



STAFF ANALYSIS

Date: February 18, 2020
To: Public Input Session Attendees
From: Lindsay Laird, Planner
Re: Lake Forest Church Davidson, Conditional Planning Area Map Amendment

1. INTRODUCTION

APPLICANT INFO

- **Owner(s):** Rebecca McIntosh (480 S. Main St.)
Julius Wade & Cary Page (496 S. Main St.)
- **Site Designer:** Henson Foley
- **Location(s):** 480 & 496 South Main Street (Parcel IDs: 00324111, 00324107, & 00324170)
- **Planning Area(s):** Village Edge (480 S. Main St.)
Village Infill, Purple Overlay District (496 S. Main St.)
- **Area:** +/- 4.11 acres

2. PLANNING STAFF PRELIMINARY REVIEW

OVERVIEW

The applicant proposes a Conditional Planning Area Map Amendment for +/- 4.11 acres currently zoned Village Edge and Village Infill Planning Areas. The Davidson Planning Ordinance (DPO) allows the Conditional Planning Area as an option for developers/property owners to ask for exceptions from the ordinance in a manner that is mutually agreeable to the developer and the Town of Davidson.

The request includes three parcels, 480 South Main Street (the former Davidson Family Clinic site), 496 South Main Street (currently a single-family home), and a vacant lot just south of 496 South Main Street. The applicant proposes a three-story commercial building fronting South Main Street (+/- 27,700 square feet) with restaurant/retail space on the first floor and office space on the second and third floors. The commercial building will also have outdoor space fronting a public pedestrian way leading to the church facility at the rear of the property. The proposed church facility will be two stories (+/- 23,750 square feet) fronting a public pedestrian way/plaza. The plan also preserves the existing home at 496 S. Main St. for church offices and meeting rooms. Plans show one new access point to the site from 496 South Main Street. A second access point will be provided via a joint driveway/parking lot at the neighboring property to the north, 460 South Main Street. Total parking on site will be 118 parking spaces. The applicant is working with neighboring property owners on shared use agreements that will allow the church to utilize +/- 84 additional parking located adjacent to the church property.

PROPOSED CONDITIONS

Lake Forest Church requests a conditional map amendment for the following reasons:

- **Allowing the Church use at 480 South Main Street.** This parcel is located in the Village Edge Planning Area which allows the religious institution use with additional requirements. Under Davidson Planning Ordinance Section 3.2.31.2, religious institutions may not be located within 1,320 feet (1/4 mile) of another religious institution. This site is just within this distance from the Davidson United Methodist Church chapel located at 304 South Main Street. This site is +/-1,090 feet from DUMC property as measured from property line to property line.
- **Allowing a portion of the church facility on the 496 South Main Street property.** This parcel is located in the Village Infill Planning Area. The religious institution use is not permitted in this planning area.
- **Allowing church offices to locate within the existing single-family residence at 496 South Main Street.** Because this parcel is located in the Village Infill Planning Area, the religious institution use would not be permitted.

Lake Forest has agreed to the following additional conditions:

- **Shared driveway and parking agreement with 460 South Main Street.** A shared driveway and parking agreement is in process between Lake Forest and the property owner(s) to the north.
- **Pedestrian improvements along 460 South Main Street.** A sidewalk from the project site, along 460 South Main Street, connecting to the existing sidewalk at the intersection of 115 and Eugenia Street is shown on the proposed site plan. This is also a recommended improvement from the draft Transportation Impact Analysis (TIA).

ADDITIONAL CONDITIONS TO CONSIDER

Staff generally supports the conditions initially proposed by the developer. Through the Conditional Planning Area Map Amendment process, the Board of Commissioners may attach additional conditions to an approval. The following conditions have been discussed and may be required by the Board of Commissioners:

- A potential payment-in-lieu for the town's portion of property tax (based on land value only).
- Subdivision of the commercial building from the rest of the project site to ensure that the religious institution use and commercial use are separate.
- Clarity on phasing of construction with respect to the church construction.
- Requiring a retail use on the first floor of the commercial building.
- Requiring affordable housing units on the third floor of the commercial building.

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS

Below is a summary of general planning and development standards relating to this proposal. Note: For the purpose of this analysis, the Village Edge and Village Infill Planning Areas are considered to be the "underlying" planning areas for the proposed site. The church building primarily lies within the Village Infill Planning Area, while the commercial building is entirely within the Village Edge Planning Area.

BUILDING TYPE, HEIGHT, & SETBACKS

The proposed building heights—two story church and three story commercial building—fall within the minimum/maximum range for the Village Infill (maximum two stories) and Village Edge (maximum three stories) Planning Areas. The commercial building complies with Village Edge setback requirements (Front: 0' min., 0' max.; Side: 0' min., max. n/a; Rear: n/a). The church building complies with Village Infill setback requirements for institutional buildings (Front: 0' min., max. n/a; Side: 10' min., max. n/a; Rear: 5' min., max. n/a).

TRANSPORTATION: STREETSAPES, ACCESS, PARKING, & IMPACTS

The proposed site plan shows a 5-foot wide sidewalk along the west side of South Main Street between the southernmost property boundary and a proposed pedestrian crosswalk (with RRFBs) at Griffith Village Lane. A 12-foot wide sidewalk is shown along the west side of South Main Street between the proposed pedestrian crosswalk and the shared driveway access at 460 South Main Street. Beyond the shared driveway access, a 5-foot wide sidewalk is shown in front of the existing Davidson Professional Park connecting the proposed site to the existing sidewalk and CATS bus stop at South Village Lane. Street trees are also shown along the project site frontage on S. Main Street.

There are two access points to this site—a shared driveway on the adjacent property to the north of this site (460 South Main Street) and a driveway near the southernmost property boundary at 496 South Main Street. A draft TIA for this project indicates that the proposal adds enough volume to warrant turn lanes at the northern shared driveway. However, due to the constrained cross section of 115 and other potential drawbacks of a widened cross section, a payment-in-lieu may be an acceptable alternative. The draft TIA also recommends that the southernmost driveway access be limited to right-in right-out access only. Staff is working with NCDOT to determine the optimal configuration.

The site plan appears to comply with minimum parking requirements for commercial and institutional buildings. The Davidson Planning Ordinance requires a minimum of 2 parking spaces per 1,000 square feet of commercial/retail use and a minimum of 1 space for every 8 seats in the main assembly area of civic/institutional buildings. It appears that the project is well within the minimum parking standards. A total of 149 parking space minimum are required (55 spaces minimum for 27,700 sf commercial and 94 spaces for the church). A total of 202 spaces are shown on the proposed plan which include 118 parking spaces on site and 84 shared spaces on the adjacent property to the north. Section 8.3.2 of the Davidson Planning Ordinance allows adjoining non-residential sites to share up to 50 percent of required parking spaces.

NATURAL ASSETS: OPEN SPACE/PARKS & TREES

The Village Edge Planning Area requires a minimum of 5% open space, while the Village Infill Planning Area requires a minimum 10% open space. A total of 38% open space is provided on the proposed site plan. Village Infill open space standards also state that 5% of the open space requirement must be met with a plaza, green, playground, community garden, or pedestrian passageway per Section 7.2 of the Davidson Planning Ordinance. The proposed site plan shows a total of 10.2% of improved open space.

Note: this project is being reviewed under the previous tree ordinance (application received October 1, 2019). Tree planting standards require a minimum of 2 large mature trees per 9,000 square feet of parcel area or 1 large mature tree and 1 small mature tree per 6,000 square feet of parcel area in the Village Edge Planning Area. The Village Infill Planning Area requires a minimum of 2 large mature trees per 7,000 square feet of parcel area or 1 large mature tree and 1 small mature tree per 4,500 square feet of parcel area. The site plan indicates that a total of 19 small mature trees and 42 large mature trees will be preserved or planted on site. The project team intends to comply with Davidson Planning Ordinance requirements based on the portion of the project site within the Village Infill Planning Area (+/-73,180.8 sf—21 large mature trees OR 16 large and 16 small mature trees required) and the portion of the project site within the Village Edge Planning Area (+/-105,850.8 sf—23 large mature trees OR 18 large and 18 small mature trees required).

3. PUBLIC PLANS & POLICIES

Below is a list of town-adopted plans and a brief summary of each plan's applicability to the proposed Lake Forest Church Conditional Master Plan:

- **Davidson’s General Planning Principles (2020)** include tenets to guide decisions and development in Davidson. Principles relevant to this proposed development are listed below.
 - We must preserve Davidson’s character and sense of community.
 - A walkable and historic downtown and adjacent neighborhoods.
 - A street, sidewalk, and greenway network that knits the community together.
 - Engaging public spaces and celebrating historic resources throughout town.
 - Local businesses that invest in our community.
 - We must preserve and enhance Davidson’s unique downtown.
 - Increase accessibility to downtown from surrounding neighborhoods and within downtown by making it easier to walk, bike, and park.
 - Build upon its status as Davidson’s social and civic center and create additional compelling public spaces to foster interaction among residents.
 - Preserve historic buildings and encourage stewardship of these unique resources.
 - Broaden the downtown area through design and redevelopment to better integrate North Main and South Main Streets and the edge areas along Jackson and Depot Streets in a manner that also protects historic character along the corridors.
 - We must provide a safe and efficient transportation network for all users by supporting active transportation, transit, and new mobility options.
 - Commercial centers that support walking, bicycling, riding public transit, and using other alternative modes as viable and safe options to these destinations.
 - New greenway, bike, and sidewalk connections to existing and new developments.
 - We must manage growth and support appropriate economic development so the town can provide public facilities and services apace with development.
 - Establishment and maintenance of an adequate commercial tax base.
 - Alternative transportation options between destinations.
 - We must consider the town’s fiscal health when making decisions.
 - Fiscal information will be used to inform decisions made about new developments and public investments.
 - A balanced fiscal approach will take into account that not all community priorities will have net positive fiscal impacts.
 - Decision-making will encourage a fiscally-sustainable balance between the residential and commercial components of the town’s tax base.
 - We must support our institutional and nonprofit community partners that contribute to our quality of life.
 - Planning policies and regulations that are developed in collaboration with community partners.
 - Consideration of the impacts of community decisions on community partner organizations.
 - Partnerships with organizations to support the advancement of community goals.

4. PROCESS/NEXT STEPS

The project is following the Conditional Master Plan process found in Davidson Planning Ordinance 14.5. This requires a recommendation by the Planning Board and approval by the Board of Commissioners.

- **Board of Commissioner Pre-Development Consultation:** June 2019
- **Board of Commissioner Work Session:** February 11, 2020
- **Public Input Session:** February 18, 2020
- **Planning Board Update:** February 24, 2020
- **Board of Commissioner Work Sessions (As Needed):** March/April

- **Public Hearing (Tentative):** March 24, 2020
- **Planning Board Recommendation (Tentative):** March 30, 2020
- **Board of Commissioner Decision (Tentative):** April 28, 2020

5. RESOURCES & ATTACHMENTS

RESOURCES

- Davidson Comprehensive Plan (2020): <https://whatsnextdavidson.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/20200116-Davidson-Comprehensive-Plan-Adopted.pdf>
- Davidson Planning Ordinance (2015): <http://www.ci.davidson.nc.us/DocumentCenter/View/8499>

ATTACHMENTS

- Proposed Site Plan (Henson Foley; Dated 1/8/2020)