

**Department of Community Planning and Economic Development—Planning Division
Site Plan Review
BZZ-1921**

Hearing Date: 9/13/04

Applicant: Jeff Smith, 2813 Silver Lane, Mpls. 55421

Address of Property: 3110 E. Lake St., Minneapolis, MN 55408

Project Name: McDonald's restaurant expansion

Contact Person and Phone: Same as applicant

Staff Contact Person and Phone: J. Michael Orange, Principal Planner. Phone: 612-673-2347; facsimile: 673-2728; TDD: 673-2157; e-mail: michael.orange@ci.minneapolis.mn.us

Date Application Deemed Complete: 8/30/04

End of 60-Day Decision Period: 10/29/04

End of 120-Day Decision Period: N/A

Ward: 8 **Neighborhood Organization:** Longfellow Neighborhood Association

Existing Zoning: C2, Neighborhood Corridor Commercial District

Zoning Plate Number: 27

Proposed Use: Application by Mr. Jeff Smith for a site plan review approval to expand the existing McDonalds restaurant located at 3110 Lake St. E., Minneapolis, MN to accommodate new crew quarters and storage (29 X 15.5 = 552 sq. ft.).

Prior approvals: PR-2 and C-248

Concurrent Review: Major Site Plan Review

Applicable zoning code provisions: Chapter 530 Site Plan Review.

Background: This is an existing building located within the commercial area of E. Lake St. The project is to expand the building by 552 sq. ft. (a 23% increase in the size of the existing 2,425 sq. ft. building) to accommodate a crew room for employees and storage.

**If you need more information or have special needs, please call the
Minneapolis Planning Department at 612-673-2597.**

Planning staff have received no comment to date from the neighborhood group.

SITE PLAN REVIEW

Findings as Required By the Minneapolis Zoning Code:

Section A. The site plan conforms to all applicable standards of Chapter 530, Site Plan Review. (See Section A below for evaluation.)

Section B. The site plan conforms to all applicable regulations of the zoning ordinance and is consistent with applicable policies of the comprehensive plan (refer to the above discussions).

Section C. The site plan is consistent with applicable development plans or development objectives adopted by the City Council (refer to the above discussions).

Section A: Conformance with Chapter 530 of Zoning Code

Building Placement and Facade:

- **Placement of the building shall reinforce the street wall, maximize natural surveillance and visibility, and facilitate pedestrian access and circulation.**
- **First floor of the building shall be located not more than eight (8) feet from the front lot line (except in C3S District or where a greater yard is required by the zoning ordinance). If located on corner lot, the building wall abutting each street shall be subject to this requirement.**
- **The area between the building and the lot line shall include amenities.**
- **The building shall be oriented so that at least one (1) principal entrance faces the public street.**
- **Except in the C3S District, on-site accessory parking facilities shall be located to the rear or interior of the site, within the principal building served, or entirely below grade.**
- **For new construction, the building façade shall provide architectural detail and shall contain windows at the ground level or first floor.**
- **In larger buildings, architectural elements shall be emphasized.**
- **The exterior materials and appearance of the rear and side walls of any building shall be similar to and compatible with the front of the building.**
- **The use of plain face concrete block as an exterior material shall be prohibited where visible from a public street or a residence or office residence district.**
- **Entrances and windows:**
 - **Residential uses shall be subject to section 530.110 (b) (1).**
 - **Nonresidential uses shall be subject to section 530.110 (b) (2).**
- **Parking Garages: The exterior design shall ensure that sloped floors do not dominate the appearance of the façade and that vehicles are screened from view. At least thirty (30) percent of the first floor façade that faces a public street or sidewalk shall be occupied by commercial uses, or shall be designed with architectural detail or windows, including display windows, that create visual interest.**

Planning Division Evaluation of Building Placement and Façade Requirements:

- Inconsistent with the Code, this is an existing building that is set back from the corner of 31st Ave. and Lake St. with parking surrounding it.
- Site amenities between the building and the street include extensive landscaping and trees.
- The building has entrances on all three principal facades but, inconsistent with the Code, the primary entrance faces the parking lot on the east side.
- The east façade of the addition will be brick consistent with the rest of the building and at least 30% of the east side of the addition will include windows.

Access and Circulation:

- **Clear and well-lighted walkways of at least four (4) feet in width shall connect building entrances to the adjacent public sidewalk and to any parking facilities located on the site.**
- **Transit shelters shall be well lighted, weather protected and shall be placed in locations that promote security.**
- **Vehicular access and circulation shall be designed to minimize conflicts with pedestrian traffic and surrounding residential uses.**
- **Traffic shall be directed to minimize impact upon residential properties and shall be subject to section 530.140 (b).**
- **Areas for on-site snow storage are provided.**
- **Site plans shall minimize the use of impervious surfaces.**

Planning Division Evaluation of Access and Circulation:

- Inconsistent with the Code, there are no walkways that connect the secondary entrances to the sidewalks on 31st Ave. and Lake St.
- Vehicular access on Lake St. is via a one-way entrance and a one-way exit. A curb cut on 31st Ave. provides two-way access. The one-way, counter-clockwise circulation on the site minimizes vehicle-pedestrian conflicts. The proposed addition does not affect access or circulation on the site.
- Most traffic will access the site via Lake St. instead of using 31st Ave. which includes residential uses.
- All areas of the site not used for buildings or parking are landscaped.

Landscaping and Screening:

- **The composition and location of landscaped areas shall complement the scale of the development and its surroundings.**
- **Not less than twenty (20) percent of the site not occupied by buildings shall be landscaped as specified in section 530.150 (a).**
- **Where a landscaped yard is required, such requirement shall be landscaped as specified in section 530.150 (b).**
- **Required screening shall be six (6) feet in height, unless otherwise specified, except in required front yards where such screening shall be three (3) feet in height.**
- **Required screening shall be at least ninety-five (95) percent opaque throughout the year. Screening shall be satisfied by one or a combination of the following:**

- A decorative fence.
- A masonry wall.
- A hedge.
- Parking and loading facilities located along a public street, public sidewalk or public pathway shall comply with section 530.160 (b).
- Parking and loading facilities abutting a residence or office residence district or abutting a permitted or conditional residential use shall comply with section 530.160 (c).
- The corners of parking lots shall be landscaped as specified for a required landscaped yard. Such spaces may include architectural features such as benches, kiosks, or bicycle parking.
- Parking lots containing more than two hundred (200) parking spaces: an additional landscaped area not less than one hundred-fifty (150) square feet shall be provided for each twenty-five (25) parking spaces or fraction thereof, and shall be landscaped as specified for a required landscaped yard.
- All parking lots and driveways shall be defined by a six (6) inch by six (6) inch continuous concrete curb positioned two (2) feet from the boundary of the parking lot, except where the parking lot perimeter is designed to provide on-site retention and filtration of stormwater. In such case the use of wheel stops or discontinuous curbing is permissible. The two (2) feet between the face of the curb and any parking lot boundary shall not be landscaped with plant material, but instead shall be covered with mulch or rock, or be paved.
- All other areas not governed by sections 530.150, 530.160 and 530.170 and not occupied by buildings, parking and loading facilities or driveways, shall be covered with turf grass, native grasses or other perennial flowering plants, vines, mulch, shrubs or trees.
- Installation and maintenance of all landscape materials shall comply with the standards outlined in section 530.220.
- The city planning commission may approve the substitution or reduction of landscaped plant materials, landscaped area or other landscaping or screening standards, subject to section 530.60, as provided in section 530.230.

Planning Division Evaluation of Landscaping and Screening:

- The site (142.3' X 230') equals 32,729 sq. ft. After subtracting the footprint of the building (2,977 sq. ft. after it is expanded), the net site is 29,752 sq. ft. The site includes 5,650 sq. ft. of landscaping, which equals 19% of the net site.
- The existing 7-ft. landscaped yard and 6-ft.-high fence on the north side of the site screens the parking lot and drive-through operation from the adjacent residential use and conforms to the yard and screening requirements of the Code. The fence wraps around the northeast corner of the site to also screen the rear yard of the adjacent residence.
- Section 530.160 (b) requires 5-ft. yards on Lake and 31st Ave. with 3-ft.-high screening that is at least 60% opaque to screen and buffer the parking lots from the streets and sidewalks. Currently, the yards and landscaping on the site conform but they lack the screening to be consistent with the Code.

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- Two parking stalls are partially located in the 15-ft. front yard required in the first 40 ft. of the northwest corner on 31st Ave. S.
- Three parking stalls and an accessory building are partially located in the 5-ft. side yard required in the first 40 ft. of the northeast corner along the east property line.

Additional Standards:

- **Lighting shall comply with the requirements of Chapter 535 and Chapter 541. A lighting diagram may be required.**
- **Parking and loading facilities and all other areas upon which vehicles may be located shall be screened to avoid headlights shining onto residential properties.**
- **Site plans shall minimize the blocking of views of important elements of the city.**
- **Buildings shall be located and arranged to minimize shadowing on public spaces and adjacent properties.**
- **Buildings shall be located and arranged to minimize the generation of wind currents at ground level.**
- **Site plans shall include crime prevention design elements as specified in section 530.260: The Police Division has reviewed the plans.**
- **Site plans shall include the rehabilitation and integration of locally designated historic structures or structures that have been determined to be eligible to be locally designated. Where rehabilitation is not feasible, the development shall include the reuse of significant features of historic buildings.**

Planning Division Evaluation of the Additional Standards:

- Existing lighting is metal halide bulbs enclosed in fixtures that do not provide full cut-offs.
- Residential properties are located across 31st Ave. S. northwest half of the site, to the north, and for the distance of one lot width on the northeast. As stated above, the fence on the north side screens the northern and northeastern residential uses and an accessory building screens the northeast residence. There is inadequate screening for the three residences on the northwest.
- There are no issues regarding blocking of significant views, casting of significant shadows, pedestrian-level winds, nor historic districts.

Section B: Conformance with All Applicable Zoning Code Provisions and Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan

ZONING CODE:

Hours of Operation: Hours businesses can be open to the public in the C2 District are 7:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 7:00 a.m. through 11:00 p.m. Friday and Saturday.

The applicant has been informed of the allowable hours.

Dumpster screening: Section 535.80. Refuse storage containers shall be enclosed on all four (4) sides by screening compatible with the principal structure not less than two (2) feet higher than

the refuse container or shall be otherwise effectively screened from the street, adjacent residential uses located in a residence or office residence district and adjacent permitted or conditional residential uses.

Trash is enclosed in an on-site accessory building.

Signage: All new signage is required to meet the requirements of the Zoning Code and permits are required from the Zoning Office.

The applicant has not provided a signage plan, but is aware that all new signage is required to meet the standards of the code.

MINNEAPOLIS PLAN:

Applicable policies of the *Minneapolis Plan*:

4.1 Minneapolis will support development in Commercial Corridors where it enhances the street's character, improves its ability to accommodate automobile traffic and foster pedestrian movement, and expands the range of goods and services offered.

Implementation Steps (selected)

- Ensure that commercial uses do not negatively impact nearby residential areas.
- Regulate impacts of commercial uses, and in some cases prevent some uses from locating on designated Commercial Corridors, due to their adverse impacts on the viability of nearby residential areas.
- Develop parking facilities and management strategies that balance the following goals: improved customer access, protection of sidewalk traffic; reduced visual impacts and shared use of parking facilities.
- Ensure that parking structures and surface lots conform to identified design principles. (See discussion of traditional urban form in Chapter 9.)
- Reduce the impact of non-residential uses on neighboring residential areas by considering appropriate access, buffering between incompatible uses and regulating hours of operation.

4.2 Minneapolis will continue to provide a wide range of goods and services for city residents, to promote employment opportunities, to encourage the use and adaptive reuse of existing commercial buildings, and to maintain and improve compatibility with surrounding areas.

Implementation Steps (selected):

- Encourage the economic vitality of the city's commercial districts while maintaining compatibility with the surrounding areas.

Consistency of the project with the Minneapolis Plan:

- The site is located within the Commercial Corridor area designated for E. Lake St. The use

and its expansion is an appropriate one consistent with the plan.

- If screening on the site is improved, potential adverse impacts from vehicle headlights and the unsightliness of the suburban-style site plan, the parking lots, and the drive-through facilities will be minimized for the adjacent residential areas.

Section C: Conformance with Applicable Development Plans or Objectives Adopted by the City Council

There are no development plans or objectives approved by the City Council for this specific area beyond the Comprehensive Plan.

Alternative Compliance: The Planning Commission may approve alternatives to any major site plan review requirement upon finding any of the following:

- **The alternative meets the intent of the site plan chapter and the site plan includes amenities or improvements that address any adverse effects of the alternative. Site amenities may include but are not limited to additional open space, additional landscaping and screening, transit facilities, bicycle facilities, preservation of natural resources, restoration of previously damaged natural environment, rehabilitation of existing structures that have been locally designated or have been determined to be eligible to be locally designated as historic structures, and design which is similar in form, scale and materials to existing structures on the site and to surrounding development.**
- **Strict adherence to the requirements is impractical because of site location or conditions and the proposed alternative meets the intent of this chapter.**
- **The proposed alternative is consistent with applicable development plans or development objectives adopted by the city council and meets the intent of this chapter.**

Planning Division Analysis Regarding Alternative Compliance:

- The site is not in compliance with the Code in the following ways:
 - Inconsistent with the Code, this is an existing building that is set back from the corner of 31st Ave. and Lake St. with parking surrounding it.
 - The primary entrance faces the parking lot.
 - The site includes 19% landscaping instead of the required 20% of the net site.
 - The public side of the expansion does not include 30% windows.
 - Inconsistent with the Code, there are no walkways that connect the secondary entrances to the sidewalks on 31st Ave. and Lake St.
 - The parking lots on the Lake and 31st Ave. sides of the site lack the required 3-ft. screening.
 - Parking stalls and the accessory building are partially in the required yards.
 - Existing lighting is by means of metal halide bulbs enclosed in fixtures that do not provide full cut-offs.
- The addition of screening and redirected parking lot lighting will mitigate the potential

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adverse impacts from vehicle headlights, parking lot lighting, and the unsightliness of the suburban-style site plan, the parking lots, and the drive-through facilities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Community Planning and Economic Development—Planning Division recommends that the City Planning Commission adopt the above findings and **approve** the application for 3110 Lake St. E., with the following conditions:

1. The Community Planning and Economic Development—Planning Division shall review and approve the final site and landscaping plans.
2. The applicant shall improve the site with the following changes:
 - The applicant shall screen the parking lots from the street and sidewalks on 31st. Ave. and Lake St.
 - The applicant shall provide sidewalk access to the building entrances.
 - At minimum, 30% of the west façade of the addition shall be clear glazing.
 - The applicant shall redirect all lighting fixtures that might cause glare to leave the site.
3. If the site improvements exceed \$2,000 in value, the applicant shall submit a performance bond for these improvements prior to the issuance of building permits.
4. The site improvements shall be completed by September 30, 2005 or the application may be revoked for noncompliance, unless extended by the Zoning Administrator or the City Council.

ATTACHMENTS

- 1) Letter from the neighborhood group.
- 2) Site and zoning map.
- 3) Site plan, floor plans, and elevations
- 4) Inconsistencies with the Zoning Code
- 5) Photos of the site and surrounding area
- 6) Zoning data sheet