

September 28, 2012

Northgate Church  
Attn: Wayne Skaff, Executive Pastor  
15407 Krypton St NW  
Ramsey, MN 55303

**Re: Site Plan and Conditional Use Permit Review**

Dear Mr. Skaff:

We are in receipt of a Site Plan, Conditional Use Permit and Minor Plat dated September 4, 2012. The submittal consists of Sheets C0, C1, C2, C3, C4, C5, C6 and C7 dated September 4, 2012, prepared by Civil Engineering and Design and Sheets A1, A2 and A3 dated September 4, 2012 prepared by Lampert Architects. In addition, the City is reviewing a request for a Minor Plat related to the project submitted by PSD, LLC. The Review Letter for that request is hereby incorporated as reference, and available upon request. We offer the following comments as it relates to the Site Plan and Conditional Use Permit Review:

**General:** The Applicant, Northgate Church, is proposing construction of a performing arts center that will include 504 auditorium seats, two classrooms, nursery and lobby area on the property legally described as Outlot A, Ramsey Town Center 14th addition located at the northeast corner of Sunwood Drive and Peridot Street NW. The City has also received an application for a Subdivision of Ramsey Town Center 14th Addition, to create the lot on which the building will be located.

**Zoning:** The Subject Property is zoned Mixed Use and is located within the COR3 Subdistrict. Institutional uses are a Conditional Use in this subdistrict.

**Lot Coverage/Floor Area Ratio (FAR):** The proposed structure is 15,242 square feet in size with a future expansion area identified on the site plan immediately north of the proposed structure of approximately 13,000 sq. ft. The minimum F.A.R in this subdistrict is 0.25; the proposed F.A.R. is 0.257 with this initial construction.

**Setbacks:** The COR3 setback from the street is 0-15 feet with at least 60% of any street frontage meeting this build to line. The proposed structure is located along this build to line on both the Sunwood Drive and Peridot Street NW elevations. The proposed building frontage on Sunwood Drive is 54% where 60% is required.

The COR Design Framework allows for flexibility in meeting this frontage by allowing an architectural wall with a minimum height of 3 feet and a maximum of 4 ½ feet to be used to meet

this 60% building frontage requirement. This method has been successfully used to frame the Allina Medical Clinic site. The proposed site and building plans do not include plans for a decorative wall to meet this frontage requirement along Sunwood Drive. Staff recommends an extension of a similar wall, as along the Allina Medical Clinic site, to fulfill the building frontage requirement and satisfy required parking lot screening for the proposed spaces facing Sunwood Drive. This addition will provide necessary consistency to the frontage of Sunwood Drive.

The proposed building frontage along Peridot Street is 46%. When combined with the percentage along Sunwood Drive the total building to street frontage is 49%. Plans submitted indicate a building addition in the northern portion of the site. Once this addition is complete the site will meet the required 60% frontage requirement along the Peridot Street. In the interim, proof of parking is planned where the addition will be situated which may result in parking facing Peridot Street NW. Since a building addition is planned it seems onerous to require an architectural wall if it will eventually be removed for the building addition. Staff recommends installation of landscape screening that meets the 3 feet height minimum along the entire west property line extending north of the building edge to the northerly property line to provide parking lot screening and consistent "street presence" of the site along this western edge. As a matter of past policy, a similar provision was allowed as part of site plan approval for the Midwest Medical Examiner's Office.

**Architectural Standards:** The design standards for this site are subject to the provisions laid out in the COR Design Framework referenced in City Code for The COR. The Design Framework places a high emphasis on high-quality architecture, materials, and site design, particularly with regard to building placement, parking areas, and the pedestrian environment.

Overall, the submittal meets or exceeds these requirements except as related to off-street parking. Staff would like to call out the following specific items from the Guidelines:

Provide parking spaces to support the use through a mix of on-street and surface lots internal to the block. Encourage shared parking solutions. The proposed parking plan utilizes on-street parking, surface lot parking, proof of parking and shared parking with adjacent users including Allina, NAU and PACT Charter school. Parking issues will be further address under the Off-Street Parking discussion.

Generally, buildings should be located at the street right-of-way; with no more than 60% of the building beyond the maximum setback. Encourage recessed entries and windows to create street level interest. The proposed building appears to conform to setbacks along Sunwood Drive and Peirdot Street NW. In addition, a condition will be made that will require an architectural wall to be extended along Sunwood Drive and landscaping along Peridot Street NW to meet the 60% building frontage.

A diverse mix of materials is encouraged, applied in a variety of proportions, exposures, and detailing, especially along all street frontages. The proposed building proposes a variety of materials and design elements on each elevation acceptable to the COR Design Framework. Proposed materials include brick inlay precast, architectural precast, and architectural masonry,

glass and accent metal. The minimum amount of windows on a street facing elevation is provided along with the required entryways. Staff is supportive of the proposed elevation plans.

**Building Height:** The COR3 subdistrict requires a minimum of 2 stories and a maximum of 4 stories for all buildings within this district. The proposed performing arts facility meets this requirement.

**Waste Storage:** A trash enclosure is proposed at the northeast corner of the building with a north facing access. This enclosure shall be constructed of the same building materials and design as the principle structure, shall include a roof and shall be connected to the building. Colored elevation plans of the proposed trash enclosure shall be submitted and approved prior to the issuance of a development permit.

**Loading Docks:** There are no loading docks required for the facility. There is, however, loading access provided for internal to the site and along Peridot St NW.

**Off-Street Parking - Spaces Required:** The COR Design Framework establishes perimeters for parking in all subdistricts and sets a minimum parking space standard of one space per five seats for places of assembly. Based on the total of 504 seats at 1 space per 5 seats, a minimum of 101 parking stalls are required with a maximum of 1 space per three seats or 168 stalls. The guidelines also support the use a wide range of parking options to fulfill required parking including use of on-street parking and encouraging shared parking solutions. The site plan proposes 43 on-site parking stalls, 40 proof of parking stalls (on-site) and 25 on street parking stalls (along Peridot Street NW and 145th Avenue NW) to fulfill its required parking.

The Design Framework states that the City may approve joint parking for one or more businesses where the total number of parking stalls provided for joint use is less than the sum of the total required for each business should they be provide them separately. A written report, as detailed on Page 21 of the Design Framework, is required. Staff is generally supportive of the use of on-street parking for the proposed use, as no parking structures (vertical) are planned in this area. Staff is supportive of the use of on-street parking for the proposed use, as no parking structures (vertical) are planned in this area.

For Phase 1 construction the site meets required parking provided the City supports the proposed proof of parking. It is understood that proof of parking is proposed as a method to save initial site development and construction costs. Northgate intends to share parking through cross-parking agreements with PACT, Allina and NAU. Again, the COR Design Framework encourages shared parking as a method to provide required off-street parking. However, any shared parking shall be approved only when it's in close proximity (300 foot radius), no conflict in hours and a legally binding instrument for joint use of off-street parking is approved by the City and recorded at the County. While the Northgate intends to share parking through "cross-parking agreements", and has an effective history of doing so, no recordable document has been provided to the City therefore the site is not meeting minimum requirements for off-street parking. This leaves the City in the position of needing to make a decision on whether to support the proposed proof of parking or require installation of the 40 stalls during Phase 1. Options to consider include:

- Require proof of parking to be installed with Phase 1 due to lack of legally recordable shared parking agreements to meet requirements of the COR Design Framework.
- Provide City with legally recordable shared cross-parking agreement.
- Accept proof of parking plan with a condition that at such time that parking demand is beyond what is provided on-site and the 25 accepted on-street parking stalls, and extending into additional on-street parking areas beyond 300' radius of the site, such proof of parking shall be installed at the applicants expense.

In addition, while this site plan review and Conditional Use Permit request does not include approvals for Phase 2 construction, it is apparent that the site will be under parked as the Phase 2 addition will be located upon the proof of parking area. While this review is based on the merits of the current application Staff will recommend a condition that Phase 2 cannot move forward without recordable cross-parking agreements.

**Signs:** Please note that all signs for the proposed building must be approved through a separate sign permit process.

**Lighting:** City standards require that the luminaire (light source) must not be visible from beyond the property line. The submittal includes a lighting plan however, a photometric plan shall be submitted prior to execution of the Development Permit. Any lighting used to illuminate an off-street parking area, sign, or structure shall be arranged to deflect away from Sunwood Drive and Peridot Street NW.

**Landscaping Plan:** The following comments are offered regarding the September 4, 2012 Landscaping Plan:

Minimum landscaping is provided to meet requirements.

- The Planting Notes should include the following:
  - Planting depth shall be such that the first set of primary roots is at finished grade.
  - Remove twine, wiring, ropes and burlap from top and sides of root ball.
  - At time of planting, only prune out dead or damaged branches. All necessary pruning cuts shall be made just outside of branch collar area.
  - Remove all tags and labels.
  - Wood chip mulch shall not be piled against the trunk of trees.
- A two (2) year maintenance guarantee is required on all landscaping after initial acceptance by the City.
- Topsoil, whether it is trucked in or the existing topsoil is amended, must meet or exceed MN DOT's Premium Topsoil specification.
- At the time of installation, all shrubs must be at least twenty-four (24) inches in size.

Please submit a revised landscaping plan prior to execution of the Development Permit.

**Irrigation:** All new landscaping shall be irrigated by an in-ground system. Irrigation metering and backflow devices shall be approved as part of the Utility Plan, and installed accordingly. Irrigation rain sensors shall be installed and appropriately placed throughout the site.

**Tree Preservation:** This site is devoid of any significant tree cover and therefore, no tree preservation plan is necessary.

**Grading and Drainage:** The following comments are offered regarding the September 4, 2012 Grading and Utility Plans prepared by Civil Engineering Site Design:

- The B612 concrete curb detail should be amended to include base material extending to 1' beyond the back of curb. The pedestrian ramp details have recently been modified at the state level. The plans must be revised to include the most recent MN/DOT approved details and design.
- Spot elevations must be called out as gutter or top of curb.
- The developer will be responsible for replacing any sidewalk or streetscape along Sunwood Drive that is damaged by construction of the building.
- A pedestrian detour plan must be submitted showing the pedestrian route along Sunwood Drive during construction of the building.

The project will require a permit from the Lower Rum River Water Management Organization (LRRWMO). Please copy the City on the submittal. The application deadline is the first Thursday of the month for the meeting on the third Thursday of the month. The LRRWMO requirements include infiltration of 1 inch of runoff from the site. Infiltration practices must be incorporated into the plans to meet this requirement. Please submit calculations routing the site runoff to the infiltration basin for the 1" 10 year and 100 year storms.

The following notes should be added or amended on the plan set:

- The contractor should have a sweeper on site or available within 3 hours. All material tracked onto City streets must be removed immediately upon discovery, or as directed by the City Engineer.
- Installation of silt fence and other down gradient sediment protection measures shall be completed and inspected prior to commencement of any site activities.

**Access and Streets:** The site will derive public access from a shared driveway with the Allina site to the east from Sunwood Drive. An existing access easement is recorded on the site.

**Sidewalks:** An additional two (2) to four (4) foot section of sidewalk must be added (at the Applicant's cost) along Peridot Street NW, in accordance with the COR Design Framework streetscape plans. Construction of this sidewalk section may require additional sidewalk easement if constructed on private property.

**Traffic Generation:** As part of the original Town Center AUAR, a detailed traffic analysis was completed that anticipated the type and size of development shown on the plat. The proposed development is consistent with the traffic modeling system used as part of the AUAR analysis.

Regional road improvements to facilitate the whole COR development have been agreed upon and have already begun construction. This proposed development does not generate more traffic than was anticipated.

**REU Number:** This property will be subject to a storm water utility charge based upon the amount of impervious surface on the site. The quarterly charge is dependent upon the number of Residential Equivalent Units (REU) calculated for this property. The site is proposed as 65.5% impervious. This leads to an REU of  $(1.36 \times 3.31) 4.508$  and a quarterly stormwater fee of \$172.21.

### **Summary of Conditions:**

This letter identified several conditions of approval that will be presented to the Planning Commission and City Council including:

- 1) An architectural wall not less than three (3) feet nor greater than four and one-half (4 ½) feet in height shall be installed along the Sunwood Drive elevation to screen the parking and meet the 60% building frontage requirement. Revised site plan and details for this architectural wall shall be submitted and approved prior to the issuance of a development permit.
- 2) Landscape screening not less than three (3) feet in height shall be installed along the entire west property line extending from the northerly building edge to the northerly property line to provide parking lot screening and a consistent “street presence” of the site along this western edge. Revised site and landscaping plans for this additional landscape screening shall be submitted and approved prior to the issuance of a development permit.
- 3) Additional two (2) to four (4) foot section of sidewalk must be added (at the Applicant’s cost) along Peridot Street NW, in accordance with the COR Design Framework streetscape plans.
- 4) Colored elevation plans of the proposed trash enclosure shall be submitted and approved prior to the issuance of a development permit.
- 5) A photometric lighting plan shall be submitted prior to execution of the Development Permit.
- 6) Staff will seek direction from the Planning Commission and City Council regarding the request for the proposed proof of parking plan.
- 7) Future requests for Site Plan approval and/or an amendment to the Conditional Use Permit as related to any proposed site or building expansion shall not be accepted by the City without recordable cross-parking agreements to fulfill required off-street parking requirements.

*Continued on next page.*

*Northgate Performing Arts Center: Site Plan Review*

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*The Planning Commission will be meeting at 7:00 pm on October 4, 2012 at the Ramsey Municipal Center at 7550 Sunwood Drive to review your final site plan and conditional use permit request. You, or your representative, should be present at the meeting to answer any questions that may arise.*

If you have any questions, please call our office at (763) 427-1410

Sincerely,

**CITY OF RAMSEY**

Tina Goodroad, AICP  
Planner

CC: Kinghorn Construction  
Attn: Grady Kinghorn  
14198 Northdale Blvd.  
Rogers, MN 55374

PSD, LLC  
Attn: Matt Kuker, Assistant Manager  
7533 Sunwood Dr. NW  
Ramsey, MN 55303