



Department of Planning,  
Building & Development

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PC Agenda: October 22, 2014

**STAFF REPORT**  
**October 17, 2014**  
**Parking Plan**  
**Park District Investment Group - Building A**  
**(100 West Grand River)**

**SUBJECT**

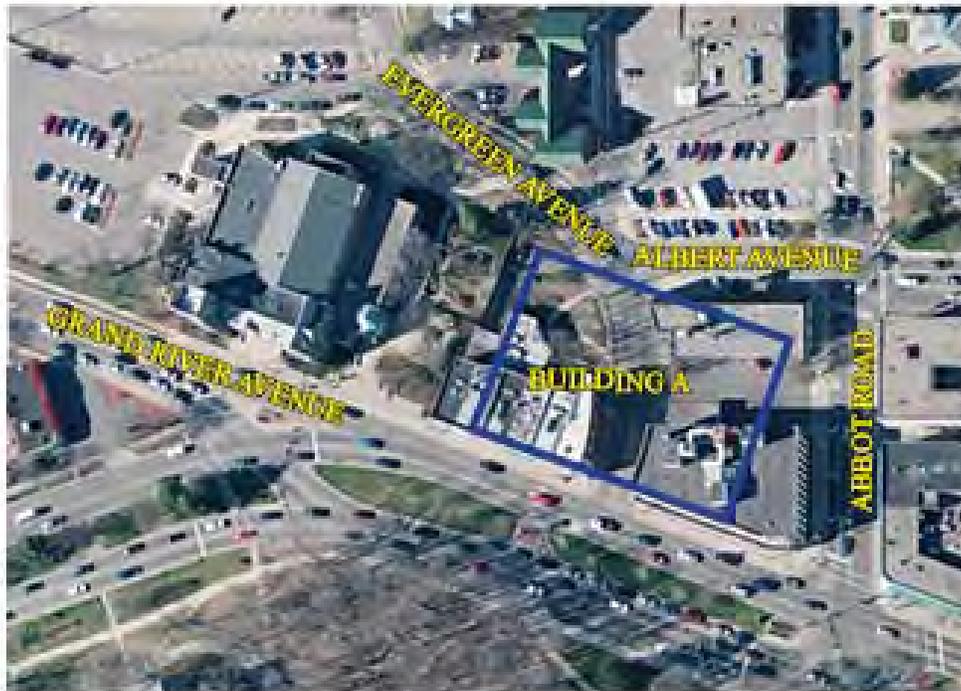
A parking plan application from Park District Investment Group, LLC, associated with the Site Plan and Special Use Permit request for the properties at 100, 124, 128, 130, 136, and 140 West Grand River Avenue, and 303 Abbot Road. The applicant is proposing 283 on-site, underground parking spaces to be served by valet parking for the uses in the building proposed for the site. The property is zoned B-3, City Center Commercial District.

**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The project is located on 1.1 acres of land on the north side of Grand River Avenue, west of Abbot Road. There are multiple owners of the parcels making up the project site. The site includes privately owned properties at 100, 124, 128, 130, 136, and 140 West Grand River Avenue, a portion of a Downtown Development Authority owned property at 303 Abbot Road, and the Evergreen Avenue right-of-way between Albert and Grand River Avenues. The entirety of the project is currently zoned B-3, City Center Commercial. To the north is the remaining portion of the property at 303 Abbot Road, Albert Avenue, City-owned Parking Lot 4, and the Dublin Square restaurant, all of which are also zoned B-3. To the west is The People's Church, which is zoned B-1, General Office Business District. Further to the west is the Showroom Shine Carwash and Crunchy's restaurant, both of which are zoned B-2, Retail Sales Business District. To the east is the core downtown which includes the highest density mixed-use developments in the City and is also zoned B-3. Michigan State University's campus is located directly to the south of the proposed project.

**PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT**

The applicant is proposing to demolish the buildings at 100, 124, 128, 130, 136, and 140 West Grand River Avenue and 303 Abbot Road to construct a ten-story, mixed-use building. The building would extend east over the Grand River Avenue properties, including the Evergreen Avenue right-of-way, and extend north approximately half way through 303 Abbot Road and the northern edges of the Grand River Avenue properties.



The new building would include multiple commercial spaces on the first floor, a hotel with the lobby and an associated restaurant serving alcohol on the second floor, hotel rooms on the second through fourth floors, and apartments on the fifth through tenth floors. The applicant has also indicated a desire to allow the residential floors to be converted to office space in the event the market for office space is strong; however, for the purpose of this review Staff will assume that these floors will be residential. Two levels of underground parking will house up to 283 cars. The uses in the building are summarized below:

**New Construction Summary:**

General Retail Space	14,104 square feet
Bank	3,564 square feet
Coffee Shop	1,188 square feet
Restaurant (non-hotel)	6,846 square feet
Hotel Rooms	121
Studio apartments	6
One-bedroom apartments	12
Two-bedroom apartments	78
Three-bedroom apartments	6
Parking	2 levels underground, 283 spaces

**PARKING REQUIREMENTS**

Applications for a building and/or occupancy permit to construct or expand a building or to convert or extend the use of a building which would result in an increased parking

demand in the B-3 district, as determined from the standards in **section 50-812**, shall first be submitted to the planning and zoning official for review.

If an application for a property in the B-3 district would result in an increase of more than ten spaces within a two-year period or would exceed the limit of 75 percent of available spaces as described in **section 50-593(l) subsections (1) and (2)**, **the applicant shall submit a parking plan to the planning commission for review at a public hearing.**

The following chart breaks down the parking requirements for the proposed development based on the requirements of section 50-812. These parking requirements do not take into consideration shared parking opportunities and are the same standards applied to suburban style, single use developments.

<b>Building A</b>	<u>Sq. Ft.</u>	<u># of units</u>	<u>Standard</u>	<u>Parking Spaces Required</u>
General Retail	14,104		1 per 500 sq. ft.	28
Bank	3,564		1 per 300 sq. ft.	12
Coffee Shop	1,188		1 per 50 sq. ft.	19
Restaurant	6,846		1 per 50 sq. ft.	110
Hotel	5,575	121	1 per unit, plus 1 per 100 sq. ft. of meeting space	177
Studio Apts		6	1 space per .75 units	5
1 BR Apts		12	1 BR Apts	12
2 BR Apts		78	2 BR Apts	117
3 BR Apts		6	3 BR Apts	15
			<b>Total Spaces Required</b>	<b>494</b>

Based on the proposed use and the current capacity of the municipal parking system the applicant must provide a parking plan to be reviewed and approved by the Planning Commission.

**PARKING PLAN**

The applicant is proposing 283 on-site parking spaces in two levels of underground parking. Under section 50-593(j)(2), where the applicant has demonstrated that the parking is necessary for the residents or customers of the proposed use and the municipal parking facility cannot accommodate the use, **the Planning Commission can approve such parking and may stipulate conditions on the arrangement and operation of such parking to ensure that it is used for the purpose for which it is intended and to ensure it does not cause disruption of pedestrian or vehicular circulation.**

If the Planning Commission agrees with this consideration, there would be **211 parking spaces** to be accommodated in the municipal parking system, absorbed through shared

parking or by other means, as proposed by the applicant and approved by the Planning Commission.

### **Municipal Permit Parking**

The parking system currently has at least **100 parking permit spaces** available between the Division Street and Charles Street ramps. In order to provide these permits there would need to be a reallocation of permit and transient parking spaces within both structures. These spaces could accommodate residents and staff associated with the retail and hotel uses, or employees of the other uses throughout the building. These available permit parking spaces would reduce the parking deficit for the proposed development to **111 parking spaces**.

### **Municipal Transient Parking**

There are a total of 153 public parking spaces (not including permit parking) west of Abbot Road. Parking counts to evaluate the capacity of the parking system were done the weeks of April 4, 2014 and November 18, 2013. For the week of April 4, 2014 the highest occupancy occurred on Thursday at 7:30 P.M. when there were 81 parking spaces occupied leaving 72 parking spaces available for other transient parking. For the week of November 18, 2013, the highest occupancy was Thursday at 9:00 P.M. when there were 78 parking spaces occupied leaving 75 parking spaces available for transient parking. These numbers indicate that that there are **at least 60 transient parking spaces** available for the proposed retail and restaurant uses, which are the uses most reliant on transient parking. The attached parking map shows the parking lots included in the counts west of Abbot Road.

The available parking spaces in the municipal parking system reduce the parking deficit for the proposed development further from 111 parking spaces to **51 parking spaces** to be absorbed through shared parking or other means as proposed by the applicant and approved by the Planning Commission.

### **Existing Urban Hotel Parking Data**

The Marriott Hotel is the City's first urban hotel in the B-3 District where the parking is accommodated in the municipal parking system. Since the City monitors the usage of the parking system the Parking Division was able to accumulate information to reflect the parking use of hotel guests for overnight stays by using the number of guest parking validations to room stays from January 1<sup>st</sup> thru December 31<sup>st</sup> of 2013. During this period there were 44,055 rooms occupied overnight and only 33,600 cars validated for those stays. This indicating that for every 100 rooms occupied there were only 76 parking spaces utilized for the patrons of the hotel.

If it were assumed that the proposed hotel in Building A would generate a similar parking need, the proposed 121 rooms in the hotel would generate the need for 92 parking spaces rather than the requirements from section 50-812 which require one parking space per room. This would reduce the 51 parking spaces to **22 parking spaces** to be absorbed through shared parking or other methods.

### Walkability/Mass Transit/Mixed-Uses

The City of East Lansing has been lauded previously for our walkability and the Capital Area Transit Authority (CATA) is an award winning bus service. The Building is proposed to be located along the main bus route in the City, and is located along one of the main north/south walking and biking routes in the City, Abbot Road. Both of these factors will have the effect of reducing the amount of parking required on the site.

The uses proposed for the building, notably the retail spaces and coffee shop, are uses that would attract traffic from persons already downtown working or living nearby. They are similar types of uses to those that are already throughout the downtown, shops that rely on foot traffic to help sustain them. Assuming that the need for 22 parking spaces would be alleviated due to foot and mass transit traffic to the downtown is not an unreasonable assumption and would only represent 4.5% of the total parking requirement. The applicant's parking plan has modal splits that are substantially higher than this, based on their analysis using reliable resources.

### Staff Analysis Summary

	Parking Spaces	Notes
<b>Required Parking under 50-812 for uses proposed in Building A</b>	494	These parking requirements do not take into consideration shared parking opportunities and are the same standards applied to suburban single use developments.
<b>Walkability/Mass Transit</b>	-22	
<b>Urban Hotel Reduction</b>	-29	Based on City information from the Marriott hotel in downtown.
<b>Total Required</b>	<b>443</b>	
<b>Proposed Parking for Building A</b>	283	Two levels of underground parking utilizing a stacked car lift system.
<b>Municipal Permit Parking</b>	100	Spaces available in both the Division Street and Charles Street ramps
<b>Municipal Transient Parking</b>	60	Spaces available west of Abbot Road in existing transient parking lots
<b>Total</b>	<b>443</b>	

## PARKING PLAN INFORMATION REQUIREMENTS

If a development application requires a parking plan the plan shall include the following information:

- A. *Where customers, employees, and tenants of the proposed use will be expected to park;*

The applicant proposes that hotel customers and residential tenants will park in the underground parking, with the potential for employees and restaurant users. Transient parking in the area will be used for the other uses in the building.

- B. *The estimated number of employees and tenants;*

The applicant provides the following estimate of employees and tenants:

Employees and Tenants	#	Notes
Retail Employees	16	
Hotel Guests	173	120 rooms -25% at double occupancy plus 15% assumed additional overnight guests.
Hotel Employees	30	
Residents	198	Total bed count
Employees	30	

- C. *The anticipated time(s) of peak customer loads;*

The applicant has indicated that their peak load, both for a weekday or a weekend, will be overnight, when the residential uses and hotel uses are at their fullest.

- D. *The location and arrangement of all existing or proposed on-site parking spaces as may be permitted under section 50-593 subsection (j);*

The applicant is proposing 283 parking spaces located in two levels of underground parking. It is proposed to be 100% valet parking with a vehicular lift system. The applicant has provided information specific to the system and a list of cities that have implemented the system.

- E. *Evidence of any arrangement(s) made by the applicant to use other off-premises parking spaces;*

No other off-site parking is being proposed in the parking plan. The additional parking needed for the proposal, namely the transient parking for retail/restaurant

uses, will be accommodated through the City's existing downtown parking system.

*F. And evidence of any proposed action(s) by the applicant to control or limit the parking demand generated by the proposed use.*

The applicant has provided no proposed actions to control or limit parking demand, other than limiting the number of parking spaces an individual residential unit can lease at any given time.

## **STANDARDS OF REVIEW**

The planning commission ***shall approve*** the parking plan ***if it determines*** that the proposed use would not adversely affect surrounding properties and public facilities and that one or more of the following conditions exist:

- a. *Because of the particular characteristics of the proposed use, it would not be expected to generate a significant increase in parking demand.*
- b. *Existing or proposed on-site spaces or other private off-street parking facilities, as may be permitted under section 50-593 subsection (j), would meet the parking needs of the proposed use.*

*50-593(j) On-premises parking. Consistent with the purposes of this district and the city's policies to optimize use of its consolidated parking facilities in the City Center commercial district, on-premises parking facilities intended as accessory uses to serve one or more uses on the same lot shall be prohibited, except where:*

- (1) The applicant has demonstrated that the parking is necessary for the residents or customers of the proposed use and the municipal parking facility cannot accommodate the use; or*
- (2) The applicant has demonstrated that the parking is necessary for increased accessibility for handicapped persons.*

- c. *The parking demand would be adequately accommodated within the municipal parking system due to the availability of spaces appropriate to serve the proposed use, as defined in the standards in subsection (l)(2) of this section.*
- d. *The parking demand would be adequately accommodated within the municipal parking system by directing customers, employees, and tenants to available spaces through validation policies, leasing arrangements, promotional programs, providing bus tokens, or other actions of the applicant.*

Under this section of review, subsection b. applies, as the municipal parking system cannot fully accommodate the proposed use. The applicant is proposing on-site parking

to serve the overnight parking needs of the uses being proposed, with the transient parking being largely accommodated in the existing parking system.

Additionally, the request for on-site parking would not have a negative impact on the surrounding properties, as it would provide parking for the uses in the building that would otherwise go elsewhere for parking, thereby taking spaces that may be available for other uses.

The Commission may, at its discretion, condition approval of a parking plan to ensure the parking needs of the proposed use are adequately met without adversely impacting other property or causing congestion on public streets or within the municipal parking system, including mandatory validation policies, mandatory parking space leasing arrangements, and/or other mandated actions.

### **PLANNING COMMISSION CONCERNS**

During the public hearing held on September 24, 2014, the Planning Commission raised several issues with respect to the proposal. Staff has looked into each question and offers the following information.

- *How will the valet parking work for the site?* - The applicant has provided an operations plan for the valet parking. There is room within the parking structure for 19 cars to queue, while waiting for the valet service and at any given time, a minimum of 5 staff members would be needed to keep the valet service functioning. The entire report is attached to the applicant's response letter and is attached to this report.
- *How much do the lifts cost/how do they work/how are they maintained?* - The applicant has addressed this information in their response letter.

At the Planning Commission meeting of October 8th, the Planning Commission raised additional concerns into the operations of the valet parking. The applicant has replied with additional information in the attached letter, dated October 16, 2014. In summary:

- *How will the valet parking drop-off on Abbot Road work?* - The applicant has not provided a breakdown in what traffic would be expected to use the Abbot Road drop-off versus the Albert Avenue drop off. Instead, they have provided theoretical scenarios under which 0%-100% of hotel guests use the Abbot Road drop-off and what effect that has on vehicle queuing. They have noted that the area would be hotel valet only and the time to park a car would be increased to ten minutes per valet, per car. They have also proposed to utilize the area to the south of the entry/drop-off as three surface parking spaces, for extended unloading or loading. In a worst case scenario, a total of 12 valets would be required (one running upstairs, one running downstairs, three parking vehicles downstairs, and seven parking vehicles upstairs). At any given time, there will never be expected to be less than three vehicles queuing at the Abbot Road drop off.

- *How does the customer interaction time (loading/unloading etc) play into the time it takes to park a car?* - This includes in the time it takes a car to be parked (five minutes in the garage, ten minutes on Abbot).

### **THIRD PARTY PARKING REVIEW**

After reviewing the parking plan provided by the applicant and hearing feedback from the Planning Commission and the public, Staff asked the applicant to hire an independent, third party parking consultant to review the shared parking for this project and incorporate the parking needs for Building B as well. Carl Walker analyzed the parking for Building A and B and provided a report, which is attached. Utilizing the City's ordinances and the proposed uses from the applicant, they determined that the total shared parking accumulation would peak in October, during the week, at 371 vehicles between the two buildings. Building A alone would have a peak demand of 310 vehicles, slightly above the amount being provided in the building.

According to Carl Walker's analysis Building A will be able to accommodate 95% of its parking needs onsite, should the plan be approved. If the DTN Park District project proceeds, with a parking structure, the remaining 5% demand would easily be accommodated in that structure. If the DTN project does not proceed, the remaining 5% would be able to be accommodated through the City parking lots in the area that would not be redeveloped.

### **SUMMARY COMMENTS**

The car lifts and valet parking being proposed here would be unique to East Lansing. However, they have been successfully used throughout the country, in many different climates. The lift systems are proven technologies that have been in use for many years. Carl Walker has analyzed the parking extensively for this project and has determined that the site can nearly support its entire parking demand at any given time, under this system and design. In terms of the Abbot Road drop off area, the Planning Commission may wish to discuss how this will operate and its necessity. However, Staff will not support parking spaces near this drop-off, no matter how temporary they might be. This would be the antithesis of walkability at an already busy intersection.

Other than the surface parking along Abbot Road, Staff has identified no major concerns with the proposed Parking Plan and **can recommend approval** of the application to allow on-site parking as part of the Park District Investment Group, LLC's proposal for Building A. Staff has provided a sample motion for the Planning Commission's use in their deliberation of this matter.

In the matter of the request from Park District Investment Group, LLC, for Parking Plan approval associated with the Site Plan and Special Use Permit request for the properties at 100, 124, 128, 130, 136, and 140 West Grand River Avenue, and 303 Abbot Road, motion to **approve the parking plan for the following reasons...**

- *(Insert specific Planning Commission reasons here)*

**Subject to the following conditions...**

- *(Insert specific Planning Commission conditions here)*
1. The applicant shall operate the on-site parking in such a way as to prevent any queuing onto Albert Avenue or Abbot Road, at any time, which would block or obstruct the free flow of vehicular traffic.