

Leslie Lechner-Salemi
Chair

James Ensign
Vice-Chair

Commissioners

Eric Hufnagel, *Mayor*
Jean Ruestman, *Vice Mayor*
Heather Hanover
Mark Holden
Melvin Renfrow
Wendy Ward
Eric Harger



Dave J. Kudwa, P.E.
*Community
Development Director*

CITY OF ST. JOHNS PLANNING COMMISSION

MEETING AGENDA

MEETING DATE: APRIL 13th, 2022

The St. Johns Planning Commission will hold a regular meeting on April 13th, 2022 at 5:30 pm in the 2nd Floor Commissioner Chambers located at the Clinton County Courthouse, 100 E. State Street, St. Johns, MI. (Please use Cass St. Entrance.)

AGENDA

1. **Call to Order (5:30 pm)**
2. **Approval of Agenda (5:30 pm – 5:32 pm)**
3. **Public Comment for Agenda / Non-Agenda Items (5:32 pm – 6:00 pm)**
4. **Old Business**
 - A. **February 9th, 2022 meeting minutes**
(6:00 pm – 6:02 pm) (ACTION ITEM)
5. **New Business**
 - A. **Special land use / site plan review – 311 N. Clinton Avenue**
(Presenter: Chris Khorey, AICP, McKenna & Associates)
(6:02 pm – 6:30 pm) (ACTION ITEM)
 - B. **Rezoning request - 101 W. Cass Street**
(Presenter: Chris Khorey, AICP, McKenna & Associates)
(6:30 pm – 7:00 pm) (ACTION ITEM)
 - C. **Rezoning request - 101 W. McConnell Street**
(Presenter: Chris Khorey, AICP, McKenna & Associates)
(7:00 pm – 7:15 pm) (ACTION ITEM)
6. **Planning Commissioner Comments (7:15 pm – 7:17 pm)**
7. **Adjournment (7:17 pm)**

May, 2022 meeting agenda:

Rental housing program
Downtown parking

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**CITY OF ST. JOHNS
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**FEBRUARY 9th, 2022
REGULAR MEETING MINUTES**

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting of the St. Johns Planning Commission was called to order by Chairperson Salemi at 5:30 p.m.

Members Present: Salemi, Hufnagel, Hanover, Holden, Renfrow, Ward, Harger

Staff Present: Dave J. Kudwa, Chris Khorey

Others Present: Jeff Simpson, Kelly Havens, Boone Deshano, Cord Ferris, Alex Kusnich, Mike Matheson, Chris Hyzer, Sean Dush, Sue Pung, John Ashley, Christine Ashley, Sherri Martens, Kevin Palmatier, Emily Palmatier, Mark Kenel, Terry Black, Ken Harris, John Thelen, Susan Ouellette, Ross Pope

2. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

A. A motion was made by Commissioner Ward and supported by Commissioner Hanover to approve the agenda as presented.

Yes: Salemi, Hufnagel, Hanover, Holden, Renfrow, Ward, Harger

Nay: None

Motion carried

3. PUBLIC COMMENT ON AGENDA / NON-AGENDA ITEMS

None

4. OLD BUSINESS

A. A motion was made by Commissioner Hanover and supported by Commissioner Ward to approve the December 8th, 2022 meeting minutes as presented.

Yes: Salemi, Hufnagel, Hanover, Holden, Renfrow, Ward, Harger

Nay: None

Motion carried

*100 East State Street, P.O. Box 477, St. Johns, Michigan 48879-0477
(989) 224-8944 Fax (989) 224-2204
E-mail: dkudwa@stjohnsmich.com*

5. NEW BUSINESS

A. Development Proposal – 450 E. Townsend Road

Deshano Development presented a concept plan to build senior housing at 450 E. Townsend Road. They discussed the need to rezone the property from residential to office and presented a concept plan. The planning commission received comments from residents regarding the proposed development.

B. Rental Housing Program

City staff gave the planning commission an update regarding a future rental housing program. The planning commission received comments from residents regarding a proposed registration and certification program for residential rental units.

C. FY 2022/2023 Capital Improvement Plan

Staff presented the FY 2022/2023 Capital Improvement Plan and the planning commission made the following recommendation:

A motion was made by Commissioner Ward and supported by Commissioner Holden to recommend approving the proposed capital improvement plan.

Yes: Salemi, Hufnagel, Hanover, Holden, Renfrow, Ward, Harger

Nay: None

Motion carried

6. PLANNING COMMISSIONER COMMENTS

None

7. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Commissioner Hanover and supported by Commissioner Ward to adjourn the meeting at 7:40 pm.

Yes: Salemi, Hufnagel, Hanover, Holden, Renfrow, Ward, Harger

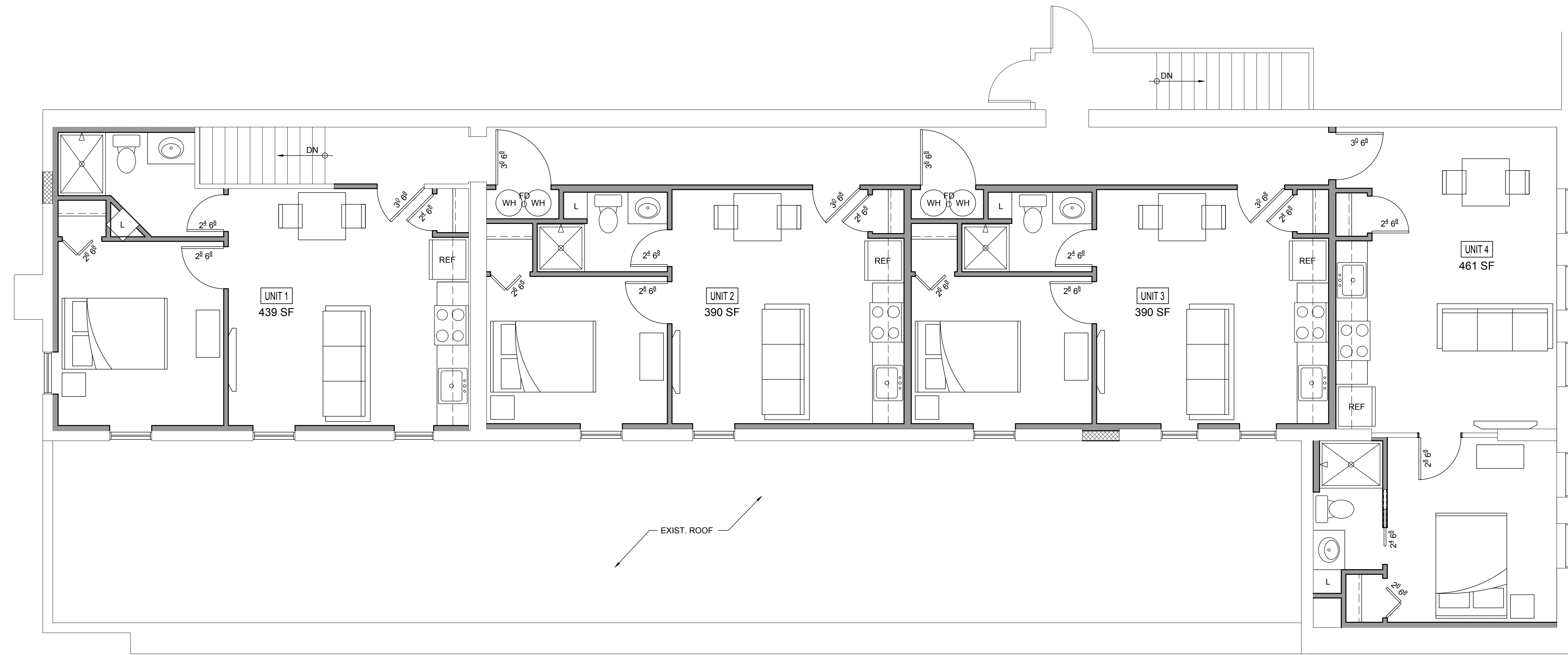
Nay: None

Motion carried

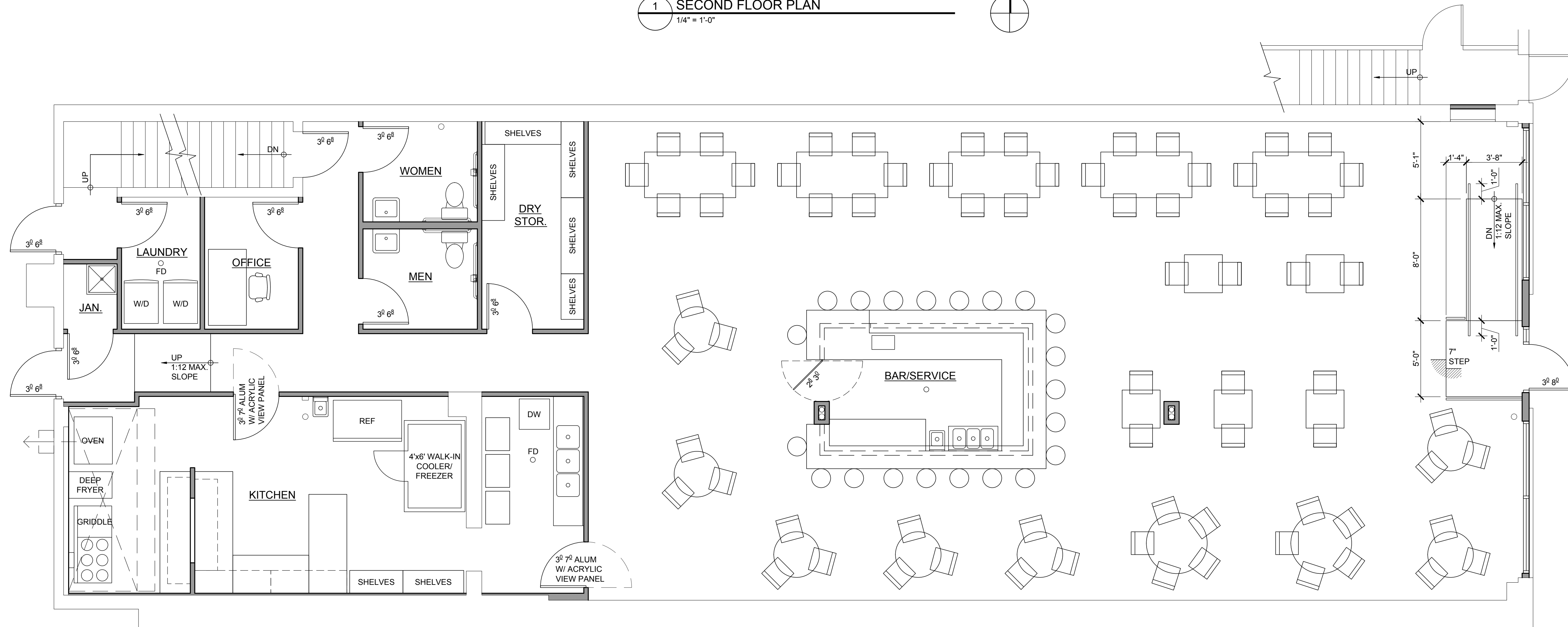
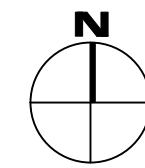
311 N CLINTON VICINITY MAP



NOTE: BUILDING TO INCLUDE REMODELED BAR/RESTAURANT AT FIRST FLOOR AND FOUR REMODELED APARTMENT UNITS AT SECOND FLOOR. BUILDING FOOTPRINT/AREA TO REMAIN AS-IS.



1 SECOND FLOOR PLAN
1/4" = 1'-0"



2 FIRST FLOOR PLAN
1/4" = 1'-0"

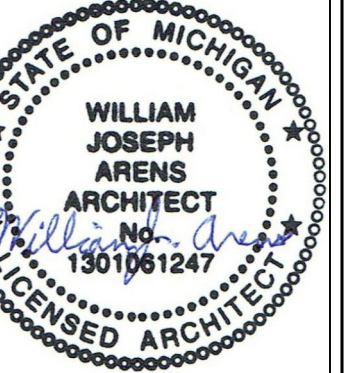


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311 N CLINTON
INTERIOR & FACADE RENOVATION
311 N CLINTON AVE
ST JOHNS, MI 48879

PROJECT NO.: 21042
DATE: 02/07/22

REVISIONS:

NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION

SHEET NO.:

A102



MCKENNA

March 1, 2022

Planning Commission
City of St. Johns
100 E. State Street, Suite 1100
St. Johns, Michigan 48879

Subject: 311 N. Clinton Avenue Special Use and Site Plan Review

Dear Commissioners,

As requested, we have reviewed the application materials submitted for 311 N. Clinton Avenue. The applicant proposes to renovate the existing building to contain the following uses:

- Restaurant (first floor)
- Four Residential Units (second floor)

The building already contains commercial space on the first floor and residential space on the second floor, but the renovation would alter the interior floor plan on both floors, as well as modernizing the systems in the building.

The building is zoned CBD Central Business District. Section 155.101 regulates uses in the CBD District differently depending on what street they are on. Clinton Avenue allows first floor restaurants and upper floor residential by right. However, the units are proposed to be under the minimum area for a dwelling unit, which is 500 square feet. The four units are proposed to be 461, 439, 390, and 390 square feet.

Section 155.199 allows the approval of dwelling units below the minimum size by Special Use Permit. Therefore, while all other aspects of the redevelopment are permitted by right, the layout of the dwelling units must be approved for a Special Use Permit before the renovation can move forward. As with any Special Use Permit, Site Plan Approval is also required.

Our comments below are divided into two parts – the first part discusses the criteria for approving the Special Use for unit size, and the second part discusses the physical site design and whether the Site Plan should be approved.

Special Use (Unit Size)

In order to be approved, the City Commission, upon recommendation of the Planning Commission, must determine that the dwelling units meet the standards of both Section 155.199 (which are specific to undersized dwelling units) and Section 155.258, which are the general standards applicable to all Special Uses.

- 1) Undersized Dwelling Unit Criteria.** Section 155.199 requires undersized dwelling units to be “**safe, sanitary housing promoting high quality of life for their residents.**” The apartments will be completely renovated with modern amenities, and will actually be slightly larger than the existing apartments in the building. All four units have full kitchens and bathrooms with a shower. All living areas and all bedrooms have windows.



The second floor of the building is not as big as the first floor, leaving space for second floor windows that look out over the first floor roof. The building to the south is set back from 311 N. Clinton, giving more light to the windows. But even if a building were to be built right up to the side wall of 311 N. Clinton (which is allowed under the zoning ordinance), the windows would still have light. The front unit has windows that look out over Clinton Avenue, and the rear unit has windows over the alley.

From a planning perspective, the units meet the standard. However, the City Commission and Planning Commission should also consult with the Building and Fire departments in making a final determination.

2) Special Use Criteria. Section 155.258 includes the following criteria:

a) Will be harmonious with and in accordance with the community development plan. In order to be considered “harmonious and in accordance”, the Special Use proposal must:

- **Be consistent with the City’s goals for Land Use, Neighborhoods, Transportation, and Sustainability as articulated in Chapter 3 of the City of St. Johns Master Plan.** The relevant pages of the Master Plan are attached for reference.

This proposal advances Land Use Goals 1, 2, 4, and 5, and is neutral on Goal 3 (which is specifically about the Federal Mogul/FC Mason site).

It also advances Neighborhood Goals 1 and 4, while being neutral about Goals 2 and 3 (which relate to neighborhoods, not the downtown).

With regard to Transportation goals, it is neutral on all goals – while Goal 2 discusses the downtown, the size of these units will no impact on whether the downtown becomes more easily navigable.

The proposal is also neutral on the specific Sustainability goals, though it advances the City’s broader Sustainability goal of creating quality housing in already built-up areas, by modernizing existing downtown apartments.

- **Positively promote the vision described for the Community Character Area that the use will be located in, as described in Chapter 4 of the City of St. Johns Master Plan.**

The proposed use is located in the “Core Downtown” Community Character Area, which specifically states that “upper floor apartments” are appropriate and that “re-use and re-occupancy of existing buildings is preferred whenever possible.” Allowing the undersized units allows the building to be redevelopment and modernized without reducing the number of housing units, which specifically advances the vision of the Community Character Area. The Core Downtown page from the Master Plan is attached for reference.



- **Not hinder the implementation of the Mobility Plan for the street(s) it is adjacent to, as described in Chapter 6 of the City of St. Johns Master Plan.**

There are no concerns that this proposal will negatively impact Clinton Avenue or any other nearby street. The relevant Mobility Plan pages are attached.

- b) **Will be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained so as to be safe, harmonious and appropriate in appearance with the existing or intended character of the general vicinity. Factors affecting this standard include noise, lighting, parking, traffic, garbage, large gatherings of people, water runoff, neighborhood character, heat island effect, and other similar off-site impacts of a use.**

The footprint, height, and use of the building will not change, so this standard is met. Our site plan comments address specific physical development issues.

- c) **Will be a substantial improvement to property in the immediate vicinity and an economic asset to the community as a whole. “Substantial improvement” and “economic asset” shall mean that the proposed use will clearly generate more economic activity, tax revenue, jobs, housing units, and/or spinoff development than the site would generate without the approved Special Use. In evaluating this criteria, the City Commission shall compare the site to its current state at the time of application, not to hypothetical alternative developments other than the proposed Special Use.**

Without the approved Special Use, the building could still be renovated and modernized, but the number of housing units would have to be reduced in order to meet the minimum unit size. Removing the hallway, there are 1,680 square feet on the upper floor that could be used for housing. That means that, using the 500 square foot minimum, the number of units would have to be reduced from 4 to 3. Therefore, approving the Special Use meets this standard, because the Special Use will prevent a decrease in the number of housing units while allowing for investment in the building.

- d) **Will be served adequately, based on the anticipated needs of the use in question, by existing public facilities and services, such as highways, streets, police and fire protection, drainage structures, parking lots, refuse disposal, water and sewer utilities, non-motorized pathways/sidewalks, communications infrastructure, public transportation, waste removal, and schools. The City Commission may also require upgrades to public services directly related to the proposal as a condition of Special Use approval.**

There are already four housing units in the building, and the footprint and height of the building will not expand, so the impact on highways, streets, drainage, water/sewer, sidewalks communications, Blue Bus, waste removal, and schools will be minimal. See Criteria F for an analysis of the impact on parking.

We will defer to the police and fire departments regarding the impact on those services.



- e) **Will be consistent with the Purpose and Intent of allowing Special Uses (see Section 155.255) and the Purpose and Intent of the Zoning District the Special Use is located within.**

The purpose and intent of allowing Special Uses is:

“The special use permit process is based on the concept that some uses are appropriate in a zoning district only under certain circumstances and with specific conditions. The special use permit review process allows the city to review a proposed use, determine if it is appropriate in the location proposed and what conditions are required to be placed on the use to ensure it’s compatibility with other uses in the area.”

The City specifically granted itself the power to approve housing units under 500 square feet by Special Use Permit on the recognition that undersized housing units can be appropriate in some, but not all, contexts. One context where undersized housing units work is in historic downtown buildings, where not only can the residents make use of the City’s parks, businesses, and amenities just steps away from their homes, but where keeping historic buildings historically viable is also an important consideration. Therefore, undersized housing units can be allowed to further the goals of a vibrant downtown.

The purpose and intent of the CBD Zoning District is:

“The CBD District is designed to provide for a variety of retail stores and related activities, and for office buildings and service establishments which occupy the prime retail frontage in the Central Business District, and which serve the comparison, convenience and service needs of a consumer population well beyond the corporate boundaries of the city. The district regulations are also designed to provide for a centrally located major shopping complex, serviced by conveniently located off-street parking facilities and allowing safe pedestrian movement; but to exclude non-retail uses which typically require large areas of land or generate truck traffic”

The Zoning District is specifically designed for the historic buildings along Clinton Avenue, which have unique needs. One of those unique needs is the need for flexibility in certain regulations to keep them economically viable, so the flexibility in unit size is appropriate here.

- f) **Will be served by adequate, safe, and efficient parking. “Adequate, safe, and efficient parking” shall mean not only meeting the requirements of Section 155.342, but also ensuring that the parking for the use does not burden nearby uses, does not create safety hazards for motorists, cyclists, or pedestrians, does not take up excessive land that could be used for more productive purposes, and does not create a blight on the historic character and charm of the City.**

There is no parking requirement in the CBD District. If this proposal was outside of the CBD District, the requirement would be:



- 4 Residential Units x 2 Spaces per Unit = 8 spaces
- 92 seats maximum restaurant capacity x .25 spaces per Seat = 23 spaces

The total requirement would be 31 parking spaces. If the building were proposed to be built from scratch, we would recommend a more detailed analysis of the capacity of the downtown parking system to absorb that number of spaces. However, the building is already existing, and the uses are permitted by right. The size of the dwelling units (which will actually increase) will not change downtown parking demand from what already exists. Therefore, this standard is met.

g) Comply with the applicable design standards outlined for the specific proposed use in Sections 155.415 through 155.448 of this chapter.”

There are no standards for restaurants or upper floor residential in that portion of the Ordinance. If the applicant decides to add a Sidewalk Café to the use, then the standards of Section 155.446 will apply. But that is not proposed at this time, nor is it relevant to the size of the dwelling units.

Site Plan (Physical Characteristics). Because the building is existing, there are few site plan considerations.

- 1) **Dimensional Standards:** There are no required setbacks in the CBD District. The maximum building height in the CBD District is 35 feet (with extra height allowable by Special Use Permit). Neither the footprint, nor the height, of the building are changing.
- 2) **Parking, Loading, and Access.** There is no parking requirement in the CBD District.
- 3) **Landscaping.** There is no landscaping requirement, and no room for landscaping on the site.
- 4) **Lighting.** No information on exterior lighting has been submitted. The applicant should submit information on proposed light fixtures along Clinton Avenue, along the south side of the building (which partially faces a parking lot), and along the alley to the west of the building. Lighting should be sufficient for safety and aesthetics without becoming a nuisance to nearby properties (or the upstairs residents at 311 Clinton).
- 5) **Trash Receptacles.** No information on trash receptacles has been submitted. Presumably there will be a trash receptacle in the alley for the restaurant? Will the residents use the same dumpster?

RECOMMENDATION

We recommend that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the Special Use to the City Commission, to allow the dwelling units at the square footage proposed by the applicant.

We recommend that the Site Plan Approval be tabled until after the City Commission approval of the Special Use. In the meantime, we recommend that the applicant submit additional information lighting and trash receptacles for review by the Planning Commission.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,
McKENNA



Christopher Khorey, AICP
Senior Principal Planner



Core Downtown

DESIGN GUIDELINES

LOT DIMENSIONS

Minimum Lot Area:
None

Minimum Lot Width:
None

BUILDING SETBACKS

Minimum / Side:
None

Maximum:
Zero feet

Rear:
As needed for loading / parking

BUILDING HEIGHT

Minimum:
2 stories

Maximum:
4 stories

STREET FRONTAGES

Retail storefronts
Outdoor patio / seating areas
Windows and displays
Awnings and canopies
Insert pictures of example development types

General Characteristics. St. Johns Core Downtown area consists of one block on either side of N. Clinton Avenue between State Street and Railroad Street. This area is a hub of commercial activity in the core of the City, and the buildings have historic architectural characteristics and define the downtown character.

Appropriate Land Uses. Mixed uses are compatible within the Core Downtown area. Commercial businesses intended for this category include service, professional, and retail businesses that encourage foot traffic and do not require large parking lots. Other land use types such as institutional or recreational uses, as well as small business “maker spaces” are also encouraged. Some residential uses, such as upper floor apartments, are also compatible in this area.

Density. There is no maximum density recommendation. The design recommendations of this Plan will set densities to a reasonable number of units by requiring good design. Setbacks on the front and side should be minimal and setbacks along the rear of lots should be respectful of parking, loading, and circulation needs.

Streets and Transportation. On-street parking, two-way traffic, and high walkability should be continued on N. Clinton Avenue. Bicycle lanes should be incorporated on all east-west streets through the downtown core. Bicycle parking should also be encouraged in strategic locations. N. Clinton Avenue should include streetscape and landscape elements that enhance the feel and character of downtown. Off-street parking lots serving downtown should include wayfinding signs such as “Free Parking Walk to Shops” or other ways to direct drivers to the downtown area.

Building Location. New buildings or infill development should be built to the sidewalk.

Building and Site Design. Reuse and re-occupancy of existing buildings is preferred whenever possible. Any new buildings should match existing feel and character of N. Clinton Avenue. Buildings should contain two or more stories, be located right on the sidewalk, and have off-street parking located to the rear. No front and side yard setbacks are encouraged. First floor storefronts should be transparent and welcoming with minimal window signage. Signage should be attractive, with projecting signs encouraged.

Parking. Any parking lots should be open to the public and serve the entire Core Downtown area. On street parking should be encouraged where street right-of-way permits, and off street parking should be located at the rear of buildings. Shared parking should be encouraged, and new uses shall not be required to create parking. Wayfinding signage should clearly identify public parking in this district.

In the St. Johns Downtown Plan, the Core Downtown Land Use Category in the provides additional recommendations for this Community Character Category.

CURRENT CHARACTER



PLANNED CHARACTER



Land Use – Development and Redevelopment

Policy Statement: Build an awareness of the City of St. Johns as an outstanding place to live, work and visit by promoting a positive business environment; encouraging new development in industrial parks; supporting redevelopment of brownfield sites; broadening and strengthening the tourism sector; and facilitating economic diversification and business growth. All while preserving and enhancing the traditional, mixed land use character of the City by offering planned integration of land uses that promote positive relationships between businesses and neighborhoods and careful separation of conflicting land uses.

GOAL #1: ACCOMMODATE A DIVERSE, STRONG COMMERCIAL AND OFFICE BASE THAT SERVES THE NEEDS OF RESIDENTS AND BUSINESSES WITHIN THE COMMUNITY.

- a. Increase small business development.
- b. Recruit a diverse number of businesses to St. Johns.
 - 1. Attract Tech Companies to St. Johns.
 - 2. Attract higher education to St. Johns through partnerships with regional institutions.
- c. Provide financial or regulatory incentives for Hotel development.
- d. Increase small town-appropriate commercial options that appeal to young professionals.
- e. Identify and discuss the best and highest uses for Township land that is close to City and within agreed upon development areas.

GOAL #3: REDEVELOP THE FEDERAL MOGUL / FC MASON BUILDING.

- a. Work with owner to address old Federal Mogul / FC Mason building and promote highest and best use of the property.
- b. Implement a phased redevelopment strategy for FC Mason.

GOAL: #2: CREATE A VIBRANT DOWNTOWN WITH DIVERSE BUSINESSES.

- a. Implement the best use of City owned properties downtown.
- b. Create attractive corridors that tie downtown to Old 127.
- c. Provide sidewalks along Old 127.
- d. Increase the amount of retail stores.
- e. Provide business location for online businesses that want a storefront.
- f. Provide incentives to attract, restaurants, brew pubs and entertainment.
- g. Provide outdoor family events such as movie nights downtown.
- h. Attract businesses with varying hours of operating and uses to create vibrant streets.
- i. Add new businesses along the side streets downtown to expand the retail area.
- j. Use public engagement to find the potential uses for the silo / elevator property and other City owned properties in and around the downtown.



GOAL #4: ENCOURAGE ECONOMIC DIVERSITY AND JOB CREATION THAT WILL LEVERAGE ST. JOHNS' GEOGRAPHIC AND CULTURAL ASSETS.

- a. Rezone vacant or underutilized property in and near neighborhoods to encourage redevelopment that is compatible in use and intensity with the existing neighborhood.
- b. Support and encourage efforts to diversify the economic base of St. Johns.
- c. Facilitate economic development activities that will strengthen neighborhoods, provide educational training and employment opportunities and provide necessary support systems.
- d. Create a business incubator to attract small businesses and startups.
- e. Attract information technology companies and Start-Ups.
- f. Expand industrial park.
- g. Incorporate cross municipal relationship to coordinate infrastructure development with Bingham Township.
- h. Reach out to existing business to identify needs for more vocational job training.

GOAL #5: PROVIDE ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITIES IN DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT AREAS.

- a. Encourage a diversity of business sizes and types, including retention of existing businesses and attraction of new businesses.
- b. Identify vacant and underutilized areas and plan to maximize their development.
- c. Reinforce existing business investment and provide for retention and expansion.
- d. Provide for local infrastructure development, where needed, to support economic development efforts.
- e. Continue downtown revitalization efforts by encouraging a mix of housing, retail, and complementary services.
- f. Promote expansion of successful brownfield redevelopment efforts.
- g. Explore creative partnerships between developers and the city in order to expedite environmental remediation.
- h. Encourage businesses to reuse infrastructure rather than relocating to new sites and thereby increase future public capital and operating costs.
- i. Transition of the industrial land along the CIS Trail to residential / mixed use.

Neighborhoods

Policy Statement: Sustain and enhance St. Johns neighborhoods by providing for the safety and protection of all residents, visitors, and property, and enabling the development of strong, cohesive, and stable neighborhoods.

GOAL #1: PRESERVE, PROTECT, AND ENHANCE THE INTEGRITY, ECONOMIC VIABILITY AND LIVABILITY OF ST. JOHNS NEIGHBORHOODS.

- a. Plans, programs and investment opportunities should be consistent with the Future Land Use Plan and with the strategies described below for each neighborhood area.
- b. Limit non-residential intrusions into residential neighborhoods and buffer detrimental effects of commercial and industrial uses through the use of open space and landscape treatments and site design.
- c. Evaluate zoning categories to ensure the character of the neighborhood is maintained and protected.
- d. Promote home ownership in all neighborhoods.
- e. Ensure that all new housing is compatible with the desired characteristics of that particular neighborhood and in accordance with the general neighborhood strategies contained in this chapter.
- f. Improve property maintenance of existing housing stock for renters and homeowners through enhanced code enforcement and rental inspection.
- g. Explore private / public partnerships to establish a home maintenance program for the low income, disabled, and senior populations.
- h. Unifying elements should be utilized as a neighborhood identifier, whether it is signage, similar architecture, street lighting or consistent streetscape landscaping.
- i. Provide opportunities for “aging in place” throughout the City.
- j. Provide opportunities to maintain the quality of older homes and redevelop blighted properties with grants for inside and outside maintenance on the home.
- k. Provide “curb appeal” grants to property owners.



GOAL #2: PROVIDE A HOUSING STOCK THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF A DIVERSE CITY POPULATION WITH SUPPORTING AMENITIES.

- a. Maintain all City parks and recreation facilities and pursue cooperative arrangements with other public and private groups for maintenance of these facilities.
- b. Involve residents in planning and maintaining open space and neighborhood parks.
- c. Explore opportunities to convert active space to passive space and consider water-storage opportunities.
- d. Create mix of housing and open space in new subdivisions that include sidewalks and trail connections.
- e. Provide housing for all ages. Including younger families and the aging population.
- f. Provide affordable housing for youth families.
- g. Increase housing stock for growing work force.
- h. Provide curb improvement grants for neighborhoods.
- i. Promote and control the further development of living units in the downtown.

GOAL #3: CREATE AN IDENTITY FOR ALL NEIGHBORHOODS.

- a. Encourage cooperation between community groups and the City to implement neighborhood signage programs.
- b. Incorporate expanded streetscape improvements to foster neighborhood identities.
- c. Utilize landscaping at entry points, in rights-of-way, and park areas to improve the image of all residential neighborhoods.
- d. Install new gateway signage at entrances to the City.

GOAL #4: MAINTAIN AND PRESERVE HISTORIC PROPERTIES WITHIN THE CITY.

- a. Secure façade grants for downtown buildings.
- b. Provide a name for the Historic District.
- c. Include the Historic District in the Wayfinding Plan.
- d. Secure historic preservation awards for home restoration projects.
- e. Use historical buildings to promote the up and coming thriving City.
- f. Bed & Breakfast.
- g. Incubator Space.
- h. Determine the buildings at the grain elevator site that are most worthy of preservation, and ensure that those are preserved.
- i. Identify and promote the City's historic Old Village plat, including adding decorative street signs, creating a zoning overlay, creating a local historic district, and seeking State and/or Federal historic status.

Transportation

Policy Statement: To create a safe, connected transportation system that includes street, transit, water, air, and non-motorized components adequate to accommodate the current and future needs of the City of St. Johns and promotes the walkable, traditional character of the community for all users.

GOAL #1: PRESERVE AND ENHANCE THE LEVEL OF SERVICE CIRCULATION AND SAFETY OF THE ROAD NETWORK TO SUPPORT ALL USERS IN THE COMMUNITY.

- a. Control noise of truck traffic in expanding industrial park.
- b. Mitigate for increased truck traffic, with buffers such as street trees and green infrastructure.
- c. Improve and maintain the specific roads that are being impacted by additional industrial park traffic.
- d. Increase safety at the intersection of M-21 and Scott Road through growth of businesses and providing infrastructure to increase walkability. Consider a roundabout.
- e. Classify all existing and proposed streets by their function and develop a circulation system, which recognizes these functions. The functions should include consideration of emergency routes.
- f. Work toward the development of an overall circulation system for the City, which is coordinated with the transportation systems of the region, and which includes a connected network of residential streets designed to connect residents to each other by walking, cycling, or driving.
- g. Require that all land developments be designed in a manner that reduces the number of potential traffic conflicts (curb cuts), particularly along streets that serve as City-wide or regional traffic carriers. Require connections for both cars and pedestrians between adjacent sites on commercial thoroughfares. New developments should not adversely affect the safety, efficiency, and function of streets.
- h. Require street layouts of contiguous residential areas to be coordinated and connected. Residential street patterns should provide access for emergency vehicles and smooth and safe flow of pedestrians, bicycles, and cars through the neighborhood.
- i. Provide street layouts and street design and paving standards in industrial areas which are appropriate for the heavier truck traffic associated with such uses and which facilitate peak-hour smooth traffic flows with minimum disruption to the general traffic flow of the community.



GOAL #2: MAKE DOWNTOWN MORE NAVIGABLE AND EASIER TO ACCESS

- a. Increase signage leading to downtown, including pavement markings at M-21 and Old 127.
- b. Provide directional signs on Old 127 to direct people downtown.
- c. Increase wayfinding signs that directs drivers to available parking.
- d. Provide on-street overnight parking on Spring Street, Brush Street, and Railroad Street.
- e. Expand public parking options downtown.
- f. Repair parking lots that are damaged.
- g. Provide a variety of parking options including parking permit types and fees.
- h. Wayfinding Sign Plan with suggested designs for both the downtown and Old 127 Corridor and tying the two together.
- i. Brand Wayfinding to downtown as "St. Johns - Where Up North Begins" and "Take a shortcut through time and visit historic downtown St. Johns".
- j. Create Walk and Bike routes / maps that tie to downtown, parks, Wilson Center and Rail Trails.

GOAL #3: IMPROVE SAFETY AND QUALITY OF LIFE ON OLD 127

- a. Collaborate with MDOT to increase traffic safety and walkability along OLD 127.
- b. Provide Beautification to OLD 127 to change the road into a gateway.
- c. Provide green infrastructure and landscaping to act as beautification.
- d. Provide basic signage at turnarounds along Old 127.
- e. Increase streetscape and building improvements to beautify Old 127 Corridor.

Sustainability and Environmental Preservation

Policy Statement: Create a healthy, sustainable environment for St. Johns citizens by preserving and enhancing St. Johns natural resources and planning for the efficient, attractive and environmentally sound use of land.

GOAL #1: INTEGRATE NATURAL FEATURES INTO SITE DEVELOPMENT WHILE CLEANING UP EXISTING CONTAMINATION TO PROTECT THE QUALITY OF NATURE IN URBAN AREAS.

- a. Promote the clean-up of contaminated sites with innovative incentives through zoning flexibility and with assistance from the Brownfield Redevelopment Authority.
- b. Promote sensitive and responsible storm water management practices by developing guidelines and policies based on Best Management Practices.
- c. Encourage developers to integrate existing natural features into new developments.
- d. Develop ordinances which preserve the integrity of the natural settings of neighborhoods, communities, open spaces and parks, and develop clear procedures for their enforcement.
- e. Integrate vegetation and natural features in road construction and improvements.

GOAL #2: PRESERVE EXISTING TREES AND WORK TO EXPAND THE TREE CANOPY.

- a. Regulate tree clearing through a tree preservation ordinance to preserve landmark trees and require effective tree preservation methods during construction.
- b. Establish a community-wide tree planting program to add neighborhood appeal, increase the community's aesthetic appeal, and reduce impacts of extreme heat events (saving energy costs).
- c. Research projected shifts in tree population and aggressively transition street tree-planting program to trees that will thrive in hotter summers and wetter winters.
- d. Increase the diversity of tree species planted in the City.
- e. Focus new vegetation and tree canopy development efforts on areas identified as high relative exposure to heat events and flooding.



Joint Planning

Policy Statement: Coordinate with Bingham Township to do joint planning areas.

GOAL #1: IDENTIFY KEY AREAS AROUND THE CITY THAT REQUIRE JOINT PLANNING EFFORTS AND INCLUDE RECOMMENDED LAND USES FOR THESE AREAS.

- a. Plan for the area bounded by the US-127 freeway, Wildcat Road, and the City limits.
- b. Plan for area bounded by the US-127 freeway, County Farm Road, Taft Road, and Townsend Road.
- c. Plan for the area along M-21 west of the City, especially the vicinity of the M-21 / DeWitt Road intersection.
- d. Prevent areas mentioned above from turning into dead space which occurs at borders of municipalities.
- e. Assign land uses that benefit both Bingham Township and the City of St. Johns.
- f. Provide land uses based on feedback from both communities.



Automobile Transportation

OLD 127 SAFETY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Old 127 runs north-south through St. Johns, spanning four lanes for most of its length except for E. Steel Street to E. Baldwin Street, where it reduces to two lanes with a center turn lane. The width of the road poses a safety concern for not only drivers, but potential bicycle and pedestrian users of the corridor. This plan envisions the following strategies:

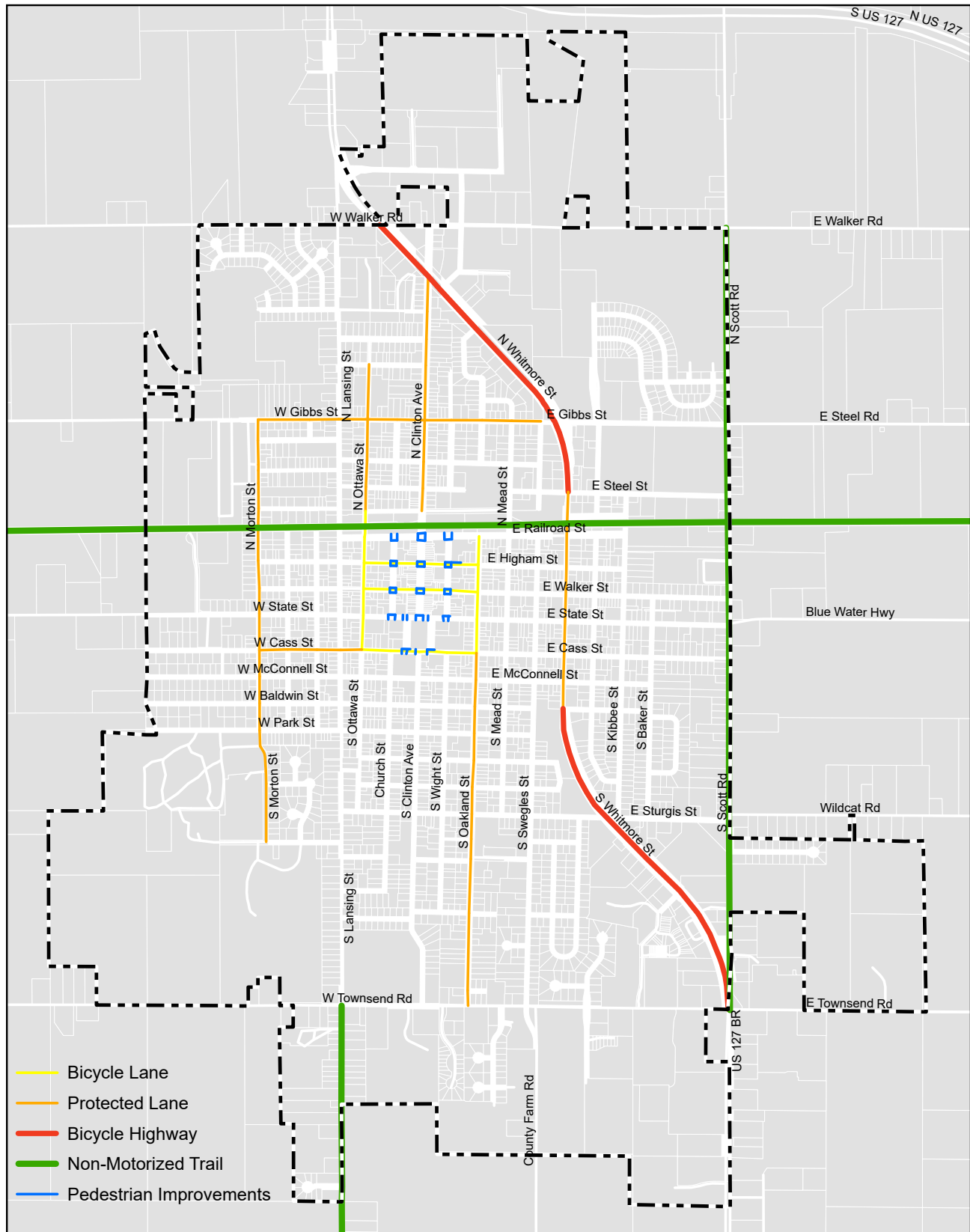
- » Create a zoning district that reflects the new Gateway Corridor Community Character District and implement a front yard setback that brings buildings closer to Old 127 for a more enclosed feeling.
- » Construct a sidewalk and plant trees along Old 127 to create visual interest and a feeling of enclosure.
- » Develop a bicycle highway within Old 127 that is physically protected from vehicle traffic.

Non-Motorized Transportation and Complete Streets

“Complete Streets” is the concept that the roads should be safe and available for all types of users, not merely automobiles. The street character and design aspects described above help to create complete streets by making walking a more enjoyable activity. On-street parking and narrow road lanes can calm traffic and lower speeds, creating a safer environment for people. New infrastructure for bicyclists and pedestrians brings encouragement and investment to these modes, and creates opportunities for both transportation and recreation.

The City of St. Johns has the opportunity to build a robust non-motorized transportation network in the near future, providing connections to the Fred Meijer Clinton-Ionia-Shiawassee Trail which extends 41.4 miles between Ionia to the west and Owosso to the east. Map 2 depicts the future non-motorized network in the City.

Map 6: Non-Motorized Network



PATHWAYS AND TRAILS

Non-motorized infrastructure should connect users to key destinations and corridors in a safe manner. Providing shared use paths and bicycle lanes where deemed appropriate can encourage users of all types and abilities to take advantage of the network. The following infrastructure priorities have been identified for the mobility plan:

- » Incorporate bicycle lanes connecting to downtown, specifically on the less busy streets parallel to N. Clinton Avenue (Ottawa Street and Oakland Street) as well as the streets that intersect with N. Clinton Avenue (Higham Street and Walker Street).
- » Install protected bicycle lanes on N. Clinton Avenue, north of the Meijer Trail up to Old 127.
- » Provide safe bicycle lane connections or shared use paths to destinations such as St. Johns Park, the Wilson Center, St. Johns High School, Gateway North Elementary School, Senior Citizen Park, Jaycee Park, and Sparrow Clinton Hospital.

SIDEWALKS

Some neighborhoods are not currently connected to the City's sidewalk network, creating a difficult walking environment. Old 127 does not have sidewalks, limiting its accessibility as a major corridor. Priorities for St. Johns should be filling in the gaps in the existing sidewalk network, connecting sidewalks to downtown and to other destinations, and requiring sidewalk improvements as part of new development or redevelopment. Priority projects include the following:

- » Complete the existing sidewalk network, especially on Old 127, Sturgis, Lincoln, and Mead Streets to provide more connections in and around downtown.
- » Sidewalks should continue to be installed as new neighborhoods are constructed to add to the extensive sidewalk network already in place.
- » Sidewalk connections to the school campus areas, particularly the middle school, are highly encouraged to promote safe routes to school and as part of encouraging more walking activity.

STREET CHARACTER AND GREEN TREATMENTS

The streets leading into Downtown St. Johns should be designed to feel comfortable and welcoming for all users. Consistent landscape and streetscape elements should be utilized to create a cohesive and aesthetically interesting design. The following strategies can create a distinct street character, indicating to people that they are entering a walkable and compact place while improving the environmental quality:

- » Street furniture should be strategically designed on N. Clinton Avenue and its intersecting streets:
 - Benches should be located in shaded and sunny areas and face a view that is worth looking at.
 - Bicycle parking should be adequately lit, evenly spaced, and easily accessible from all sides.
 - Lighting should be at the pedestrian scale, not to primarily light the road or cast broad shadows.
 - Signage should be consistent, clear, and well-located.
 - Trash receptacles should be easy to find, evenly spaced, and intentionally incorporated as part of the street furniture.
 - Landscaping should be featured on all streets, including street trees, ornamental trees, and landscaped beds with low-maintenance plantings. Benches should be located near landscaped areas.
- » Green treatments:
 - Plant shade trees along streets and in public spaces wherever possible.
 - Reconstruct and expand the bulb-outs at the four main intersections along N. Clinton Avenue to increase pedestrian space, trees, and landscaping, effectively improving the street character and shortening the length of the crosswalks to create a safer and more comfortable pedestrian environment.
 - Implement a cohesive landscape design along E. State Street to create a natural barrier that would help protect the historic buildings closest to E. State Street from the long-term damage that comes from the vibrations of the heavy truck traffic.

The key intersections on Map 3 are the primary focus areas for traffic calming and green nodes. The two bounding intersections of downtown, where N. Clinton Avenue crosses W. Railroad Street and where it crosses E. State Street, should have intentional pedestrian-oriented designs to draw people into downtown.

Map 7: Street Character and Green Treatments

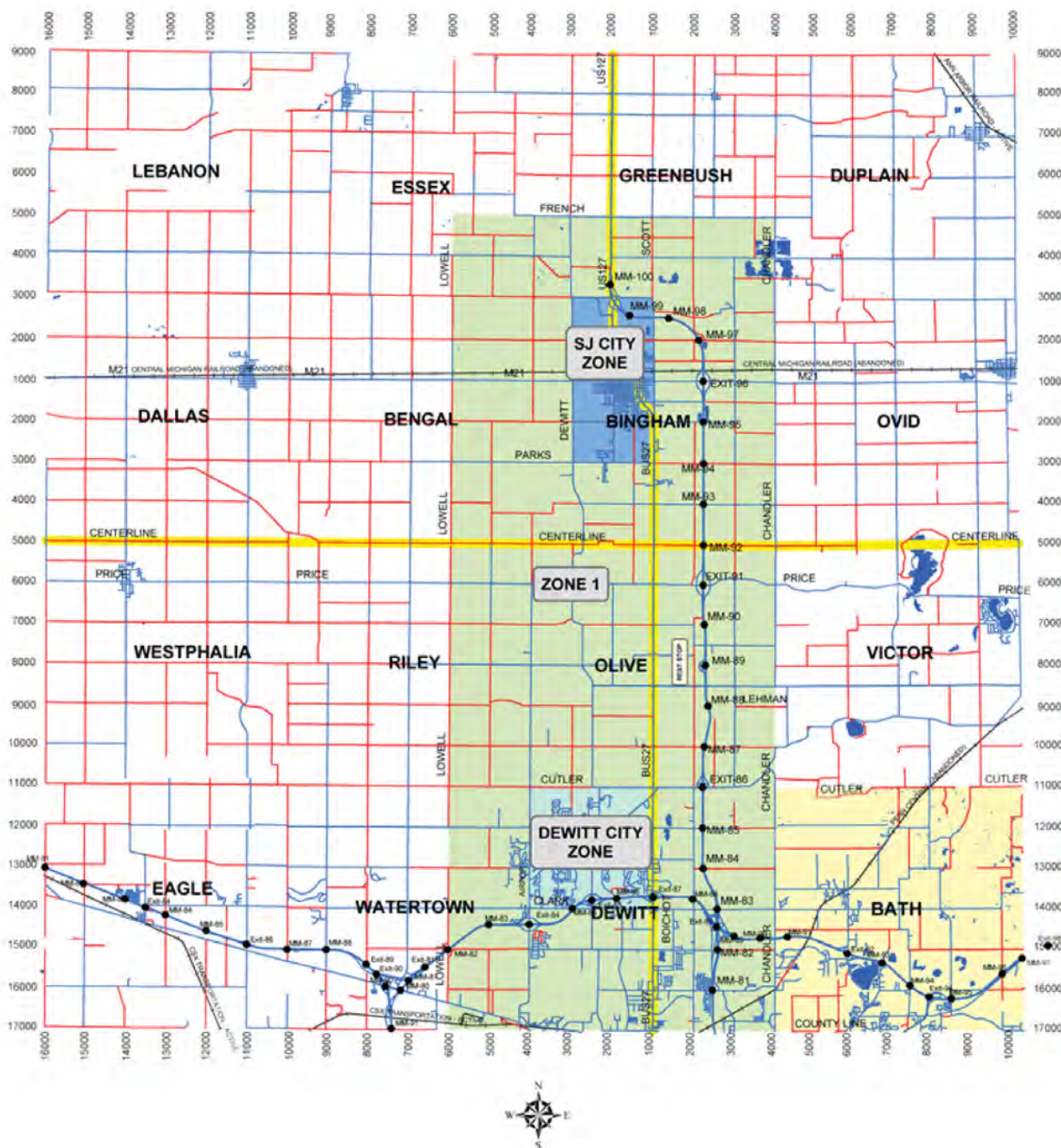


Bicycle Parking

Downtown has several bikeable destinations and will also be a main point of interest on the Meijer Trail, so it is a primary location for bike parking. There are currently several bicycle parking locations on N. Clinton Avenue between the Meijer Trail and State Street. The mobility plan envisions a City-wide non-motorized network with the following goals:

- » Ensure there is bicycle parking at key locations around St. Johns such as the Wilson Center, schools, parks, and activity nodes within the Neighborhood Center Commercial areas.
- » Develop trailheads with bicycle parking and amenities like water fountains and repair stations at key intersections of trails and pathways with other points of interest.

Map 8: Clinton Transit



Public Transit

Established in 2001, Clinton Transit services the St. Johns / Bingham Township community, as well as Olive, DeWitt, and Bath Townships, and the City of DeWitt. Service is provided on a "dial-a-ride" basis, delivering riders door-to-door through prearranged and scheduled trips.

There are no fixed route services serving St. Johns. The City will work with Clinton Transit to evaluate service and ridership on an ongoing basis, and to evaluate the need for fixed-route service, including commuter service to Lansing and East Lansing, in the future.



MCKENNA

March 31, 2022

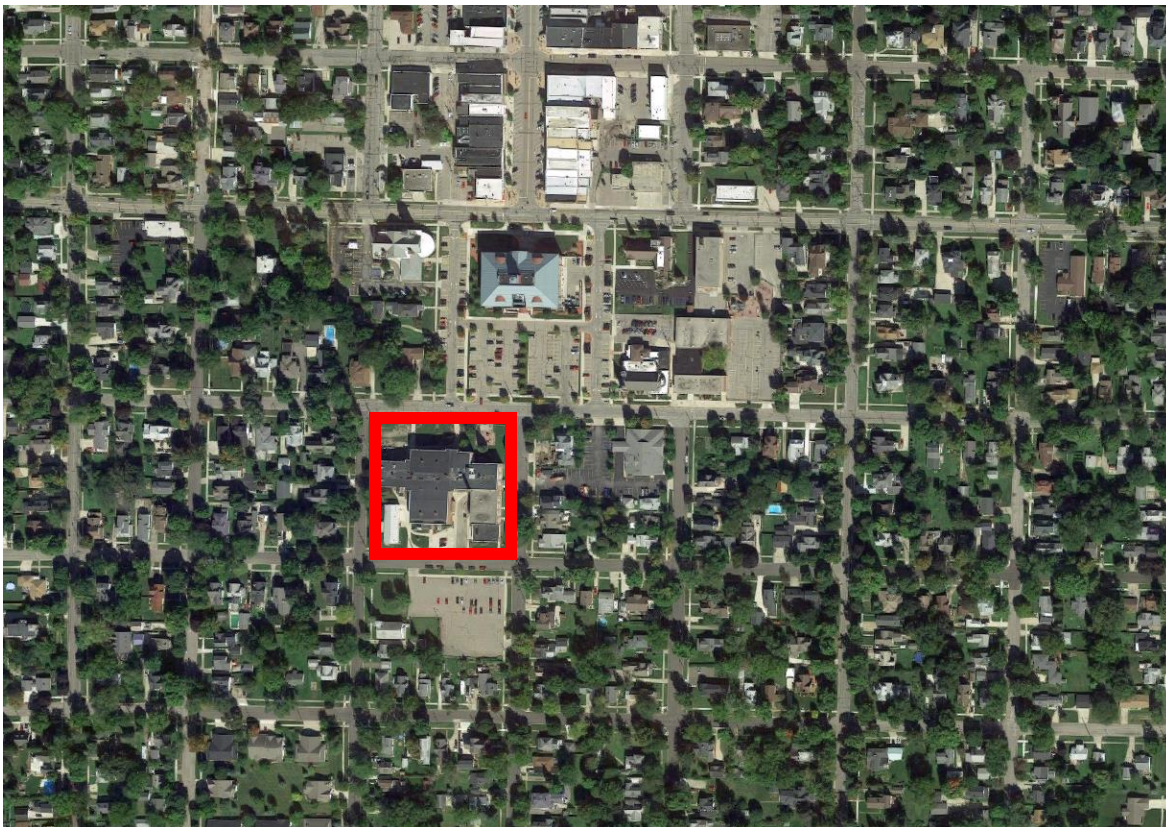
Planning Commission
City of St. Johns
100 E. State Street, #1100
St. Johns, MI 48879

Subject: Proposed Rezoning of 101 W. Cass Street

Dear Commissioners,

As requested by the City, we have reviewed the above referenced application for the rezoning of the lot at 101 W. Cass Street from MC Municipal Center to CBD Central Business District.

The lot, which currently contains the Wilson Center, is outlined (approximately) on the aerial photo below. The applicant proposes to renovate the Wilson Center into a mixed-use complex, including residential units.



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Below is the current zoning map in the area. The parcel in question is highlighted.



LEGEND

- R1 - Low Density Residential
- R2 - Medium Density Residential
- R3 - High Density Residential
- CBD - Central Business District
- GC - General Commercial
- MU - Mixed Use
- I1 - Industrial - High Performance
- I2 - Industrial - Liberal Performance
- O - Office
- MC - Municipal Center



ZONING DISTRICT COMPARISON

The chart below compares the existing MC District to the proposed CBD District. When considering a rezoning, the Planning Commission must take into account all potential uses under the new zoning classification, not merely the use the applicant has expressed interest in.

The permitted uses in the CBD District are dependent on the adjacent roadways. The site is adjacent to four roadways – Cass, McConell, Church, and Clinton. But Section 155.101 states that the street that should be used to determine the permitted uses is the front lot line – in this case, Cass. Cass Street is not specifically listed in Section 155.101, so the site falls under “All Other Streets.”

	<i>Existing District MC Municipal Center</i>	<i>Potential District CBD Central Business District (Cass Street)</i>
Permitted Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cemeteries• Child Care Centers• Christmas Tree Sales• Continuation of Existing Residential• Essential Services• Fraternal, Armory, and Legion Halls• Funeral Homes and Mortuaries• Essential Services (gas, electric, etc) needed to serve nearby residential.• Government offices and facilities.• Hospitals and quasi-public health care clinics.• Off-street Parking.• Parks and Playgrounds• Religious Institutions• Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Single Family Homes• Multi-Family Residential• Outdoor recreation/parks
Special Approval Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication Antennas• Essential Services serving a broader purpose.• Psychiatric Hospitals	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mixed Use (commercial/residential)• Retail• Restaurant• Hotel• Office• Financial Services/Bank• Personal Services



	Existing District MC Municipal Center	Potential District CBD Central Business District (Cass Street)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Appliance/Electronic Repair• Religious Institution• Government Operations Building• Museum/Art Gallery• Indoor Recreation/Community Center/Library• Outdoor Recreation/Public Park• Outreach Mission/Community Service Organization
Minimum Lot Size	6,000 square feet	None
Minimum Lot Width	60 feet	None
Minimum Setbacks	Front: 50 feet Side: 25% of the height of the building Rear: 25 feet	None
Maximum Lot Coverage	60%	100%
Maximum Building Height	35 feet 2.5 stories	35 feet Additional height approvable by Special Use
Residential Density	No Residential Units Permitted	No maximum, provided minimum unit size and building height meet requirements or are otherwise approved by Special Use Permit.

The two districts are very different. Rezoning to CBD would substantially reduce the number of permitted uses by right, but would greatly expand the uses permitted by Special Use permit. The Planning Commission would have to carefully consider any requested Special Use permit should the property be rezoned.

Notably, it is our understanding that the applicant has considered child care as part of the mixed use complex, and that is not listed as a permitted use in the CBD District. However, we would support an interpretation that child care could be considered approvable by Special Use as part of a “mixed use (commercial/residential)” building.



The less restrictive dimensional standards of the CBD District would relieve the building from legal non-conforming status with regard to its setbacks and height, some of which do not meet MC District requirements.

One other consideration is that the CBD District exempts the site from all parking requirements. There is only minimal on-site parking, but under that district, if and when the building is renovated, there would be no mechanism to require additional parking. It is our understanding that the City is considering expanding on-street parking opportunities on surrounding streets in support of the redevelopment. In that case, there might not be a need to require more parking.

REVIEW CRITERIA FOR REZONING

When reviewing a rezoning request, the Planning Commission should consider the following criteria.

1. Consistency with the Master Plan.

In order to be approved, a rezoning should be consistent with the Future Land Use Map in the Master Plan. The Future Land Use map designates the lot as “Downtown Edge/Mixed Use” as shown on the map below.

On Page 50, the Master Plan states that the appropriate land uses in the “Downtown Edge/Mixed Use” category are “uses that can serve as a transition between the downtown and the neighborhoods are encouraged. Uses should be a mix of commercial, professional offices, residential, technology, and civic.” The uses permitted in the CBD District are consistent with that list.

Importantly, the Zoning Plan on Page 16 states that CBD is an appropriate Zoning District for the Downtown Edge Future Land Use category.

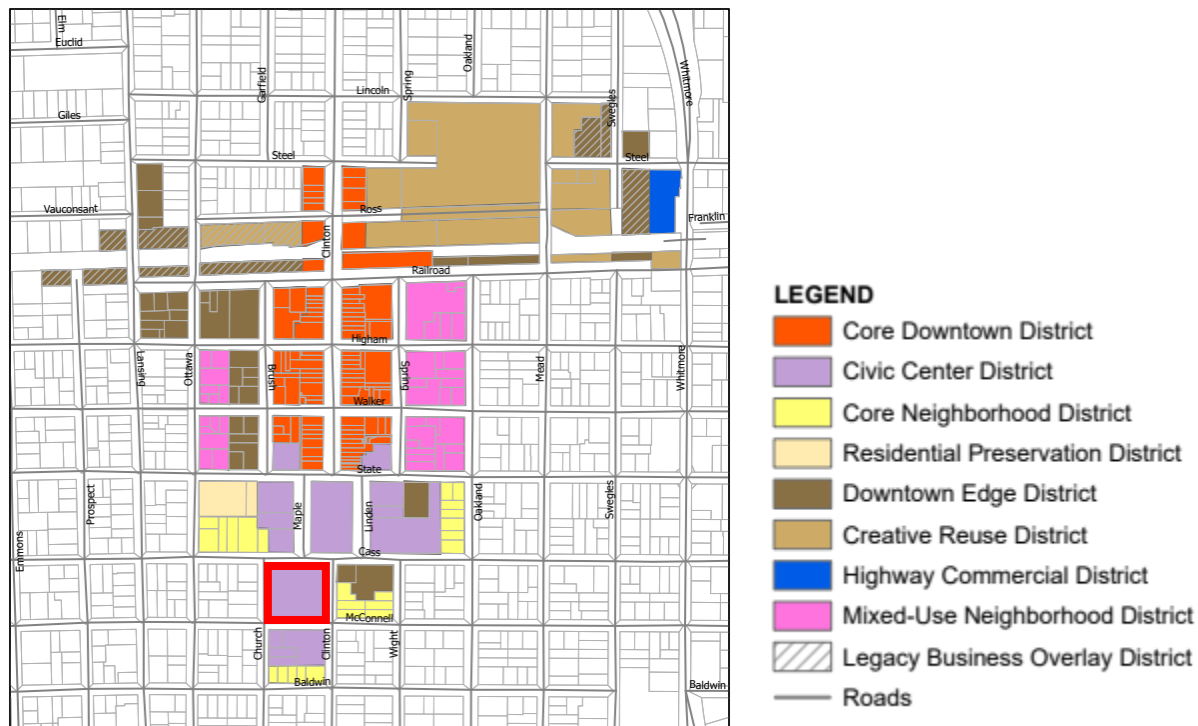


LEGEND

	City Boundary		Core Downtown
	Old Village Overlay		Downtown Edge / Mixed Use
	Joint Planning Areas		Flexible Redevelopment
Citywide Community Character Districts			Community Commercial
	Parks, Open Space, and Greenways		Gateway Commercial
	Rural Estate		Commercial / Industrial
	Modern Spacious Residential		Industrial
	Traditional Walkable Residential		Agriculture-Energy/Industrial
	Multiple Family Residential		Agriculture-Energy
	Public / Institutional		



The site in question is also within the area covered by the Downtown Master Plan. The Downtown Future Land Use map is shown below, with the site in question highlighted. The Civic Center district calls for “monumental architecture” and “community centers,” which the existing Wilson Center is consistent with. The uses allowed in the CBD District do not exactly match the uses listed for the Civic Center district, but they are no incompatible.



Overall, this analysis determines that the rezoning is consistent with the Master Plan.

2. **The Site’s Physical Compatibility with the Uses Permitted in the Zoning District.** The Planning Commission must consider whether the site can reasonably support the uses permitted in the proposed Zoning District, from a physical perspective.

The site contains the old St. Johns High School, which has also served as the Middle School and the Wilson Center. The building has classic architecture and fits with Downtown St. Johns’ traditional urban form. The applicant wishes to renovate the building into a mixed use development, with residential units. That type of redevelopment of a school building has been successful elsewhere, and the uses permitted in the CBD District would allow for the proposed redevelopment (though a special use permit would be required)– while the uses permitted by the MC District are much more restrictive and limiting for the building’s future.

3. **Compatibility with Surrounding Uses.** The Planning Commission must consider whether all of the permitted uses in the proposed CBD District would be appropriate adjacent to the existing surroundings. The table below summarizes the land use attributes of the site and the surrounding properties.



	Zoning	Existing Land Uses	Future Land Use (Master Plan)	Downtown Plan
Subject Parcel	MC	Wilson Center	Downtown Edge/Mixed Use	Civic Center
North	MC/R-3	Residential/City Hall	Downtown Edge/Mixed Use	Civic Center
East	O/R-2/ R-3/MC	Dentist/Funeral Home/Residential	Downtown Edge/Mixed Use	Downtown Edge/Core Neighborhood
South	MC	Parking Lot	Downtown Edge/Mixed Use	Civic Center
West	R-3	Residential	Traditional Walkable Residential	N/A

The surrounding land uses are mixed use urbanism consistent with the edges of St. Johns' downtown. They have been adjacent to the school/community center for decades, and the Master Plan includes nearly all of them into the same Downtown Edge/Mixed Use category – indicating that a mix of uses and urban character are envisioned for nearly all of the blocks. Even the residential areas are mostly zoned R-3, which is the City's densest residential category.

Additionally, the CBD District gives the Planning Commission control over many of the specific uses on the site in question, through the Special Use process. Ultimately, the CBD district would not be incompatible with the surroundings.

4. **Most Appropriate Zoning District.** The Planning Commission must consider whether the CBD District is the most appropriate district for the uses desired on the site. Some other options exist to allow mixed uses on the site.
 - **The MU District** allows a wide variety of uses and envisions walkable character through its dimensional requirements. However, very importantly, it does not allow multi-family residential – only single family, duplexes, and townhouses.
 - **A Conditional Rezoning** would allow the applicant to voluntarily waive certain rights applicable to the CBD District. However, the only aspect of the CBD District that may be objectionable is the parking exemption. If the City has other plans to ensure adequate parking for the redevelopment, a conditional rezoning is not necessary.
 - **A Planned Unit Development** would allow all aspects of the redevelopment to be governed in a single document. However, that option is unnecessarily complex when the CBD District is sufficient for the redevelopment, supported by the Master Plan, and not incompatible with the surroundings – especially if the City has a plan to ensure adequate parking.



5. **Infrastructure Capacity.** We are not aware of any infrastructure capacity issues that would restrict the allowable uses in the CBD District.

RECOMMENDATION

The CBD District is supported by the Master Plan, and allows uses that are compatible with the surroundings, especially with the added protection of the Special Use process. Therefore, we recommend that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the rezoning to the City Commission.

However, the City should also be prepared to make sure there is sufficient parking for the development through non-zoning methods, because the CBD District exempts the parcel from parking requirements.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Respectfully submitted,
McKENNA

Christopher Khorey, AICP
Senior Principal Planner



MCKENNA

March 31, 2022

Planning Commission
City of St. Johns
100 E. State Street, #1100
St. Johns, MI 48879

Subject: Proposed Rezoning of 101 W. McConnell Street

Dear Commissioners,

As requested by the City, we have reviewed the above referenced application for the rezoning of the lot at 101 W. Cass Street from MC Municipal Center to CBD Central Business District. We will also evaluate the R-3 District as an alternative to CBD.

The lot, which currently contains a parking lot, is outlined (approximately) on the aerial photo below. The applicant proposes to construct senior housing on the site.



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Below is the current zoning map in the area. The parcel in question is highlighted.



LEGEND

- R1 - Low Density Residential
- R2 - Medium Density Residential
- R3 - High Density Residential
- CBD - Central Business District
- GC - General Commercial
- MU - Mixed Use
- I1 - Industrial - High Performance
- I2 - Industrial - Liberal Performance
- O - Office
- MC - Municipal Center



ZONING DISTRICT COMPARISON

The chart below compares the existing MC District to the proposed CBD District, as well the R-3 option. When considering a rezoning, the Planning Commission must take into account all potential uses under the new zoning classification, not merely the use the applicant has expressed interest in.

The permitted uses in the CBD District are dependent on the adjacent roadways. The site is adjacent to three roadways –McConnell, Church, and Clinton. But Section 155.101 states that the street that should be used to determine the permitted uses is the front lot line – in this case, McConnell. McConnell Street is not specifically listed in Section 155.101, so the site falls under “All Other Streets.”

	<i>Existing District MC Municipal Center</i>	<i>Potential District CBD Central Business District (McConnell Street)</i>	<i>R-3 High Density Residential</i>
Permitted Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cemeteries• Child Care Centers• Christmas Tree Sales• Continuation of Existing Residential• Essential Services• Fraternal, Armory, and Legion Halls• Funeral Homes and Mortuaries• Essential Services (gas, electric, etc) needed to serve nearby residential.• Government offices and facilities.• Hospitals and quasi-public health care clinics.• Off-street Parking.• Parks and Playgrounds• Religious Institutions• Schools	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Single Family Homes• Multi-Family Residential• Outdoor recreation/parks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Single Family Homes• Two Family Residential• Multi-Family Residential• Adult Foster Care• Family Child Care• Essential Services (gas, electric, etc) needed to serve nearby residential.• Home Occupations



	<i>Existing District MC Municipal Center</i>	<i>Potential District CBD Central Business District (McConnell Street)</i>	<i>R-3 High Density Residential</i>
Special Approval Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Antennas • Essential Services serving a broader purpose. • Psychiatric Hospitals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mixed Use (commercial/residential) • Retail • Restaurant • Hotel • Office • Financial Services/Bank • Personal Services • Appliance/Electronic Repair • Religious Institution • Government Operations Building • Museum/Art Gallery • Indoor Recreation/Community Center/Library • Outdoor Recreation/Public Park • Outreach Mission/Community Service Organization 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication Antennas • Bed and Breakfast • Cluster Housing Developments • Essential Services (gas, electric, etc) needed to serve a broader area. • Religious Institutions
Minimum Lot Size	6,000 square feet	None	7,000 square feet
Minimum Lot Width	60 feet	None	75 feet
Minimum Setbacks	Front: 50 feet Side: 25% of the height of the building Rear: 25 feet	None	Front: 10 feet Side: 10 feet Rear: 20 feet
Maximum Lot Coverage	60%	100%	55%
Maximum Building Height	35 feet 2.5 stories	35 feet	30 feet 2.5 stories



	Existing District MC Municipal Center	Potential District CBD Central Business District (McConnell Street)	R-3 High Density Residential
		Additional height approvable by Special Use	
Residential Density	No Residential Units Permitted	No maximum, provided minimum unit size and building height meet requirements or are otherwise approved by Special Use Permit.	Lots less than 0.1 acres: 1 dwelling unit Lots between 0.1 and 0.3 acres in area: Up to 2 dwelling units Lots between 0.3 and 0.4 acres in area: Up to 3 dwelling units On lots between 0.4 and 1.0 acres in area: Up to 4 dwelling units On lots over 1 acre: 1 unit per 0.1 acres

The three districts are very different. Rezoning to CBD would substantially reduce the number of permitted uses by right, but would greatly expand the uses permitted by Special Use permit. The Planning Commission would have to carefully consider any requested Special Use permit should the property be rezoned.

The MC District is very limiting, especially because the site is not currently developed. The allowable uses would not allow the use the applicant has proposed (senior housing), nor would they allow many of the appropriate infill uses for a development site within the city's core neighborhood.

The CBD District completely eliminates setbacks and parking requirements, as well as opening the door for special uses for small dwelling units and tall buildings. Since the site is currently a parking lot, the wide variety of allowable uses and lack of dimensional controls in the CBD District are a concern.

Under CBD, the applicant could, hypothetically, take up the entire site with a three story building. Approximately 20% of the building would be needed for circulation, leaving 40,000 square feet per floor, or 120,000 total square feet. That could be divided into 240 500-square foot housing units (though at least 40% of those would have to have two or more bedrooms, which would probably reduce the total number). While the applicant is unlikely to "max out" the allowable building area on the site, the CBD district does pose a concern about overloading the site – especially because there would be no parking requirement.

The requirement in CBD District to have 40% of the units be two or more bedrooms is also bad for the applicant, who is unlikely to want that much of a senior housing complex taken up with multi-bedroom units.



The R-3 District is much more focused, allowing primarily residential uses, which would include senior housing. The site is approximately 50,000 square feet, so it would allow approximately 50 housing units under R-3 zoning.

REVIEW CRITERIA FOR REZONINGS

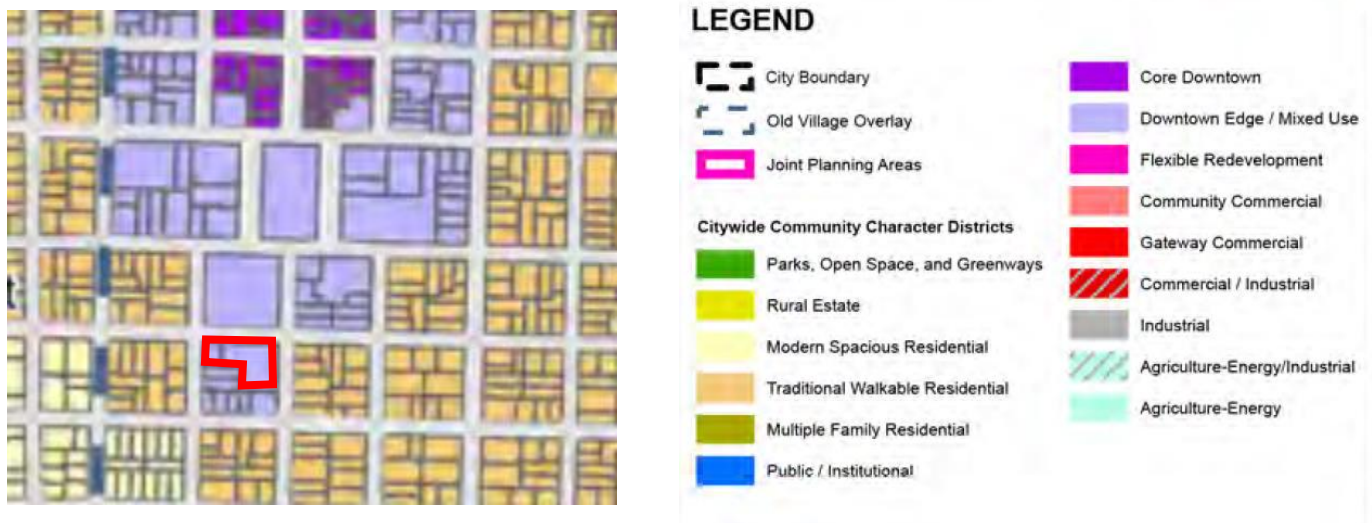
When reviewing a rezoning request, the Planning Commission should consider the following criteria.

1. Consistency with the Master Plan.

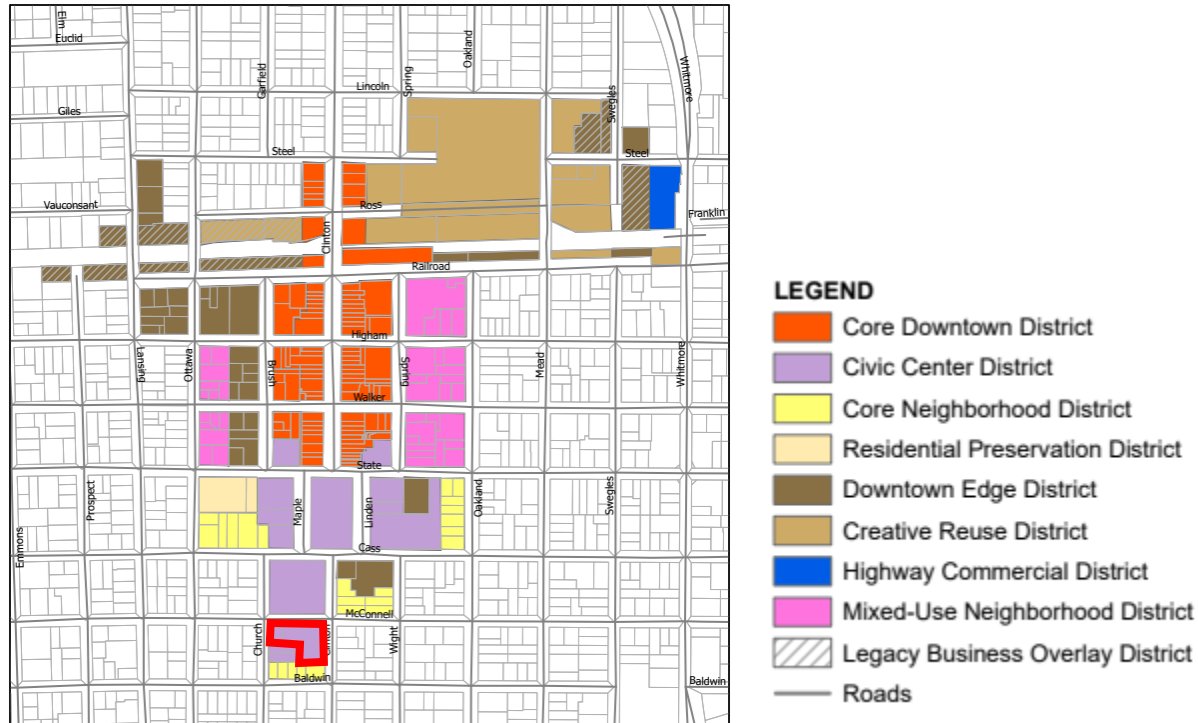
In order to be approved, a rezoning should be consistent with the Future Land Use Map in the Master Plan. The Future Land Use map designates the lot as “Downtown Edge/Mixed Use” as shown on the map below.

On Page 50, the Master Plan states that the appropriate land uses in the “Downtown Edge/Mixed Use” category are “uses that can serve as a transition between the downtown and the neighborhoods are encouraged. Uses should be a mix of commercial, professional offices, residential, technology, and civic.” The uses permitted in the CBD District are consistent with that list. The uses permitted in the R-3 District are partially consistent with that list, in that R-3 allows dense, urban-style housing, and also allows some civic uses, but does not allow commercial, offices, or technology.

Importantly, the Zoning Plan on Page 16 states that CBD is an appropriate Zoning District for the Downtown Edge Future Land Use category, but does not list R-3 as an appropriate Zoning District. That said, a senior housing development, or other multi-family, would support the overall mixed use vision of the Downtown Edge category, especially given the location of the site in the southernmost block of the category.



The site in question is also within the area covered by the Downtown Master Plan. The Downtown Future Land Use map is shown below, with the site in question highlighted. The Civic Center district calls for “monumental architecture” and “community centers,” which the existing Wilson Center is consistent with. The uses allowed in the CBD District do not exactly match the uses listed for the Civic Center district, but they are no incompatible.



Overall, this analysis determines that the CBD District is intended as an appropriate zoning district for the site, but that the R-3 District would also be compatible with the vision of the Master Plan.

2. **The Site's Physical Compatibility with the Uses Permitted in the Zoning District.** The Planning Commission must consider whether the site can reasonably support the uses permitted in the proposed Zoning District, from a physical perspective.

The site contains a parking lot that has served the school/community building to the north (which has been the high school, the middle school, and the Wilson Center throughout its history). Under the CBD District, the only uses permitted by right are residential or recreational, though the Special Use process opens up a wide variety of uses, including retail, restaurants, hotels, and office space. The residential uses would be appropriate, while the others would likely not be – though the Special Use process would offer the Planning Commission an opportunity to analyze proposals on a case by case basis.

The R-3 District would also allow only residential uses by right, and would have a much more limited set of Special Uses. The biggest difference between the R-3 and CBD Districts, as noted above, is dimensional standards, including the allowable residential density. The CBD District is much less restrictive, and could allow a development that would be incompatible with the surroundings.



	Zoning	Existing Land Uses	Future Land Use (Master Plan)	Downtown Plan
Subject Parcel	MC	Parking Lot	Downtown Edge/Mixed Use	Civic Center
North	MC	Wilson Center	Downtown Edge/Mixed Use	Civic Center
East	R-2	Residential	Traditional Walkable Residential	N/A
South	R-2	Residential	Traditional Walkable Residential	N/A
West	R-2	Residential	Traditional Walkable Residential	N/A

3. **Compatibility with Surrounding Uses.** The Planning Commission must consider whether all of the permitted uses in the proposed CBD District would be appropriate adjacent to the existing surroundings. The table below summarizes the land use attributes of the site and the surrounding properties.

The surrounding land uses are largely residential, especially to the west, east, and south. The residential configuration is a traditional small-town neighborhood. A multi-family building, especially senior housing, could be appropriately scaled to be compatible with the neighborhood, especially given the massing of the Wilson Center building to the north – which ensures that any building at 101 W. McConnell would not be the largest building in the vicinity.

That said, the design of the new building will be crucial to ensure compatibility, which makes the lack of dimensional and density controls in the CBD District a concern. The R-3 District has a lower maximum height, residential-scale setbacks, and density limit that is designed to be consistent with the existing core neighborhood. All of those controls will help ensure a compatible building is constructed.

4. **Most Appropriate Zoning District.** Given the specific characteristics of this rezoning proposal, we have actually been analyzing this criteria throughout this letter. For the reasons described elsewhere, the R-3 District is a more appropriate option than the CBD District. The other options available are:
- **The MU District** allows a wide variety of uses and envisions walkable character through its dimensional requirements. However, very importantly, it does not allow multi-family residential – only single family, duplexes, and townhouses.
 - **A Conditional Rezoning** would allow the applicant to voluntarily waive certain rights applicable to the CBD District. However, the R-3 District already allows multi-family/senior housing without the problematic portions of the CBD District.
 - **A Planned Unit Development** would allow all aspects of the redevelopment to be governed in a single document. However, that option is unnecessarily complex when the R-3 District is sufficient for the redevelopment, supported by the Master Plan, and not incompatible with the surroundings. A PUD would be a better option than the CBD District, however.



5. **Infrastructure Capacity.** We are not aware of any infrastructure capacity issues that would restrict the allowable uses in either the CBD District or the R-3 District.

RECOMMENDATION

While the CBD District is supported by the Master Plan, it has a number of provisions that would be problematic on the site, including the lack of setback requirements, the high allowable density, the 40% multi-bedroom unit requirement, and the potential for additional height, smaller units, or commercial uses by Special Use permit.

For that reason, we recommend that the Planning Commission recommend a rezoning to R-3 to the City Commission.

Please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions.

Respectfully submitted,
McKENNA

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