



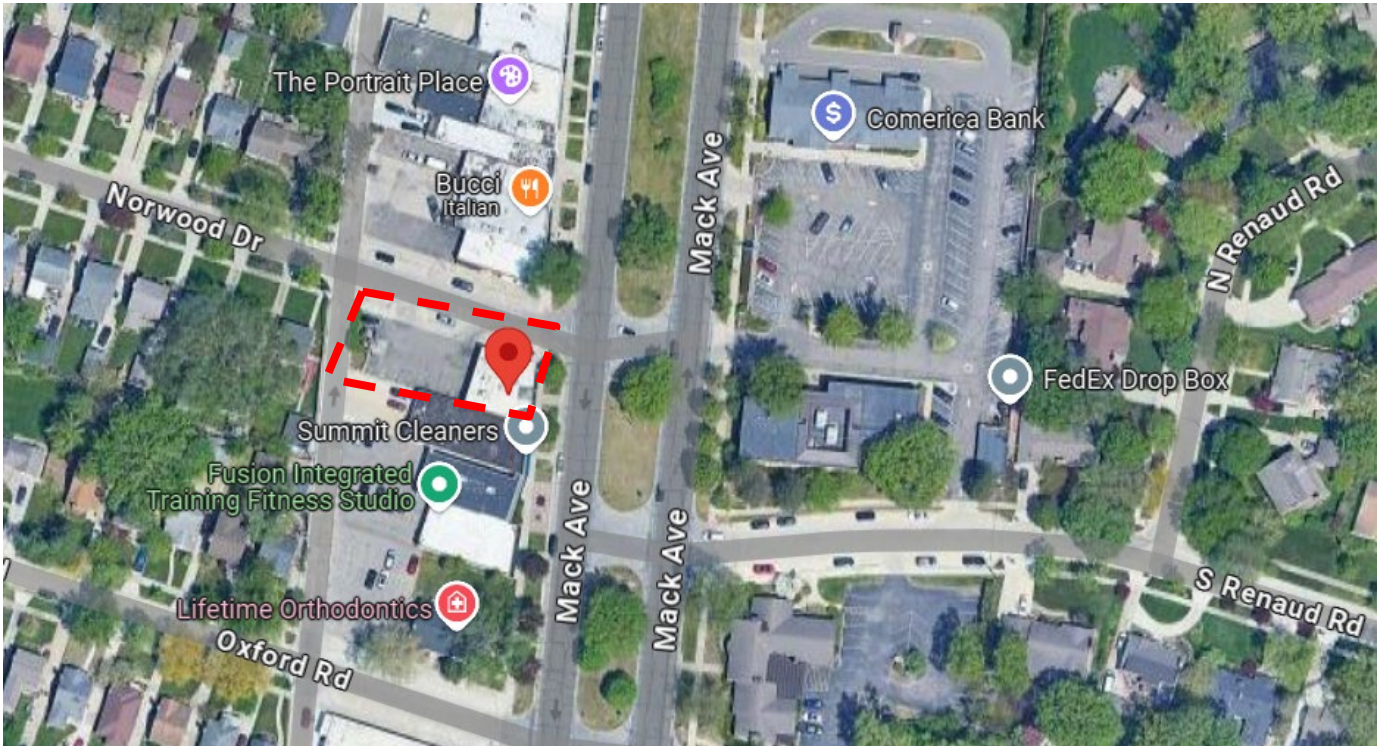
October 17, 2024

Planning Commission  
City of Grosse Pointe Woods  
20025 Mack Plaza Dr  
Grosse Pointe Woods, MI 48236

**Subject: 20195 Mack Ave (Branden McRill, Lola’s Taco Bar) Special Land Use and Site Plan Review**  
Parcel ID: 40-011-01-155-400  
Zoning: C - Commercial Business

Dear Commissioners,

Following the Planning Commission’s recommendation for approval of the special land use and approval of the site plan, Branden McRill (the “Applicant”) requests special land use approval for a sit-down restaurant, serving liquor, at 20195 Mack Avenue (the “Site”). Restaurants serving alcohol (taverns) require special land use review within the C Commercial Business District, and it must be approved in accordance with the procedures set for a special land use approval.



**PROJECT SUMMARY**

To prepare for the new business to occupy the space, the applicant has submitted a site plan to the Planning Commission to conduct aesthetic improvements to the exterior, such as a change in paint color and signage, and adding outdoor seating. The applicant also proposed an interior renovation of the former Boston Market restaurant facility to add new kitchen equipment and lighting, change the design and modify existing millwork, and modify the layout. The parking lot with 10 off-street parking spaces, without ADA spaces, is proposed to remain the same.



## RECOMMENDATION

**Special Land Use Consideration.** As a special land use, there should be strict compliance with Ordinance regulations and Planning Commission may impose reasonable standards to offset negative impacts on surrounding properties based on their findings and comments brought forth during the public hearing. Following the required public hearing, we recommend the following motion of approval:

*I move to recommend approval of the proposed special land use for a sit-down restaurant, including the sale of liquor at 20195 Mack Avenue (Parcel ID 40-011-01-155-400) to City Council based on the findings of compliance with the Ordinance listed in the review.*



**Site Plan Consideration.** Provided there is consensus on the Commission regarding the special land use review, we recommend the Planning Commission consider the following or a similar motion:

*I move to approve the proposed site plan of a sit-down restaurant, including the sale of liquor at 20195 Mack Avenue (Parcel ID 40-011-01-155-400) with the following conditions:*

- 1. The special land use for on-site sale and consumption of alcohol is approved by Council.*
- 2. The number of employees in the largest shift does not exceed 5, based on off-street parking requirements on site, otherwise the parking configuration and dumpster location must be improved to create additional parking spaces.*
- 3. A protective barrier between the length of the off-street parking space and the sidewalk along Norwood Drive is provided.*
- 4. The shrubbery screen along the western property line facing the residential property is improved to not encroach on the public alley and improved to screen the entire length of the property, or the dumpster is relocated to the SW corner of the site with an enclosure to screen the property.*
- 5. The dumpster screening is enhanced to satisfy the requirements of the Planning Commission and the Ordinance.*
- 6. A city outdoor café permit and Wayne County approval is obtained for the outdoor seating in the public right-of-way.*

Respectfully submitted,

**McKENNA**

Brigitte Wolf, AICP  
Associate Planner



# Special Land Use Review

This project is reviewed against the Zoning Ordinance requirements for the sale and consumption of alcohol on site, also referred to as a tavern, according to Section 50-4.20, and the Master Plan for the City of Grosse Pointe Woods. We offer the following comments for your consideration; underlined items require additional discussion and/or identify outstanding items to be addressed.

## 1. HARMONY WITH MASTER PLAN (MI Zoning Enabling Act)

*Similar to the conditions of rezoning request, is the proposal consistent with the goals, policies, and future land use map of the Master Plan? Or, has the applicant demonstrated that conditions have changed significantly since the Master Plan was developed, and request is demonstrably consistent with the development trends in the area?*

**Findings:** The 2006 Master Plan Future Land Use Map designates this area as *General Business/Mixed Use*. The draft 2024 Master Plan Future Land Use Map designates this area as *Corridor Mixed-Use* described in the text of the Master Plan as retail, restaurant, personal service and office establishments which are designed for the day-to-day retail and personal service needs of nearby residents. These facilities are intended to be near residential neighborhoods with adequate buffering. The C Commercial zoning district corresponds to this land use classification. The proposal includes a restaurant use to service nearby residents. Additionally, this request aligns with other economic development initiatives, such as the Social District, established in 2024.

## 2. HAZARDOUS OR DISRUPTIVE SMOKE, FUME, GLARE, NOISE, VIBRATION OR ODOR POLLUTION (Sec. 50-4.11)

*To promote such business development insofar as it is possible and appropriate in each area, uses are prohibited [in the C Commercial District] which would create hazards, offensive and loud noises, vibration, smoke, glare, heavy truck traffic or late hours of operation.*

**Findings:** Based on the proposed use being similar to the prior use, it is not anticipated that it will be hazardous or disruptive so long as the site is properly maintained. The restaurant will be open for lunch and dinner services. I believe the intended hours of operation are 10am until 10pm daily. We do not anticipate any hazards or disruptions beyond the existing use of the site.

## 3. CONSISTENT WITH INTENT OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE (Sec. 50-3.1)

*The intent of the C Commercial Business district is to encourage the concentration of local business areas to the mutual advantage of both the consumers and merchants and thereby promote the best use of land at certain strategic locations and avoid the continuance of encouraging marginal strip business development along major streets.*

**Findings:** The proposed commercial business provides a unique restaurant concept and cuisine to nearby residential areas, which is not already offered, and offers a space for gatherings. So long as the proposed business operates with enforcement of avoiding loud noises, vibration, smoke, glare, and late hours of operation, we find this proposed use as the best use of land and find that its services residents, invites visitors, and encourages business development along Mack Avenue.



# Site Plan Review

Following the site plan standards explained in section 50-6.1, this review has been prepared for review and approval by Planning Commission.

## 1. ZONING AND MASTER PLAN DESIGNATIONS

The following chart provides information on existing land use, current zoning, and future land use.

Location	Existing Land Use	Zoning District	Future Land Use Designation
Subject Site	Vacant former Boston Markey prepared food establishment	C	General Business/Mixed Use ('06) Corridor Mixed Use ('24)
North	General Commercial	C	General Business/Mixed Use ('06) Corridor Mixed Use ('24)
South	General Commercial	C	General Business/Mixed Use ('06) Corridor Mixed Use ('24)
East	Restricted Office	C	General Business/Mixed Use ('06) Corridor Mixed Use ('24)
West	One-Family Residential	C	General Business/Mixed Use ('06) Corridor Mixed Use ('24)

**Findings:** The 2006 Master Plan Future Land Use Map designates this area as *General Business/Mixed Use*. The draft 2024 Master Plan Future Land Use Map designates this area as *Corridor Mixed-Use* described in the text of the Master Plan as retail, restaurant, personal service and office establishments which are designed for the day-to-day retail and personal service needs of nearby residents. These facilities are intended to be near residential neighborhoods with adequate buffering. The C Commercial zoning district corresponds to this land use classification. The site itself contains an existing restaurant facility of approximately 2,192 square feet alongside an existing parking lot.

The site is currently zoned in the C Commercial Business district. Restaurant businesses are a permitted use; however, with the addition of the liquor license for sale and consumption of alcohol onsite, it must receive a special land use (Section 50-4.20) it must be approved in accordance with the procedures set for a special land use approval.

## 2. DIMENSIONAL REQUIREMENTS (Sec. 50-3.1.J)

Standard	Requirement	Existing Conditions	Proposed Conditions	Proposed Compliance
<i>Minimum Front Setback (West)</i>	0 feet	No Change	No Change	Complies
<i>Minimum Side Setback (North / South)</i>	<i>In C districts, side yards are not required along interior side lot lines if all walls abutting or facing such lot lines are of fireproof construction and wholly without windows or other openings...</i> <i>In C districts, no side yard is required on the street side of corner lots.</i>	No Change	No Change	Complies



<p><i>Minimum Rear Setback (East)</i></p>	<p><i>In C districts, rear yards are not required along interior rear lot lines for buildings or parts of buildings not used as dwellings, if all walls abutting or facing such lot lines are of fire-proof construction and wholly without windows or other openings...</i></p> <p><i>In C districts, on any lot running through from street to street, a rear yard shall be provided on the rear street conforming to the requirements for front yards on that street.</i></p>	<p>No Change</p>	<p>No Change</p>	<p>Complies</p>
<p><i>Maximum Building Height</i></p>	<p>2 stories, 28 feet</p>	<p>No Change</p>	<p>No Change</p>	<p>Complies</p>

**Findings:** Dimensional requirements are met and comply with the standards.

**2. ARCHITECTURE AND BUILDING DESIGN (Sec. 50-5.18)**

*The Ordinance requires architectural and building design standards to “promote a complimentary use of design elements that result in a theme oriented, harmonious appearance and image for the commercial and high intensity residential areas of the city”.*

**Findings:** The existing building is composed of brick with concrete detailing and vinyl trim along the top of the façade, which the Applicant intends to maintain and paint a light blue, aligning with the pre-approved building colors (see below). Per Section 50-5.18 of the Zoning Ordinance, new construction, renovations, remodeling, or exterior building alterations in the C Commercial Business district shall be in conformance with approved design standards. The architectural design and current colors of the existing building conform to these standards. *Complies.*



Buxton Blue HC-149



Yarmouth Blue HC-150

**3. PARKING AND LOADING (Sec. 50-5.3)**

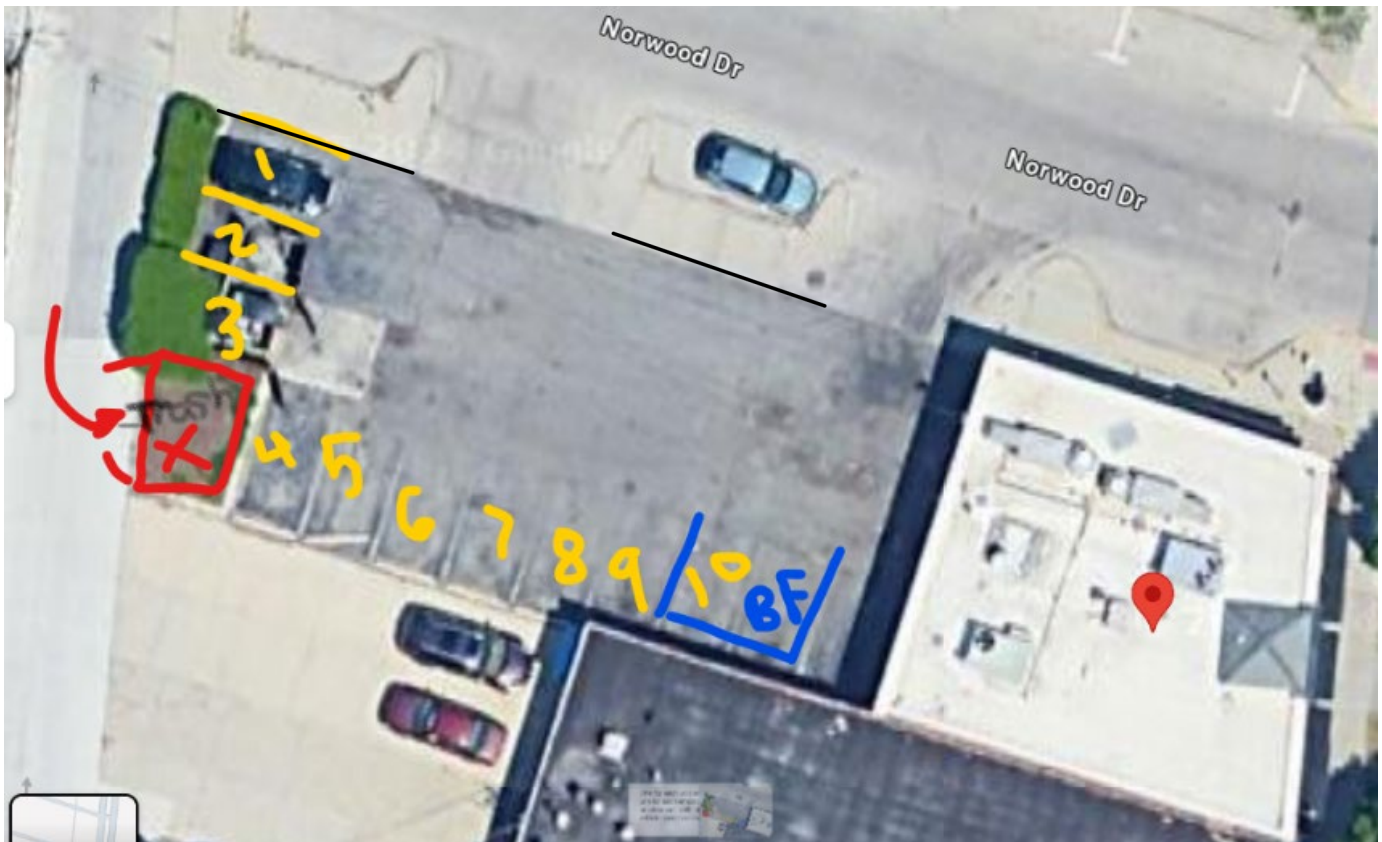
**Findings:**

**Parking.** The current site configuration includes 10 parking spaces without any designated ADA spaces, which can be accessed via two egress/ingress drives off Norwood Drive. The applicant does not intend to modify the parking layout. Additionally, there are three on-street parking spaces along Norwood Drive and two along Mack Avenue that abut the property.

Per section 50-5.3(H), Establishments for sale and consumption on the premises of beverages, food, or refreshments, except as otherwise specified in section 50-5.3 (H) requires one space per 200 gross square feet of area, plus one for each employee during peak employment. The total building area is 2,192 gross square feet, which would require 11 parking spaces. However, given that this is an existing building, and the total area of the structure remains unchanged, the Ordinance only requires compliance with 50% of the requirements. Thus, five (5) off-street parking spaces plus spaces for the number of employees in the largest shift are required. Unless the Planning Commission finds substantial evidence to impose greater standards to offset anticipated negative impacts, as a special land use, the proposed business meets the parking requirements given the number of employees do not go beyond the number of parking spaces. *Complies.*



Location	Required	Provided	Compliance
20195 Mack	Square footage of gross floor area = 2,192.016 Number of Employees (largest shift) = # 50%(11) = <b>5 + 5 Employees</b>	10 off street parking + on-street spaces. Could add one-two more with relocating the dumpster.	<b>Likely</b> complies pending information on employees in the largest shift.



**Loading.** The site plans indicate the building as 2,192 square feet, which requires one loading space. The site plan does not indicate a dedicated loading and unloading zone. The applicant will need to give reason if a loading space is not needed, otherwise one must be added to the site.

**Protective Barrier.** The Ordinance requires that where a parking lot adjoins a public sidewalk, there shall a barrier so located as to prevent cars parked on such parking lot from extending over or encroaching upon such public sidewalk. **We recommend adding at least a two-foot tall masonry screening wall to prevent vehicles from extending over or encroaching on the sidewalk (the approximate areas are depicted in black on the image above).** If the applicant has substantial reasoning that a masonry screening cannot be accommodated in the space portrayed on the image below, in red, the Planning Commission may consider requiring a curb be added in place of the protective, screening wall barrier.



#### 4. SIGNS (Chapter 32 of the General Code)

**Findings:** The site plan indicates a new wall sign and roof sign that would protrude above the top line of the building facade. Chapter 32 of the City's Code of Ordinance concerns signage. The wall sign is likely compliant; however, the applicant should be aware that the proposed roof sign is not. This will be addressed administratively through the sign review application process. *Can comply.*

#### 5. LIGHTING (Sec. 50-6.1)

*The Ordinance states "Exterior lighting shall be designed so that it is shielded from adjacent properties and so that it does not impede the vision of traffic along adjacent streets."*

**Findings:** The applicant has not proposed any new lighting on the exterior of the building. *Complies.*

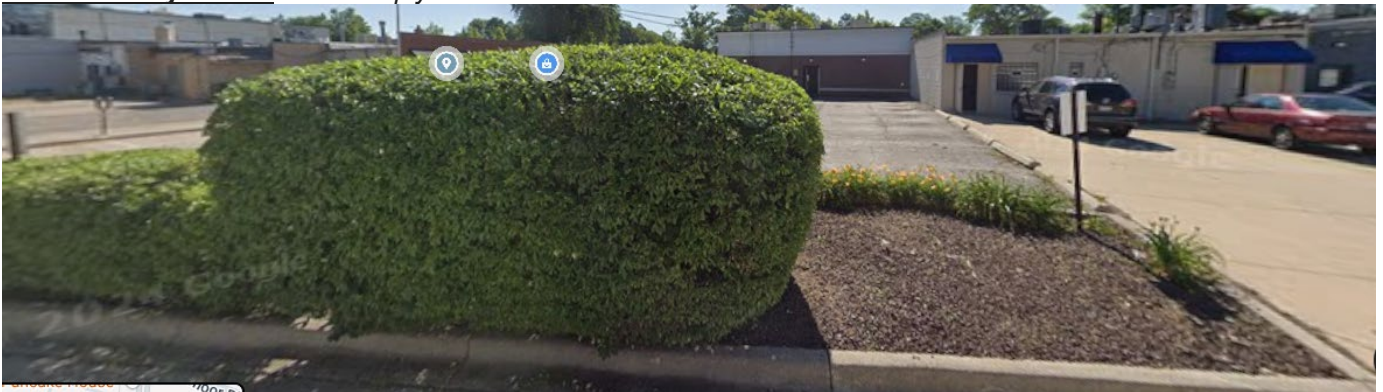
#### 6. LANDSCAPING and SCREENING (Sec. 50-6.1)

*The site plan requirements include that "the site design shall provide reasonable visual and sound privacy for dwelling units located within the project and adjacent to the project. Fences, walks, barriers, and landscaping shall be used, as appropriate, for the protection and enhancement of property and the privacy of its occupants."*

**Findings:**

**Landscaping.** There is existing landscaping on site screening the parking lot from the residential properties behind the lot; however, the previous owner did not maintain the hedge well. The applicant has proposed to preserve the landscaping along the rear property line.

**Parking Lot Screening.** Whenever a parking area adjoins residential property or a residential street, an ornamental masonry wall not less than two feet or more than four feet in height shall be erected and maintained between the required yard space and area to be used for parking, except for such portions as are used for entrances and exits. The site currently utilizes a dense shrubbery screen in lieu of an ornamental masonry wall, that screens part of the length of the property. **Attention should be given to improve the shrubbery and prevent the shrubs from encroaching into the public alley and to complete the screening along the full length of the property line. Section 50-5.19 Greenbelts lists the plant types and species allowed as part of the shrubbery screen.** *Can comply.*



#### 7. TRASH RECEPTALE (Sec. 50-6.1)

*"Any trash receptacles shall be appropriately screened and utilize quality materials that complement the proposed site and adjacent properties."*

**Trash Receptacle/Enclosure:** The site plan indicates the new business will be utilizing the existing dumpster location and red painted wood fence screening; however, the dumpster takes up vital parking spaces and the wood screening is in need of maintenance and stands out by color it is painted. **The applicant must propose a higher quality, durable material, such as masonry or concrete block, that complements the site based on the**





**updated colors of the main building as well as adjacent properties. The applicant should also consider relocating the dumpster to maximize parking.**

### **8. OUTDOOR SEATING (Sec. 50-6.5)**

*According to the Outdoor Café Permit application review criteria, the following must be added to outdoor seating in the public right-of-way, “The perimeter around the outdoor cafe area may be delineated using nonpermanent fixtures such as railing, potted plants, decorative chains, or other approved fixtures. The permanent anchoring of tables, chairs, umbrellas, awnings, railings or other fixtures may be approved by the building department provided such anchoring meets all city and county requirements.”*

**Findings:** The site plan indicates nine (9) outdoor seating tables with a total of 28 seats in the public right-of-way in front of the building along Mack Avenue. A decorative fence enclosure and planters as a protective barrier to the roadway have been included. *Complies.*

**For the outdoor seating to be actualized as proposed in the rendering presented, the use of public right of way will need to be approved by Wayne County before receiving a city permit as this area is in county right of way.**