
To: Spring Lake Park Planning Commission From: Phil Carlson, AICP, Stantec

City of Spring Lake Park

File: Mr. Car Wash Date: March 28, 2022
 8200 Central Ave NE
 Applicant: Brittney Whitley, CWP West Corp
 Owners: Tam Le, Jin Yuan

Re: Conditional Use Permit, Preliminary Plat, Mr. Car Wash, 8200 Central Avenue NE

INTRODUCTION

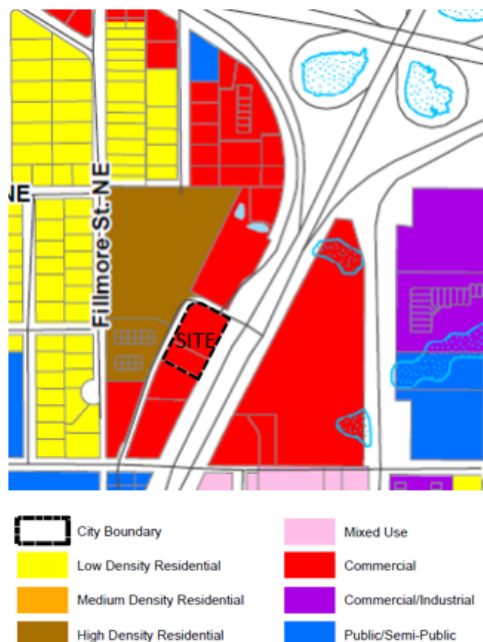
Mr. Car Wash proposes to build a new car wash facility at 8200 Central Avenue NE, on the parcels now occupied by Taco Lindo restaurant and Hope's Chinese Buffet. The property address is Central Avenue, but its access is from Middletown Road, the frontage road for Central Avenue/Highway 65.

Surrounding uses are commercial uses fronting Highway 65 both north and south of the site, with the Cottages and Middletown townhouse residential uses west across Middletown Road. Across Highway 65 to the east is the HyVee Foods store and gas station.

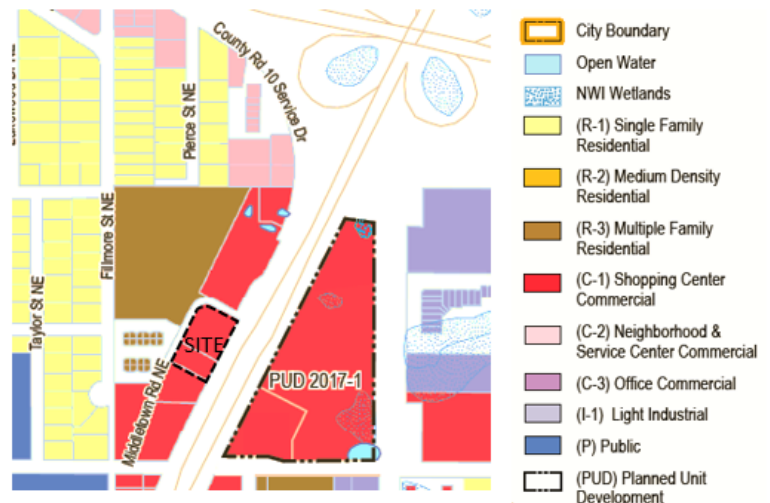
The property is guided Commercial and zoned C-1 Shopping Center, shown on the maps below. A car wash is a conditional use in the C-1 district, noted in the list of uses in the code as *"Auto and marine; service, parts, repair and wash"*. They are also applying to plat the property.



2040 Land Use Plan



Zoning Map



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SITE ISSUES – CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT

The Zoning Code allows the City to impose reasonable conditions on certain uses to address issues that may impact surrounding properties or public health, safety, and welfare. Conditional uses are considered *permitted uses to which reasonable conditions may be attached based on findings of fact*. The assumption is that the use is allowed and the City needs to articulate the conditions under which the use might be approved, rather than deny it because of potential conditions that do not yet exist. If it appears there is no reasonable way to accommodate the use in this location, the City can deny the use.

Site Operation & Access

Car wash customers would enter off Middletown Road at the SW corner of the site, through the four-lane automated pay stations, then turn into the long, enclosed car wash building. Much of the wash operation is automated but there are attendants on duty for detailing, drying, interior vacuuming and cleaning, etc. Exiting the car wash at the north end of the building, customers can either go straight out the north end of the site, turning right to get directly onto Highway 65, or turn left within the site and get back to the parking area in front of the building where there are vacuums at each parking space for customers. Exiting from the parking/vacuum area is one-way out onto Middletown Road. The site plan is illustrated on the next page.

Within the building there are also restrooms for customers, office space and service functions for staff, and mechanical equipment. The pay station canopy is a separate structure apart from the main building. There are two small, enclosed structures for the vacuum equipment, one on each end of the parking area with underground tubing connecting to each vacuum station. Next to the south vacuum equipment enclosure is the trash dumpster enclosure.

Traffic

The access points described above are the three driveways for the site: one-way in at the SW corner of the site from Middletown Road, one-way out next to it from the parking/vacuum area, also onto Middletown Road, and one-way out at the NE corner of the site. It will be important to have clear signage so that traffic can be managed safely.

The current two properties have four driveways onto Middletown Road between them – separate entrance and exit driveways for Taco Lindo on the west side of the site, a two-way driveway for Hope's Chinese Buffet on the west side of the site, and a two-way driveway out the north end of the site for Hope's. The proposed Mr. Car Wash plan would replace these four with the three described above. Public works and engineering recommends that the north access drive, proposed as one-way out, be signed to only allow right turns onto Highway 65, and not allow traffic to go straight onto northbound Middletown Road. The existing and proposed driveways are illustrated on the site plan on the next page.

An issue with any drive-through type facility is adequate stacking and making sure that cars waiting in line don't interfere with cars on the adjacent street. The site plan submitted by the applicants shows 19 cars waiting in the pay station lines. This may be adequate, depending on their experience with their facilities. But on a very busy day cars may back up onto Middletown Road, or be tempted to do so. There needs to be clear signage so that stacking onto the road is not allowed and also a condition in the CUP that any traffic problems could result in review and revocation of the permit.

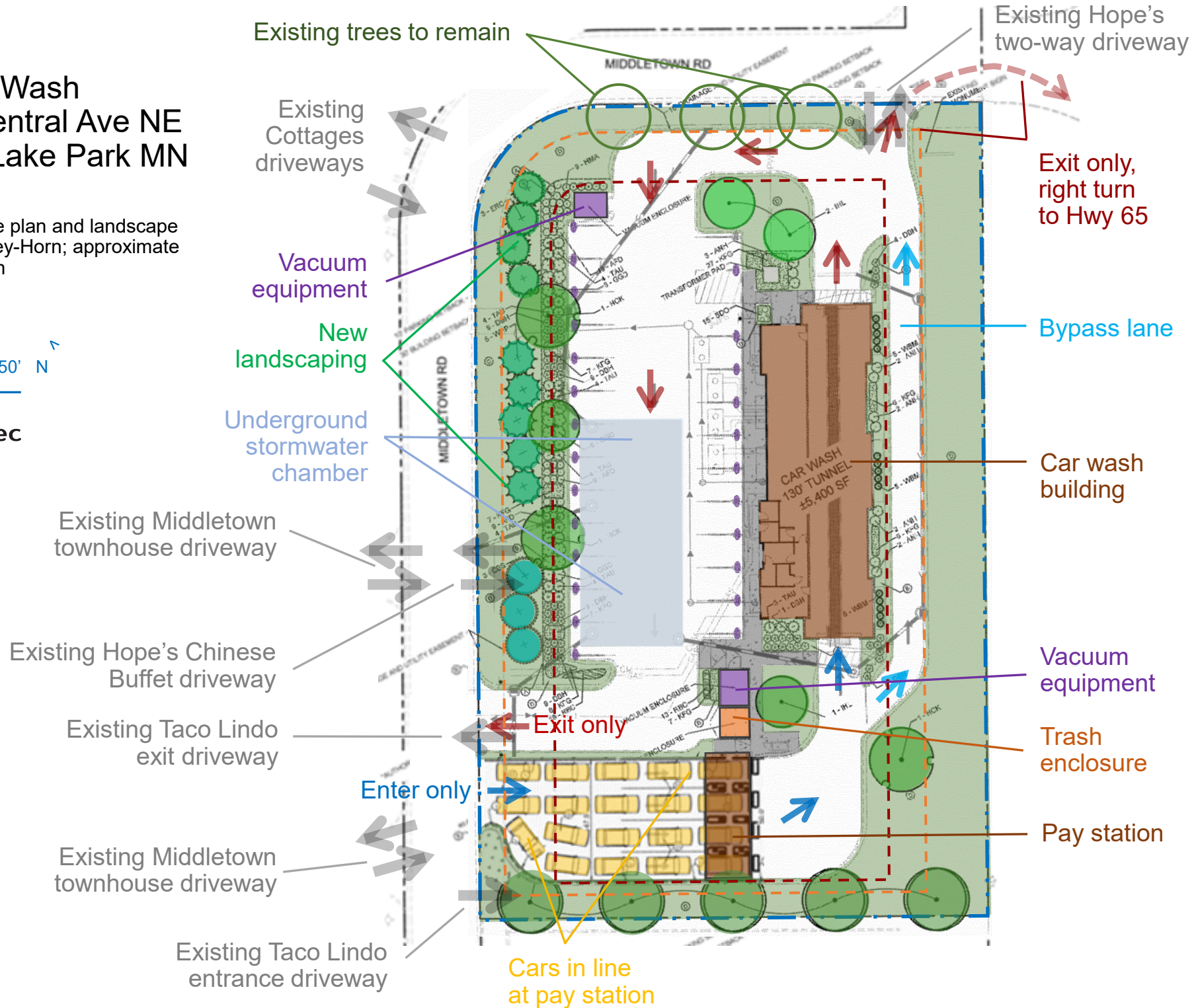
Parking

There are 24 parking spaces in front of the building in the parking/vacuum area. This would serve customers and staff for the facility. Spring Lake Park's parking standards require 10 spaces per lane in a commercial car wash. This facility may be different than what was imagined for a "commercial car wash" when the code was written. We recommend relying on the applicants' experience with their facilities to propose adequate parking.

Mr. Car Wash 8200 Central Ave NE Spring Lake Park MN

3-22-22
Based on site plan and landscape
plan by Kimley-Horn; approximate
for discussion

0 50' N



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Landscaping & Screening

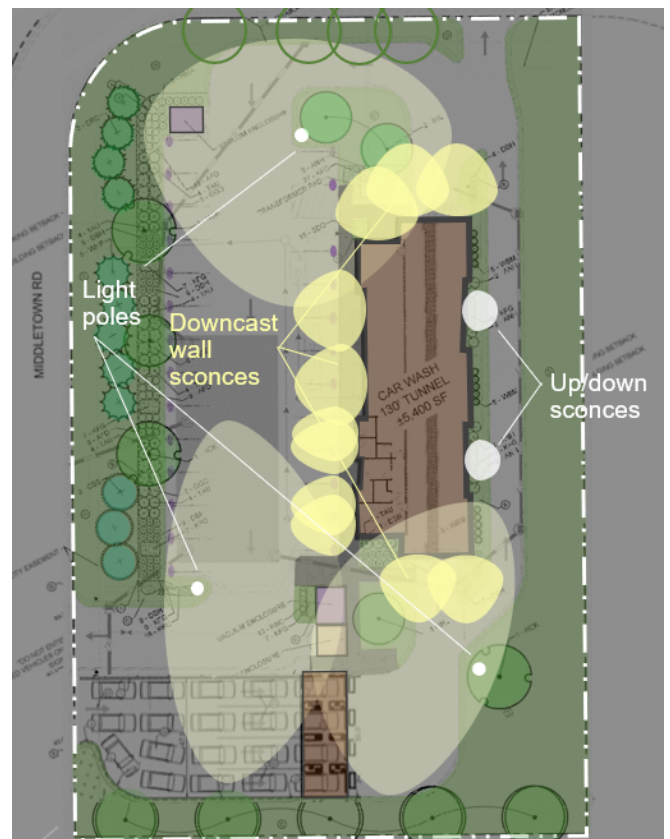
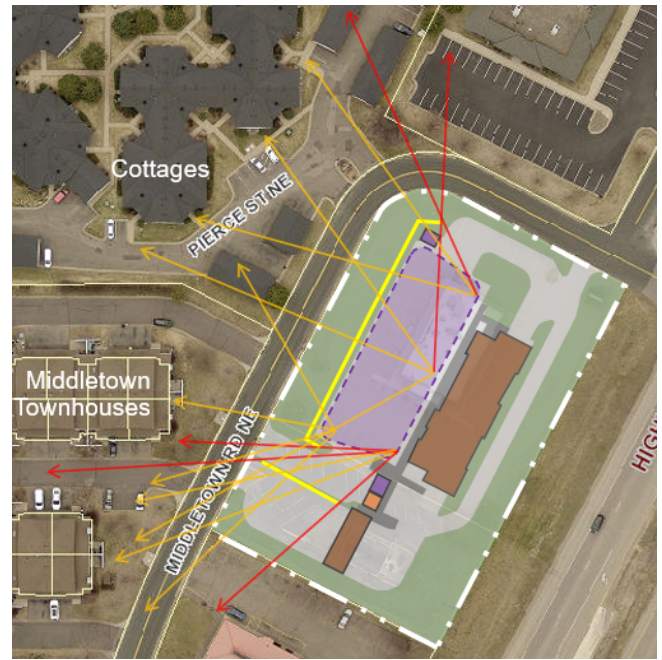
The landscape plan proposes significant landscaping on the west side of the site towards the existing townhouses, consisting of spruce, cedar and pine trees. There are large deciduous trees proposed in other parts of the site and four existing trees on the north side of the site are to be saved. There is a generous and varied complement of shrubs and perennials around the site and building as well.

Noise

The car wash operations are noisy, especially the blowers for drying, but they will be within the building and should be significantly muffled by the building and by the fact that the entry and exit doors face north and south, not toward the nearby residential uses. The vacuums can also be noisy and may need more muffling than would be provided by the proposed landscaping. We have asked for noise information from the applicants. Even if the site meets State standards a noise source can still be pretty annoying. We suggest some reasonable mitigation, which could include a solid fence or wall on the west side of the site to block noise. The graphic above right shows the site plan over an aerial. The purple area is where the vacuums are, the yellow lines are potential fence/wall locations to block the noise. The arrows show noise from four locations in the vacuum area. The orange arrows show noise that is directly blocked or at least muffled by the fence and red lines show noise that would get past the fences. With the two yellow fence lines suggested the only places noise would get directly through is to the south to other commercial uses, to the west at the driveway between the Middletown townhouses, and to the NW past the east edge of the Cottages. If we require a fence, we want it to block as much noise as possible but not block visibility for cars going in and out of the site.

Lighting

Lighting is proposed with wall-mounted fixtures on all sides of the building plus 20-ft tall light poles in three locations. All lights will be downcast cutoff type fixtures which will not spill more than 0.5 footcandle beyond the property lines or onto the public street. Initially the lights on the east side of the building facing Highway 65 were proposed as “up/down sconces” meaning that they would shine both up and down. We recommend there be no up lighting. The lighting scheme is illustrated, approximately, to the right.



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Hours

The applicants' narrative proposed hours of 7:30 am to 7:00 pm, which is reasonable.

Signage

Signage is proposed on all four sides of the building and will need to meet the City's sign permit standards.

Building Materials

The exterior materials on the main building will be a combination of decorative block, concrete block, EIFS, pre-finished metal panels, and stone veneer. As we understand the architectural drawings, parts of the main building and accessory buildings are proposed to be painted concrete block or painted wood siding. The architecture is interesting and varied, but we recommend that the building materials not include painted concrete block, but rather integrally colored block and no wood.

PRELIMINARY PLAT

The property is now two lots and the applicants propose to plat it into one new lot, a plat to be called Middletown 65. The City Engineer is requesting including the following within that plat:

- 1) Include a 5-wide drainage and utility easement along the south and east sides of the plat.
- 2) Include a 15-foot wide drainage and utility easement along the west and north sides of the plat.
- 3) Provide a separate, 10-foot wide road and sidewalk easement document covering the west and north sides of the plat. Record this road and sidewalk easement when the plat is recorded.

RECOMMENDATION

Conditional Use Permit

I recommend that the Conditional Use Permit for the proposed Mr. Car Wash at 8200 Central Avenue NE be approved as submitted on plans from Kimley-Horn dated 3-3-2022 and architectural elevations from Mr. Car Wash (no date), with following conditions:

- 1) Hours of operation will be 7:30 am to 7:00 pm.
- 2) If noise information from the applicants warrants additional sound mitigation, a solid fence or wall 6 feet in height will be installed on the west side of the site as illustrated in the Planner's report dated March 28, 2022, to block noise from the vacuum and parking area. The fence or wall will be of materials and colors compatible with the building, to be reviewed and approved by the City Administrator.
- 3) The entry drive on Middletown Road will be signed as entrance only and indicating that no stacking is allowed onto the public street. If the City becomes aware of problems with cars stacking in the street or other traffic problems on site, the City Council reserves the right to review and potentially revoke the Conditional Use Permit.
- 4) Building materials will not include painted concrete block or wood. All concrete block will be integrally colored.

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- 5) All lighting will be downcast cutoff type fixtures that allow no more than 0.5 footcandle of light spillage beyond the property lines or onto the public road rights-of-way. This includes the up/down sconces proposed on the east side of the car wash building, which will not include any up lighting.
- 6) Signage will be submitted for a sign permit before a building permit is issued.
- 7) The driveway at the north side of the site will include signage indicating exit only and right turn onto Highway 65.
- 8) All landscaping will be installed as indicated on the landscape plan and guaranteed for at least one year.
- 9) All requirements of the City Engineer will be followed for engineering and utility issues prior to issuing a building permit.

Finding of Fact for Approval of Conditional Use Permit

- 1) The City has standards for review of conditional uses to review and regulate potential impacts to surrounding properties and public roadways.
- 2) The proposed car wash use may generate traffic that could impact area roadways. Limiting and regulating traffic on and around the site is a reasonable exercise of the City's authority.
- 3) The proposed car wash use may generate noise beyond an acceptable level given its location near existing residential uses. Requiring screening to block noise is a reasonable exercise of the City's authority.
- 4) The use as conditioned with this approval meets the criteria for approving a Conditional Use Permit in Section 16.56.030(E)(1) of the City Code.

Preliminary Plat

I recommend that the Planning Commission recommend approval of the preliminary plat with the following conditions:

- 1) Include a 5-wide drainage and utility easement along the south and east sides of the plat.
- 2) Include a 15-foot wide drainage and utility easement along the west and north sides of the plat.
- 3) Provide a separate, 10-foot wide road and sidewalk easement document covering the west and north sides of the plat. Record this road and sidewalk easement when the plat is recorded.

Finding of Fact for Approval of Preliminary Plat

- 1) The City has reasonable expectations for provision of streets, sidewalks, utilities, and other public functions. Requiring property to dedicate easements for such features is reasonable.

OPTIONS

- 1) Recommend approval of the CUP and Preliminary Plat as presented with the recommended conditions and findings, or as modified by the Planning Commission.
- 2) Recommend denial of the CUP and Preliminary Plat, with findings for denial.
- 3) Continue one or both items to a future meeting to gather more information or more discussion.

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60-DAY RULE

The Conditional Use Permit application was received on March 2, 2022 and was considered complete on March 11, 2022, with receipt of the landscape plan. The 60-day deadline for final action by the City Council is May 11, 2022.

The Preliminary Plat has its own 120-day deadline under State statute. The application was received on March 2, 2022. The deadline for final action by the City Council is July 10, 2022.