dead trees/snags. The applicant should install a solar powered aerator in the detention basin and coordinate with the City's Zoning Inspectors to remove dead trees while maintaining screening. The applicant should work with Staff to rectify all landscape deficiencies with implementation of the site improvements.

Signs

The proposal includes the addition of two new wall signs (Lexus logos), which are proposed to be located on the stone wing wall. The logos are proposed to each be approximately 24 square feet in size and mounted at a height of 22 feet. The logo will be the same color, font, and illumination as the existing signs. The sign will appear black during the day and white at night.

The applicant is proposing to retain one sign on the new car store and one sign on the used car store. The sign facing W. Granville Road is proposed to be removed from the new car store. The existing new car store sign to remain is 44 square feet in area mounted at a height of 17 feet (Dublin Center Drive). The existing used car store sign to remain is 37 square feet in size mounted at a height of 17 feet (W. Dublin-Granville Road). The total sign area of existing signs is 115 square feet. The total proposed sign area is 129 square feet.

Code permits one sign per building or parcel with a second being allowed for parcels with over 100 feet of frontage on two public streets. Under the current regulations, three signs are permitted for this dealership. Each wall sign is permitted to be up to 80 square feet in size (or total 160 square feet for the campus). All wall signs are limited to a maximum of 15 feet in height. The request for one additional sign at a higher than permitted by Code requires the review and approval of a Master Sign Plan (MSP) by the Commission. Code states that MSPs cannot be requested to allow a greater number of signs or greater visibility without unique consideration for how the signs are architecturally integrated and contribute to vibrancy of the BSD. The two new signs are thoughtfully integrated into the architecture of the wing wall and landscape design of the plaza.

3. Criteria Analysis

Minor Project Review

- 1) The Minor Project is consistent with the Community Plan, and all BSD adopted plans, policies, and regulations.
Criteria Met. The Minor Project is consistent with the BSD plans and policies, which allows for existing auto-oriented businesses may continue to operate and update although expansion to new sites is discouraged.
- 2) The Minor Project is consistent with the approved Final Development Plan.
Criteria Met. The site layout is not proposed to be significantly modified and there are no architectural modifications proposed to the new car store or the used car store. The proposal maintains the character established as part of the previously approved Final Development Plan.
- 3) The Minor Project is consistent with the record established by the Planning and Zoning Commission.
Criteria Met. The proposal ensures a design esthetic and details that are consistent with applications previously approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission. The design establishes active pedestrian space within the BSD.
- 4) The Minor Project meets all applicable use standards.
Criteria Met. The proposal is consistent with all applicable use specific standards.
- 5) The proposed improvements meet all applicable requirements of the BSD Code and responds to the standards of the BSD Design Guidelines.
Criteria Met with Conditions. The proposal utilizes materials and design elements that provide an integrated look and feel with the adjacent buildings. The proposal meets all other applicable Zoning Code provisions with the condition that the parcels be combined prior to submittal of the Building Permit and that the applicant work with the City to ensure all landscape deficiencies are remedied.

Master Sign Plan

- 1) Allow a greater degree of flexibility in sign design and display.
Criteria Met. The intent of a Master Sign Plan is not to simply allow large or more visible signs, but to create a flexible framework that allows for creativity in sign design and display. The proposed allowances are requested to permit additional flexibility in sign number and location due to the unique challenges of an existing auto-oriented site.

- 2) Intended for multiple signs for a single building or a group of buildings to ensure the requested signs work in coordinated fashion.
Criteria Met. The requested signs are for a two buildings on a single site, and are coordinated with the design of the both. The applicant is proposing to remove one sign to be sensitive to the established character of Dublin.

- 3) Not intended to simply permit larger or more visible signs, or additional signs without consideration for unique sign design and display.
Criteria Met. The flexibility requested is appropriate given the development history of the site and previously approved signs.

- 4) Maintains the purpose and intent of the sign and graphics standards for the applicable BSD Zoning District.
Criteria Met with Condition. The intent of the BSD-Office regulations are upheld in the integration of the proposed signs. The applicant shall provide Staff with an approved MSP subsequent to PZC review.

BSD Sign Design Guidelines

- 1) Signs and graphics should contribute to the vibrancy of the area.
Guideline Met. The proposal is consistent with the purpose and intent of the BSD Sign Design Guidelines to create a vibrant, walkable mixed use district by allowing additional flexibility and creativity in sign design. While the signs are auto-oriented it appropriate to have a mix of sign types especially for pre-existing structures.

- 2) Signs should be highly pedestrian-focused while remaining visible to those traveling by car or bicycle.
Guideline Met. The signs are proposed in a manner that is auto-oriented while realizing the need for wayfinding at a variety of scales.

- 3) Placement of signs and graphics should assist with navigation, provide information, and identify businesses.
Guideline Met. The wall signs are strategically located around the two buildings to identify businesses and assist with navigation from various access points. The signs are placed for maximum visibility for both vehicles and pedestrians while minimizing the total number of signs.

4. Recommendations

Minor Project Review

Approval of a Minor Project Review having found the criteria are met with three conditions:

- 1) The applicant combine the two subject parcels prior to submittal of a Building Permit.
- 2) The applicant update all plan sheets to ensure that preservation of the two trees north of the building is shown consistently.
- 3) The applicant coordinate with Staff to resolve all landscape compliance issues prior to final zoning inspection.

Master Sign Plan

Approval of a Master Sign Plan having found the criteria are met with one condition:

- 1) The applicant submit a Master Sign Plan to Planning prior to sign permit submittal that reflects the approved MSP with all applicable sign dimensions.

