



MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 18, 2022

TO: Honorable Mayor and City Councilmembers
Dave Perrault, City Administrator

FROM: Jessica Jagoe, City Planner

SUBJECT: Planning Case 22-002 – Concept Plan Review
Launch Properties – 3737 Lexington Avenue and 1133 Grey Fox Road

Budgeted Amount:	Actual Amount:	Funding Source:
N/A	N/A	N/A

Council Should Consider

Council should consider a request for a Concept Plan Review for the proposed redevelopment of the properties at 3737 Lexington Avenue and 1133 Grey Fox Road for the construction of a standalone car wash and a three tenant outbuilding (i.e. restaurant, dental office, and bank). The Applicant is seeking feedback from the City Council on the concept plan in advance of the full submission which would include a land use application for items such as a Subdivision, Conditional Use Permit, Site Plan Review, and Planned Unit Development.

The Concept Plan Review process is an opportunity for the City Council to provide comments and questions regarding proposed developments. A concept review is considered advisory and is nonbinding to the City and Applicant (Section 1320.14, Subd 4 of the Zoning Code). No formal action can be taken at a Work Session. A formal application will be subject to the full review process, including a public hearing with Planning Commission and City Council review.

Background

Launch Properties is proposing the redevelopment of the properties at 3737 Lexington Avenue N. and 1133 Grey Fox Road. The properties are currently owned by STORE Master Funding III, LLC. The two sites are currently developed with one vacant industrial building and associated parking lot developed over both lots. The proposal includes a lot reconfiguration that would adjust the existing lot line to the east. The Applicant is proposing to demolish the existing building and redevelop the site.

On October 11, 2021, the Developer had a proposal for redevelopment of these properties which included construction of an Aldi grocery store and a two tenant outbuilding (i.e. dental office and bank). This application was denied by the City Council for the following reasons:

1. The Applicant proposes a significant number of deviations from city development standards as outlined in the staff report and discussed in full by the City Council.
2. Many if not most of the deviations or requests for flexibility, including notable the yard setbacks, landscaping, and building positioning, are due to the number and size of the proposed buildings.
3. The application proposes no offsetting enhancements or benefits to the City or neighboring properties in exchange for the flexibility sought.
4. Elimination of the proposed multi-tenant building on the east portion of the site would also eliminate most if not all requests for flexibility or deviations from adopted standards.

Since that application, the Developer has been working with prospective tenants and on a revised site layout that would reduce the number of flexibilities requested. The Applicant has indicated that Aldi has made the decision to not move forward with a location in Arden Hills at this time. This allowed the Developer an opportunity to procure previously considered tenants and develop a new site layout that is believed to better align with the feedback provided by the City Council.

Discussion

Existing Conditions

The Property is currently owned by STORE Master Funding III, LLC. The site is currently developed as a vacant industrial building with an associated parking lot. The building was previously occupied by Pace Industries, LLC for manufacturing and office purposes until the closure of their facility.

Aerial Map of Subject Property



There are three existing accesses to the site off of Grey Fox Road and one access point to the west that leads onto the alley on the west boundary of the site. The Applicant would be eliminating all four of these existing access points and is proposing two new two-way entrances of off Grey Fox Road as part of this concept plan. As part of the redesigned site plan, the Applicant has aligned the multi-tenant access point with the access to Cub Foods. Preliminary comment from the Public Works Director is supportive of the closure of the existing accesses and a preference for the driveway alignments as shown. At this stage, the City Engineer has not completed a full review which would include turning radius, traffic movements, etc. as that level of detail would be completed as part of the future submission.

In the B-3 zoning district, proposals for new construction, redevelopment of a site, and significant modifications to existing sites shall use the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process. A PUD promotes the development of land in a unified manner by treating the entire development as a single entity. The purpose of the PUD process is to achieve a higher quality and better project than would otherwise be possible if the strict application of the zoning and subdivision requirements were met.

The proposed lots are within the Red Fox/Grey Fox/Lexington Avenue Business Area which is discussed in the Land Use Chapter. This area includes Red Fox and Grey Fox roads and is bounded by Lexington Avenue, Highway 51, Interstate 694, and the Canadian Pacific railway. This area is used by a number of small and large businesses for a variety of retail, manufacturing, distribution, warehousing, and office uses. This area was largely developed between the 1950s and 1970s, though the retail area along Lexington Avenue has had some new development and redevelopment in the last 15 years. This area is marked as an area of possible redevelopment in 2040.

Comprehensive Plan

The Subject Property is guided as Commercial (COM) in the Arden Hills 2040 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Chapter. The area is designated for a broad range of retail, shopping, and services to meet the needs of the community and region. Compatible uses such as office buildings are also intended for this area. A development intensity of intensity of up to 0.8 FAR may be allowed. According to the Comprehensive Plan the total area of the COM is 26 acres.

Direction	2040 Comp. Plan Land Use	Zoning	Existing Land Uses
North	COM - Commercial	B-3 Service Business District	Retail/Fast Food Restaurant
South	COM - Commercial	B-3 Service Business District	Retail/Grocery Store
West	CMU - Community Mixed Use	B-4 Retail Center District	Retail and Other Commercial

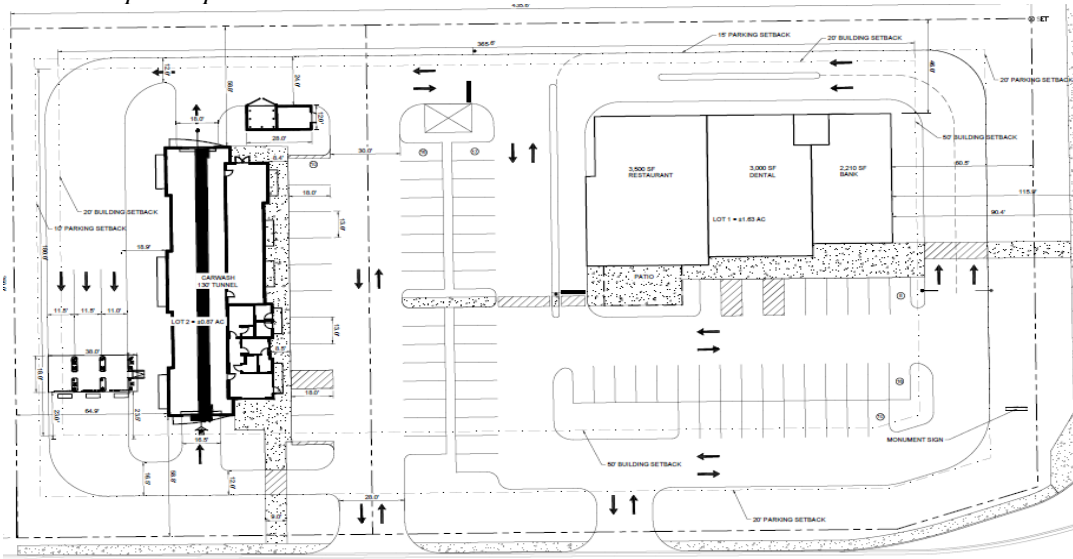
Concept Plan Proposal

The Applicant is proposing to develop the parcels with two new buildings. Lot One would be developed with a full service car wash for Mister Car Wash. Lot Two would be a three-tenant building comprised of a fast-casual restaurant for Panera (+/- 3,500 sq. ft.), a dental clinic for Pacific Dental (+/- 3,000 sq. ft.), and a bank for Bank of America (+/-2,200 sq. ft.). The proposed development is planned for construction in 2022-2023. The Mister Car Wash building is proposed to be located on the western (interior) parcel, with the multi-tenant building on the eastern (corner) parcel.

Subdivision – Intends to Comply

The lot area requirements for the B-3 Zoning District are a minimum lot size of 13,000 square feet and 100 feet of lot width and 130 feet of lot depth. The Applicant has indicated flexibility will not be requested as part of this application for the proposed subdivision.

Concept site plan



Setbacks – Flexibility Requested

From the previous project reviews, the Applicant has reconfigured the boundary line and building layout to reduce the number of areas where flexibility was to be considered relating to setbacks. The proposed concept plan meets the lot setback requirements for the B-3 District and parking. However, the city code in Section 1325.05 Subd. 8, E states “at least fifty percent (50%) of the largest building on each site shall be constructed at the front setback line.” The Applicant is requesting flexibility on this requirement. The front setback in the B-3 District is 50 feet from the property line. The proposed multi-tenant building is shown to be 60 feet from Lexington Avenue and 180 feet from Grey Fox Road. The car wash building would be 58 feet from Grey Fox Road.

Ordinance Requirements	B-3 District Standards	Proposed Development
Minimum Front Yard Setback	50 feet	Multi-Tenant: 60 feet – Lexington Avenue and +/- 180 feet Grey Fox Road Car Wash: 58 feet – Grey Fox Road
Minimum Rear Yard Setback	20 feet	Multi-Tenant: 46 feet Car Wash: 58 feet
Minimum Side Yard Setback	20 feet (min)/ 40 feet (total)	Multi-Tenant: +/- 100 feet (min) / N/A corner lot (total) Car Wash: +/- 40feet (east) and 65 feet (west)
Building Positioning	At Front Setback = 50 feet	Multi-Tenant: 60 feet – Lexington Avenue and +/- 180 feet Grey Fox Road Car Wash: 58 feet – Grey Fox Road

Exterior Materials – Intends to Comply

From the elevation renderings, the multi-tenant building materials are shown to be precast concrete base, masonry, metal panels, and fiber cement panels (i.e. wood grain texture). The car wash would be a combination of EIFS, masonry, metal panels, and stone. City code requires at least seventy-five (75) percent of the exterior building materials should be made of brick masonry, tile masonry, natural stone or its synthetic equivalent, decorative concrete plank,

transparent glass or any combination thereof. Trim and other accent or decorative features may be metal, wood, split faced block, EIFS, or stucco. Undesirable materials include simulated brick, vinyl or aluminum siding, sheet or corrugated metal siding, plain concrete blocks or panels, brightly colored metal roofing or canopies, pre-cast tilt-up walls, and mirrored or reflective glass.

Additionally, businesses within the B-3 District for transparency requirements shall have fifty percent (50%) of all first level building façades that front a public street comprised of transparent windows or doors in order to allow views of interior uses and activities. The Applicant as part of the concept review has not provided the specific detail on building materials or transparency. However, it was stated that flexibility would not be requested for exterior materials or transparency requirements.

Multi-Tenant Building Front Elevation facing Grey Fox Road



Multi-Tenant Building NE Corner Elevation facing South along Lexington Avenue



Car Wash Front Elevation facing Grey Fox Road



Freestanding and Wall Signage – Discussion Requested

The properties are located in Sign District 5. The Applicant has revised the master sign plan for the proposed development and has stated an intent to comply with sign district regulations. For the concept review, the Applicant provided a rendering of the shared monument sign in the narrative that complies with the ordinance requirements. Staff would need additional detail on the square footage of the tenant wall signage in order to verify compliance.

For the concept review, staff will note that properties in Sign District 5 are allowed wall signs up to 80 square feet. The Applicant has shown wall signage on three elevations of the proposed car wash building. On the south elevation there are two separate wall signs shown. The definition of a sign is “any written message, pictorial presentation, number, illustration, decoration, banner or other device that is used to announce, direct attention to, identify, advertise or otherwise make anything known.” The City Council should provide feedback as part of the concept review on consideration for allowing flexibility for wall signage.

Drive-Thru Facilities – Flexibility Requested

Section 1325.04 of the Zoning Code lists special requirements for drive-up facilities. One of these requirements states “no drive-in business, drive-up window, or fast food restaurant shall be located on a site that is within 1,320 feet of another facility”. The nearest drive-up facility is the Arby’s, located directly north of the Subject Property. The Applicant is requesting flexibility from this requirement on both properties to allow for a drive-in car wash and drive-up window.

With the proposed site layout, the multi-tenant building will feature a dual drive-thru lane running along the east and north sides of the building. These lanes will merge to one lane on the west side of the building where the pickup window will be located. The outermost drive-thru lane will be designated for “pre-order” pickup and the interior lane will be for the traditional menu board ordering. The proposed site plan has the menu and order board on the north side of the building. City code states “electronic devices such as loudspeakers or devices, and similar instruments, shall not be located within fifty (50) feet of any adjacent lot regardless of use or zoning district.” The multi-tenant building is shown to be 46 feet from the north property line. Therefore, the Applicant would also need to seek flexibility from the requirement for placement of electronic devices given the order board is positioned on the north side of the building closer to the north property line.

For the proposed standalone car wash, the Applicant has shown that the west side of the property will have three drive-thru lanes approaching automated pay stations under a detached accessory canopy. No additional information was included in the submittal on amplification or display features of the automated pay stations. Each pay station is shown in the renderings to have a security arm that allows customers to then enter the drive-in car wash tunnel upon payment. As a customer exits the car wash (i.e. heading towards the north side of the property) they wrap around the car wash building to exterior self-service vacuum stalls located adjacent to the parking stalls and building (i.e. east side of car wash building). It is stated that this car wash location will not have a towel dry service. The application does not provide specifics on the proposed vacuum stations. The Council should consider providing feedback to the Applicant on the installation of the accessory vacuum stations in preparation for their future submission. The car wash is permitted as a Conditional Use in the B-3 Zoning District under Motorized Vehicle Service. Factors for Council discussion may be the hours of operation, noise from equipment (i.e. washer, blowers, and vacuums), and stacking of vehicles waiting for service.

Off-Street Parking – Discussion Requested

The Applicant is seeking Council feedback on the number of parking spaces provided in satisfaction of ordinance requirements. Under City Code Section 1325.06, there are general categories listed to determine the number of parking spaces required. For concept review, the Council is asked to consider the following provisions based on the proposed uses:

- Restaurants – 15 stacking spaces for each customer pickup window plus one (1) space for each two (2) seats.
- Business & Professional Offices – one (1) parking space for each 250 sq. ft. of gross floor area.
- Clinics – one (1) for each doctor or dentist plus one (1) for each nurse, technician, or professional and one (1) for each 200 sq. ft. of gross floor area.
- Uses Not Specifically Noted Including Public Uses – As determined by City Council after recommendation by Planning Commission

The Applicant is proposing 77 parking spaces total for the development. The following table breaks down the off-street parking requirements based on the proposed uses. Based on the site information provided, staff estimates the multi-tenant building would trigger the need to establish 60 parking spaces. This number does not factor in the proposed car wash.

Land Use Category	Proposed Concept	Applicant Parking	Required Parking
Restaurant – 15 stacking spaces per pickup window and 1 space for each 2 seats	60 seats	28 stacking and 30 spaces	15 stacking and 30 spaces
Bank – 1 space per 250 SF of gross floor area	2,210	15	8.84
Dental Office – 1 space per dentist & technician, and 1 space per 200 SF of gross floor area	3,000	15 + 6 (i.e. est. employees) = 21	21
Other Uses Not Specifically Noted	1 drive-thru car wash tunnel	10	As determined by City Council
Site Total:		76	Approx. 60 without car wash

The city code for off-street parking requirements does not identify a land use category for Motor Vehicle Service (i.e. car wash). The Applicant is proposing 10 parking spaces for the car wash use. A comparable land use for the car wash might be to refer to the Service Station classification which is three (3) spaces for each enclosed bay plus one (1) for each employee on peak work shift. As an alternate, the city code does identify a category for Uses Not Specifically Noted Including Public Uses as determined by the City Council. Staff would note that those 10 parking spaces appear to be in the same location shown in the renderings for the self-service vacuum stalls. Further clarification should be provided by the Applicant between employee and customer parking for the proposed car wash. Staff believes the need for off-street parking attributed to the car wash would be minimal given the type of drive-thru service described.

For the concept review, the Applicant is seeking feedback from the Council on the number of parking spaces provided overall and specifically to the proposed car wash use. It was noted in the narrative that the two properties will have a shared parking/cross-access agreement.

Plan Evaluation Summary

Launch Properties has provided a conceptual site plan and 3D conceptual renderings of both buildings from different elevations. Based on an initial review, staff believes the proposal would require the following land use requests:

- Preliminary Plat and Final Plat for Subdivision
- Master and Final Planned Unit Development
- Site Plan Review
- Signage Plan
- Conditional Use Permit for Car Wash in the B-3 District

The table below provides the performance standards for the B-3 District and the preliminary analysis for the proposed development:

Ordinance Requirements	B-3 District Standards	Proposed Development
Maximum Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	0.8	Intends to meet code
Maximum Building Height	35 feet	Intends to meet code
Maximum Structure Coverage	40%	Intends to meet code
Minimum Landscape Lot Area	25%	Intends to meet code
Minimum Front Yard Setback	50 feet	Multi-Tenant: 60 feet – Lexington Avenue and +/- 180 feet Grey Fox Road Car Wash: 58 feet – Grey Fox Road
Minimum Rear Yard Setback	20 feet	Multi-Tenant: 46 feet Car Wash: 58 feet
Minimum Side Yard Setback	20 feet (min)/ 40 feet (total)	Multi-Tenant: +/- 100 feet (min) / N/A corner lot (total) Car Wash: +/- 40feet (east) and 65 feet (west)
Building Positioning	At Front Setback = 50 feet	Flexibility Requested <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Multi-Tenant: 60 feet – Lexington Avenue and +/- 180 feet Grey Fox Road • Car Wash: 58 feet – Grey Fox Road
Drive-Thru Requirements	Separation Between – 1350 feet Electronic Devices – 50 feet	Flexibility Requested <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Separation between facilities • Location of electronic device
Minimum Parking Requirements	Determined by land use	Discussion Requested – PUD shared parking 77 parking spaces provided
Off-Street Parking Setbacks	20 feet from ROW	20 feet
Building Façade	50% transparency at front	Intends to meet code

Building Materials	75% brick, tile, natural stone, decorative concrete, transparent glass or any combination thereof	Intends to meet code
Pedestrian and Bicycle Circulation	6 foot sidewalk	Intends to meet code
Freestanding Sign Copy Area	100 square feet	96 square feet
Wall Signage	Sign District 5	Discussion Requested – Car wash wall signs on single elevation

Budget Impact

N/A

Attachments

- A. Land Use Application
- B. Location Map
- C. Project Narrative
- D. Concept Renderings and Site Plan
- E. Presentation