

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division
Site Plan Review
BZZ-5882

Date: January 7, 2013

Applicant: Wellington Management, Attn: Steve Wellington, 1625 Energy Park Drive, St. Paul, MN 55108, (651) 292-9844

Address of Property: 6015, 6023, and 6029 Nicollet Avenue South

Project Name: Goodwill Store

Contact Person and Phone: DJR Architecture, Attn: Scott Nelson, 333 Washington Avenue North #210, Minneapolis, MN 55401, (612) 676-2796

Planning Staff and Phone: Becca Farrar, Senior City Planner (612)673-3594

Date Application Deemed Complete: December 13, 2012

End of 60-Day Decision Period: February 11, 2013

End of 120-Day Decision Period: Not applicable for this application.

Ward: 11

Neighborhood Organization: Windom Community Council

Existing Zoning: C2 (Neighborhood Corridor Commercial) District, AP (Airport) Overlay District

Proposed Zoning: Not applicable for this application.

Zoning Plate Number: 37

Lot area: 32,807 square feet or approximately .75 acres

Legal Description: Not applicable for this application.

Proposed Use: A new two-story, 20,922 square foot secondhand goods store.

Concurrent Review:

- Site plan review application for a new two-story, 20,922 square foot secondhand goods store.

Applicable zoning code provisions: Chapter 530 Site Plan Review.

Background: The applicant proposes to demolish the existing structure (a former Perkins restaurant) on the site and construct a new two-story, approximately 20,922 square foot secondhand goods store on the properties located at 6015, 6023, and 6029 Nicollet Avenue South. The property is zoned C2 (Neighborhood Corridor Commercial) District and is located within the AP (Airport) Overlay District. The AP Overlay District does not have any applicable implications on the proposal. Secondhand goods stores are permitted uses in all commercial districts, but subject to several specific development standards. The proposal complies with all applicable development standards as further described below.

As proposed, the building would include retail sales on both floors, with a processing component at the rear portion of the first floor. There are two principal entrances to the building into a common vestibule; one off of the public sidewalk along Nicollet Avenue and the other off the parking lot located on the north side of the building. The entrance to both the parking and goods donation drop-off area would be located off of Nicollet Avenue on the north side of the building. All traffic circulation would flow one-way in order to reduce drive-aisle widths within the surface parking lot. The goods donation drop-off area would be located on the south side of the building. A total of 32 off-street parking spaces would be provided for the development.

Goodwill is a non-profit organization. The purpose of the store would be to process donated goods for resale, and to recycle those goods that are unacceptable for resale. Goods that are donated at this location would be sold at this location and the proceeds are used to help advance Goodwill's mission of assisting individuals with barriers to education, employment and independence in order to achieve their goals. Goodwill provides job training, counseling, support and employment placement resources and services.

Staff has not received official correspondence from the Windom Community Council or any neighborhood letters prior to the printing of this report. Any correspondence received after the printing of this report will be forwarded on to the Planning Commission for consideration.

SITE PLAN REVIEW

Findings as Required by the Minneapolis Zoning Code:

- A. The site plan conforms to all applicable standards of Chapter 530, Site Plan Review. (See Section A Below for Evaluation.)**
- B. The site plan conforms to all applicable regulations of the zoning ordinance and is consistent with applicable policies of the comprehensive plan and applicable small area plans adopted by the city council. (See Section B Below for Evaluation.)**

Section A: Conformance with Chapter 530 of Zoning Code

BUILDING PLACEMENT AND DESIGN:

- **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. In the case of a corner lot, the principal entrance shall face the front lot line.**
- **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 walls shall provide architectural detail and shall contain windows as required by Chapter 530 in order to create visual interest and to increase security of adjacent outdoor spaces by maximizing natural surveillance and visibility.**
- **In larger buildings, architectural elements, including recesses or projections, windows and entries, shall be emphasized to divide the building into smaller identifiable sections.**
- **Blank, uninterrupted walls that do not include windows, entries, recesses or projections, or other architectural elements, shall not exceed twenty five (25) feet in length.**

- Exterior materials shall be durable, including but not limited to masonry, brick, stone, stucco, wood, metal, and glass.
- 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 fronting along a public street, public sidewalk, public pathway, or adjacent to a residence or office residence district.
- Entrances, windows, and active functions:
 - Residential uses:
 - Principal entrances shall be clearly defined and emphasized through the use of architectural features such as porches and roofs or other details that express the importance of the entrance. Multiple entrances shall be encouraged. Twenty (20) percent of the walls on the first floor and ten (10) percent of the walls on each floor above the first that face a public street, public sidewalk, public pathway, or on-site parking lot, shall be windows as follows:
 - a. Windows shall be vertical in proportion.
 - b. Windows shall be distributed in a more or less even manner.
 - Nonresidential uses:
 - Principal entrances shall be clearly defined and emphasized through the use of architectural features such as roofs or other details that express the importance of the entrance. Multiple entrances shall be encouraged. Thirty (30) percent of the walls on the first floor and ten (10) percent of the walls on each floor above the first that face a public street, public sidewalk, public pathway, or on-site parking lot, shall be windows as follows:
 - a. Windows shall be vertical in proportion.
 - b. Windows shall be distributed in a more or less even manner.
 - c. The bottom of any window used to satisfy the ground floor window requirement may not be more than four (4) feet above the adjacent grade.
 - d. First floor or ground floor windows shall have clear or lightly tinted glass with a visible light transmittance ratio of 0.6 or higher.
 - e. First floor or ground floor windows shall allow views into and out of the building at eye level. Shelving, mechanical equipment or other similar fixtures shall not block views into and out of the building in the area between four (4) and seven (7) feet above the adjacent grade. However, window area in excess of the minimum required area shall not be required to allow views into and out of the building.
 - f. Industrial uses in Table 550-1, Principal Industrial Uses in the Industrial Districts, may provide less than thirty (30) percent windows on the walls that face an on-site parking lot, provided the parking lot is not located between the building and a public street, public sidewalk or public pathway.
 - g. In multiple tenant buildings, each individual ground level tenant space that faces a public street, public sidewalk, public pathway, or on-site parking lot shall comply with the minimum window requirements of this section.
Minimum window area shall be measured as indicated in section 530.120 of the zoning code.
Minimum window area shall be measured as indicated in section 530.120 of the zoning code.
- Ground floor active functions: Except for industrial uses in Table 550-1, Principal Industrial Uses in the Industrial Districts, the first floor or ground level of buildings shall be designed to accommodate active functions by ensuring that parking, loading, storage, or mechanical equipment rooms are limited to no more than thirty (30) percent of the linear building frontage along each wall facing a public street, public sidewalk, or public pathway.
- The form and pitch of roof lines shall be similar to surrounding buildings.
- Parking Garages: The exterior design shall ensure that sloped floors do not dominate the appearance of the walls and that vehicles are screened from view. In addition to compliance with minimum window requirements, principal and accessory parking garages shall comply with provisions requiring active functions on the ground floor. In the downtown districts, the more restrictive parking garage provisions of Chapter 549, Downtown Districts, shall apply.

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The applicant proposes to construct a 20,922 square foot secondhand goods store on the subject properties. The building is subject to one yard requirement; a rear yard setback along the east property line due to the abutting residential zoning classification of R1A to the east. The properties located directly to the east of the subject site accommodate a large regional stormwater pond (Lake Mead) owned by the City of Minneapolis. The building is located up to the property line along Nicollet Avenue; however, the parking is also located along the Nicollet Avenue street frontage as well. The subject parcels have in total approximately 260 linear feet of frontage along Nicollet Avenue. The building is located up to the property line for approximately 98 linear feet while the parking lot and egress from the drop-off vestibule total approximately 160 linear feet.

The proposed building is oriented towards Nicollet Avenue South and the use of progressive design and street-oriented building alignments is reinforced. The design also maximizes natural surveillance and visibility, and facilitates pedestrian access and circulation along the street frontage. There are two principal entrances proposed to the building; access is provided off of Nicollet Avenue South (west elevation) and off of the parking lot (north elevation) into a common vestibule. Both principal entrances are accessed directly off of the public sidewalk.

The first floor of the west and north elevations of the building are subject to a 30% window requirement. Windows between 2 and 10 feet are required in order to provide natural surveillance and visibility by having active uses located along public streets and facing on-site parking areas.

On the west elevation of the proposed structure facing Nicollet Avenue South, the proposal exceeds the 30% window requirement as 31% are provided on this elevation. The windows are vertical in nature and evenly distributed.

The north elevation of the proposed structure facing the on-site parking lot exceeds the 30% window requirement as 30.6% windows are provided on this elevation. The windows are vertical in nature but not evenly distributed. Alternative compliance is necessary for window distribution. Planning Staff would recommend that in this specific circumstance the Planning Commission grant alternative compliance. The elevation is exceeding the overall percentage requirement at 30.6% and other than one segment of the building the windows are evenly distributed. The floor plan indicates that this area is programmed with an elevator and an elevator equipment room. Provided the windows on this elevation remain unobstructed, Planning Staff believes that the proposed distribution is reasonable.

The building complies with the active functions provision as outlined above. The exterior materials and appearance of the rear and side walls of the proposed building would be similar to and compatible with the front of the building. The materials on the proposed structure would include brick, stucco, decorative metal elements and canopies. The proposed building incorporates architectural elements including recesses and projections, windows and entries. There are no blank uninterrupted walls that exceed 25 feet in width on the building. The principal roof line of the building would be flat. In the area both pitched roofs and flat roofed buildings can be found.

No ramp is proposed as part of this development. A total of 32 off-street parking spaces are proposed on site with ingress and egress via three curb cuts off of Nicollet Avenue South.

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 530.150 (b) related to alley access.**
- **Site plans shall minimize the use of impervious surfaces.**

There are two principal entrances proposed to the building; access is provided off of Nicollet Avenue South and off of the parking lot into a common vestibule. Both principal entrances are accessed directly off of the public sidewalk.

The site is located within close proximity to several bus lines.

The proposed development has been somewhat designed to minimize conflicts with pedestrian traffic and surrounding residential uses. Access to the site would be via three curb cuts off of Nicollet Avenue South; ingress would occur via a single curb cut and there would be two egress points; one from the parking lot on the north side of the property and the other from the drop-off area located on the south side of the site.

There is a public alley adjacent to the site, however, it will not be utilized as a means of access to the site. In fact, the City of Minneapolis has installed a 6-foot tall decorative fence that bisects the unbuilt public alley separating the subject site from the regional stormwater pond property to the east.

The site has been somewhat designed to minimize the use of impervious surfaces as approximately 87% of the site would be impervious as a result of the redevelopment of the site. The existing site is approximately 96% impervious. Further, the site incorporates landscaping that slightly exceeds the minimum 20% requirement.

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, including all required landscaped yards, shall be landscaped as specified in section 530.160 (a).**
- **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.**
- **Except as otherwise provided, 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 530.170 (b), including providing landscape yards along a public street, public sidewalk or public pathway and abutting or across an alley from a residence or office residence district, or any permitted or conditional residential use.**

- **The corners of parking lots where rows of parking spaces leave areas unavailable for parking or vehicular circulation shall be landscaped as specified for a required landscaped yard. Such spaces may include architectural features such as benches, kiosks or bicycle parking.**
- **In parking lots of ten (10) spaces or more, no parking space shall be located more than fifty (50) feet from the center of an on-site deciduous tree. Tree islands located within the interior of a parking lot shall have a minimum width of seven (7) feet in any direction.**
- **All other areas not governed by sections 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 530.210.**
- **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 530.80, as provided in section 530.220.**

The zoning code requires that at least 20% of the site not occupied by the building be landscaped. The lot area of the site is 32,807 square feet. The footprint of the building is 10,871 square feet. When you subtract the footprint from the lot size the resulting number is 21,936 square feet; 20% of this number is 4,387 square feet. According to the applicant's landscaping plan there is 4,493 square feet of landscaping on the site or approximately 20.5% percent of the site not occupied by the building which meets the minimum requirement.

The zoning code requires at least 1 canopy tree for each 500 square feet of required green space and at least 1 shrub for each 100 square feet of required green space. The tree and shrub requirement for this site is 9 trees and 45 shrubs. The applicant is proposing to plant 10 canopy trees, 95 shrubs and perennials on the site. The proposal exceeds the quantity requirements for the site.

A seven-foot wide landscaped yard and screening equal to 60% opacity is required between the parking area and the west and east sides of the property. The applicant is proposing at least a 7-foot wide landscaped yard and a screening buffer that incorporates an ornamental fence between the parking and the west property line along Nicollet Avenue South that meets the requirements. However, along the east side of the site, the applicant is not proposing a landscaped yard or any screening. Alternative compliance would be necessary. Planning Staff would recommend that the Planning Commission grant alternative compliance in this circumstance as the site is uniquely situated adjacent to City of Minneapolis owned land that accommodates a large regional stormwater pond (Lake Mead). Further, there is an existing public alley located along the east property line, however, the alley is not constructed, and the City previously installed a 6 foot tall decorative metal fence at the centerline of the alley as well as some landscaping. There is also a 25-foot linear tree requirement along Nicollet Avenue that is currently being met based on the proposed landscaping plan.

In parking lots of 10 spaces or more, no parking space shall be located more than 50 feet from an on-site deciduous tree. In addition, tree islands in parking lots must have a minimum width of 7 feet in any direction. The applicant is proposing a total of 32 off-street parking spaces in the surface parking lot. Not all parking spaces are located within 50 feet of an on-site deciduous tree. Alternative compliance would be necessary. Planning Staff would recommend that the Planning Commission require compliance with this provision as it would be practical to meet the standard based on existing opportunities to incorporate additional trees into the parking lot. Two small tree islands are proposed. The shape of the tree islands are triangular thus prohibiting compliance with a minimum width of 7 feet in any direction. Alternative compliance is necessary. Planning Staff would recommend that the Planning Commission grant alternative compliance in this circumstance as the proposed dimensions are meeting the intent of the provision by landscaping the majority of the areas within the parking lot that aren't used for parking or

vehicular circulation. There is one corner in the parking lot that could be landscaped that is unavailable for parking, but given the one-way drive aisles and location of the large loading space it appears better suited to leave this area striped in order to allow for vehicular circulation. Alternative compliance would be necessary. As noted, Planning Staff would recommend alternative compliance in this specific circumstance.

ADDITIONAL STANDARDS:

- **All parking lots and driveways shall be designed with wheel stops or discontinuous curbing to provide on-site retention and filtration of stormwater. Where on-site retention and filtration is not practical, the parking lot shall be defined by six (6) inch by six (6) inch continuous concrete curb.**
- **To the extent practical, site plans shall minimize the blocking of views of important elements of the city.**
- **To the extent practical, buildings shall be located and arranged to minimize shadowing on public spaces and adjacent properties.**
- **To the extent practical, 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 related to:**
 - **Natural surveillance and visibility**
 - **Lighting levels**
 - **Territorial reinforcement and space delineation**
 - **Natural access control**
- **To the extent practical, 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.**

The surface parking area will be designed with curb openings so that stormwater runoff drains towards the perimeter green space areas on the site.

Staff would not expect a two-story building to result in the blocking of any significant views or to have any shadowing impacts on adjacent properties or on public spaces. Staff would also not expect the proposal to have any impacts on light, wind and air in relation to the surrounding area.

The site appears to incorporate the applicable CPTED principles. The active uses proposed within the ground level and second floor of the building provide natural surveillance, there are windows on all sides of the building except the east and a portion of the south elevations of the building that allow people to observe adjacent public spaces and the entrances are connected to the public sidewalk. Planning Staff has no additional comments or concerns at this time regarding site safety.

There are no designated or eligible historic structures on the subject property.

Code Provisions and Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and Applicable Small Area Plans Adopted by the City Council

ZONING CODE - The proposed secondhand goods store is a permitted use in all commercial districts but is subject to the following specific development standards:

Secondhand goods store

- (1) Back-lighted signs, back-lighted awnings, portable signs, temporary signs and freestanding signs

- shall be prohibited.
- (2) The window and door area of any existing first floor façade that faces a public street or sidewalk shall not be reduced, nor shall changes be made to such windows or doors that block views into the building at eye level.
 - (3) For new construction, at least thirty (30) percent of the first floor façade that faces a public street or sidewalk shall be windows or doors of clear or lightly tinted glass that allow views into the building at eye level.
 - (4) The use of bars, chains or similar security devices that are visible from a public street or sidewalk shall be prohibited.
 - (5) The premises of all adjacent streets, sidewalks and alleys, and all sidewalks and alleys within one hundred (100) feet shall be inspected regularly for purposes of removing any litter found thereon.
 - (6) All receipt, sorting and processing of goods shall occur within a completely enclosed building.
 - (7) An appointment or set hours for the acceptance of donated goods shall be required.

The development as proposed would comply with all above-listed specific development standards for secondhand goods store.

With the approval of the site plan review application, this development would meet the requirements of the C2 zoning district.

Parking and Loading:

Minimum automobile parking requirement: According to Chapter 541 of the Zoning Code, secondhand goods stores have a minimum parking requirement of 1 space per 500 square feet of gross floor area in excess of 4,000 square feet. The applicant proposes to construct a 20,922 square foot building which would require a minimum of 34 off-street parking spaces. The applicant is meeting the bicycle incentive which allows a reduction in the minimum automobile parking requirement for a non-residential use by 10% or one space whichever is greater where bicycle parking spaces are provided equal to 25% of the number of required automobile spaces but not less than 4 bicycle parking spaces. The applicant proposes to incorporate a total of 9 bicycle parking spaces which meets the bicycle incentive and reduces the minimum off-street parking requirement to 31 off-street parking spaces. The applicant is proposing a total of 32 off-street parking spaces which meets the minimum requirement.

Maximum automobile parking requirement: The maximum automobile parking requirement for secondhand goods stores is 1 space per 200 square feet of gross floor area. Based on the proposed square footage of 20,922 square feet, the maximum automobile parking requirement would be 105 spaces. The applicant proposes to provide a total of 32 off-street parking spaces on site, which is lower than the maximum requirement.

Bicycle parking requirement: Secondhand goods stores have a minimum bicycle requirement of 3 spaces of which not less than 50% of the required bicycle parking shall meet the standards for short-term bicycle parking which is as follows:

- *“Required short-term bicycle parking spaces shall be located in a convenient and visible area within fifty (50) feet of a principal entrance and shall permit the locking of the bicycle frame and one (1) wheel to the rack and shall support a bicycle in a stable position without damage to the wheels, frame or components. With the permission of the city engineer, required bicycle parking may be located in the public right-of-way. Public bicycle parking spaces may contribute to compliance with required bicycle parking when located adjacent to the property in question.”*

The applicant is proposing to locate 9 bicycle parking spaces on site which exceeds the minimum requirement.

Loading: Based on Chapter 541 of the Zoning Code, secondhand goods stores have an assigned loading requirement rating of “medium”. Based on the size of the proposed secondhand goods store at 20,922 square feet, one large (12 feet by 50 feet) off-street loading space is required. The applicant is proposing one large loading space on the east side of the site.

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 would be stored in the processing area within the building. Further, a compactor is located on the east side of the building adjacent to the one-way driveway along the east property line. The compactor has been designed to meet the screening requirements outlined in the Zoning Code.

Signs: The applicant is proposing to install two canopy mounted signs; one facing west towards Nicollet Avenue and the other facing north towards the surface parking lot. Both signs would be 3 feet, 6 inches by approximately 26 feet or approximately 90 square feet in size, internally illuminated metal channel letters at a height of 15 inches. As no other signage is proposed on the property, the site is allowed 1.5 square feet for each primary building wall. There is approximately 98 feet of building wall facing Nicollet Avenue, or an allowance of 147 square feet and approximately 103 feet of building wall facing the surface parking lot or an allowance of 155 square feet. Both proposed signs meet the requirements outlined in Chapter 543 of the Zoning Code. Separate permits are required from the Zoning Office for all proposed signage.

Lighting: While a photometric plan has been provided, details of the proposed fixtures were not provided. All lighting will need to be downcast and shielded to avoid undue glare. All lighting shall comply with Chapters 535 and 541 of the Zoning Code and Planning Staff shall review the details of the fixtures in the final review prior to permit issuance.

Maximum Floor Area: The maximum FAR for all structures in the C2 zoning district is the gross floor area of the building, which is 20,922 square feet, divided by the area of the lot which is 32,807 square feet. The outcome is .64 which is less than the maximum of 1.7 permitted in the C2 District. The development is in compliance with the allowable FAR.

Minimum Lot Area: Not applicable for this development.

Dwelling Units per Acre: Not applicable for this development.

Height: Maximum building height for principal structures located in the C2 zoning district is 4 stories or 56 feet, whichever is less. The height of the proposed building is 2 stories or 33 feet; therefore, it complies with the requirement.

Yard Requirements: The required yards are as follows:

Front - along Nicollet Avenue South: 0 feet

Interior side yard: 0 feet

Rear (abutting residential zoning): 5 feet

The development complies with all yard requirements.

Building coverage: Not applicable for this development.

Impervious surface area: Not applicable for this development.

THE MINNEAPOLIS PLAN FOR SUSTAINABLE GROWTH

According to *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*, the subject parcels are located along Nicollet Avenue South which is a designated Commercial Corridor from 58th Street to the city boundary, within the boundaries of the Neighborhood Commercial Node at 60th Street West and Nicollet Avenue South, and adjacent to a designated Major Retail Center located at 60th and Nicollet. The properties are further designated for mixed-use development.

According to *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*, Commercial Corridors “serve as boundaries connecting a number of neighborhoods and serve as focal points for activity. Development and revitalization of these corridors helps to strengthen surrounding urban neighborhoods. Commercial Corridors can accommodate intensive commercial uses and high levels of traffic. The corridors support all types of commercial uses, with some light industrial and high density residential uses as well. While the character of these streets is mainly commercial, residential areas are nearby and impacts from commercial uses must be mitigated as appropriate. Additionally, the City encourages new medium- to high-density residential development along Commercial Corridors, particularly as part of mixed use development. These corridors frequently carry large traffic volumes and must balance significant vehicular through-traffic capacity with automobile and pedestrian access to commercial property.” Neighborhood Commercial Nodes “are typically comprised of a handful of small- and medium-sized businesses focused around one intersection. These nodes primarily serve the needs of the immediate surrounding area, although they may also contain specialty stores that serve a regional client base. The character of Neighborhood Commercial Nodes is defined by the limited scale of businesses operating in these locations. Related to the city’s historical growth pattern, these nodes generally consist of traditional commercial storefront buildings. They maintain a building typology and pedestrian orientation that is appropriate for the surrounding residential neighborhoods.” Regarding the mixed-use designation the plan states that “it allows for mixed-use development, including mixed-use with residential. Mixed use may include either a mix of retail, office or residential uses within a building or within a district.” Further, there is no requirement that every building be mixed-use. The following policies and implementation steps of *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth* apply to this proposal:

Land Use Policy 1.1 states, “Establish land use regulations to achieve the highest possible development standards, enhance the environment, protect public health, support a vital mix of land uses, and promote flexible approaches to carry out the comprehensive plan.” This policy includes the following applicable implementation steps: (1.5.1) “Ensure that land use regulations continue to promote development that is compatible with nearby properties, neighborhood character, and natural features; minimizes pedestrian and vehicular conflict; promotes street life and activity; reinforces public spaces; and visually enhances development.

Land Use Policy 1.2 states, “Ensure appropriate transitions between uses with different size, scale, and intensity.” This policy includes the following applicable implementation steps: (1.2.1) “Promote quality design in new development, as well as building orientation, scale, massing, buffering, and setbacks that are appropriate with the context of the surrounding area”; (1.2.2) “Ensure that lighting and signage associated with non-residential uses do not create negative impacts for residential.”

Land Use Policy 1.3 states, “Ensure that development plans incorporate appropriate transportation access and facilities, particularly for bicycle, pedestrian, and transit.” This policy includes the following applicable implementation steps: (1.3.1) “Require safe, convenient, and direct pedestrian connections between principal building entrances and the public right-of-way in all new development and, where practical, in conjunction with renovation and expansion of existing buildings”; (1.3.2) “Ensure the provision of high quality transit, bicycle, and pedestrian access to and within designated land use features.”

Land Use Policy 1.4 states, “Develop and maintain strong and successful commercial and mixed use areas with a wide range of character and functions to serve the needs of current and future users.” This policy includes the following applicable implementation steps: (1.4.1) “Support a variety of commercial districts and corridors of varying size, intensity of development, mix of uses, and market served”; (1.4.2) “Promote standards that help make commercial districts and corridors desirable, viable, and distinctly urban, including: diversity of activity, safety for pedestrians, access to desirable goods and amenities, attractive streetscape elements, density and variety of uses to encourage walking, and architectural elements to add interest at the pedestrian level”; (1.4.4) “Continue to encourage principles of traditional urban design including site layout that screens off-street parking and loading, buildings that reinforce the street wall, principal entrances that face the public sidewalks, and windows that provide “eyes on the street”.”

Land Use Policy 1.5 states, “Promote growth and encourage overall city vitality by directing new commercial and mixed use development to designated corridors and districts.” This policy includes the following applicable implementation step: (1.5.1) “Support an appropriate mix of uses within a district or corridor with attention to surrounding uses, community needs and preferences, and availability of public facilities.

Land Use Policy 1.10 states, “Support development along Commercial Corridors that enhances the street’s character, fosters pedestrian movement, expands the range of goods and services available, and improves the ability to accommodate automobile traffic.” This policy includes the following applicable implementation steps: (1.10.1) “Support a mix of uses – such as retail sales, office, institutional, high-density residential and clean low impact light industrial –where compatible with the existing and desired character”; (1.10.2) Encourage commercial development, including active uses on the ground floor, where Commercial Corridors intersect with other designated corridors.”

Land Use Policy 1.11 states, “Preserve and enhance a system of Neighborhood Commercial Nodes that includes a mix of housing, neighborhood-serving retail, and community uses.” This policy includes the following applicable implementation steps: (1.11.4) “Encourage a height of at least two stories for new buildings in Neighborhood Commercial Nodes, in keeping with neighborhood character”; (1.11.7) “Encourage the redevelopment of vacant commercial buildings and direct City services to these areas.”

Urban Design Policy 10.10 states, “Support urban design standards that emphasize a traditional urban form in commercial areas.” The policy includes the following applicable implementation steps: (10.10.3) “Enhance pedestrian and transit-oriented commercial districts with street furniture, street plantings, plazas, water features, public art and improved transit and pedestrian and bicycle amenities”; (10.10.4) “Orient new buildings to the street to foster safe and successful commercial nodes and corridors”; (10.10.6) “Require storefront window transparency to assure both natural surveillance and an inviting pedestrian experience.”

Urban Design Policy 10.11 states, “Seek new commercial development that is attractive, functional and adds value to the physical environment.”

Planning Staff believes that the proposal to construct a new two-story, 20,922 square foot secondhand goods store on the property is supported by the above listed policies and implementation steps of *The Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*.

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

There is one small area plan that applies to the subject properties. *Nicollet Avenue: The Revitalization of Minneapolis’ Main Street* was adopted by the City Council in 2000. The plan states that at 60th Street there is a lack of identity and cohesion with a bleak pedestrian environment that creates a poor gateway to Minneapolis from the City of Richfield. In general, there is a lack of identity along the avenue. The subject parcels are located within the 60th Street Investment Area. The plan states under Investment Recommendations for 56th Street to 62nd Street: support and invest in commercial development of the 60th Street node as a community service center that accommodate cars and drivers but not at the expense of pedestrians; and a further recommendation is to encourage infill development with parking interior to the site, decorative fencing, landscaping, and provision of pedestrian amenities as well as streetscape improvements at and around 60th Street to enhance the pedestrian environment. In general, the proposed development complies with the recommendations in the plan.

ALTERNATIVE COMPLIANCE

The Planning Commission may approve alternatives to any 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, green roof, decorative pavers, ornamental metal fencing, architectural enhancements 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.**

Alternative compliance is requested by the applicant to meet the following standards:

Window distribution: The first floor of the north elevation of the proposed structure facing the on-site parking lot exceeds the 30% window requirement as 30.6% windows are provided on this elevation. The windows are vertical in nature but not evenly distributed. Alternative compliance is necessary for window distribution. Planning Staff would recommend that in this specific circumstance the Planning Commission grant alternative compliance. The elevation is exceeding the overall percentage requirement at 30.6% and other than one segment of the building the windows are evenly distributed. The floor plan indicates that this area is programmed with an elevator and an elevator equipment room. Provided the windows on this elevation remain unobstructed, Planning Staff believes that the proposed distribution is reasonable.

Landscaping and screening requirements: A seven-foot wide landscaped yard and screening equal to 60% opacity is required between the parking area and the west and east sides of the property. The applicant is proposing at least a 7-foot wide landscaped yard and a screening buffer that incorporates an ornamental fence between the parking and the west property line along Nicollet Avenue that meets the requirements. However, along the east side of the site, the applicant is not proposing a landscaped yard or any screening. Alternative compliance would be necessary. Planning Staff would recommend that the Planning Commission grant alternative compliance in this circumstance as the site is uniquely situated adjacent to City of Minneapolis owned land that accommodates a large regional stormwater pond (Lake Mead). Further, there is an existing public alley located along the east property line, however, the alley is not constructed, and the City previously installed a 6 foot tall decorative metal fence at the centerline of the alley as well as some landscaping.

Proximity to on-site deciduous trees: In parking lots of 10 spaces or more, no parking space shall be located more than 50 feet from an on-site deciduous tree. The applicant is proposing a total of 32 off-street parking spaces in the surface parking lot. Not all parking spaces are located within 50 feet of an on-site deciduous tree. Alternative compliance would be necessary. Planning Staff would recommend that the Planning Commission require compliance with this provision as it would be practical to meet the standard based on existing opportunities to incorporate additional trees into the parking lot.

Tree islands: Tree islands in parking lots must have a minimum width of 7 feet in any direction. Two small tree islands are proposed. The shape of the tree islands are triangular thus prohibiting compliance with a minimum width of 7 feet in any direction. Alternative compliance is necessary. Planning Staff would recommend that the Planning Commission grant alternative compliance in this circumstance as the proposed dimensions are meeting the intent of the provision by landscaping the majority of the area within the parking lot that aren't used for parking or vehicular circulation.

Corner of parking lot not landscaped: There is one corner in the parking lot that could be landscaped that is unavailable for parking, but given the one-way drive aisles and location of the large loading space it appears better suited to leave this area striped in order to allow for vehicular circulation. Alternative compliance would be necessary. As noted, Planning Staff would recommend alternative compliance in this specific circumstance.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendation of the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division for the site plan review:

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development– Planning Division recommends that the City Planning Commission **approve** the site plan review application for a new two-story, approximately 20,922 square foot secondhand goods store on the properties located at 6015, 6023, and 6029 Nicollet Avenue South subject to the following conditions:

1. Planning Staff review and approval of the final site, elevation, lighting and landscaping plans before building permits may be issued.
2. All site improvements shall be completed by January 7, 2015, unless extended by the Zoning Administrator, or the permit may be revoked for non-compliance.

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3. A final merchandising plan for the building shall be provided for review and approval. No shelving, signage, merchandise, newspaper racks or other mechanisms shall be placed in front of the required ground level transparent windows.
4. Separate permits shall be submitted for the proposed on premise signs.
5. All parking spaces shall be located within 50 feet of an on-site deciduous tree per Section 530.170 of the Zoning Code.

Attachments

1. Statement of use and description of the project
2. General correspondence
3. Zoning map
4. Plans, site, landscape, floor, elevations, civils, renderings
5. Photos
6. PDR notes