

CITY COUNCIL STAFF REPORT

Meeting Date November 24, 2025

REPORT TO: Michael Sable, City Manager

REPORT FROM: Elizabeth Hammond, Planner

PRESENTER: Danette Parr, Community Development Director

AGENDA ITEM: Church of Pentecost, 1701 Gervais Avenue East
 a. Conditional Use Permit Resolution
 b. Design Review Resolution
 c. Wetland Buffer and Parking Setback Variance Resolution

Action Requested: Motion Discussion Public Hearing

Form of Action: Resolution Ordinance Contract/Agreement Proclamation

Summary:

The Church of Pentecost is proposing an expansion of its building and parking lot at 1701 Gervais Avenue East. The proposal includes an addition on the south side of the building, an expansion of the parking lot, and adding three stormwater basins for the property. To move forward with the proposal, the applicant requests approval for a conditional use permit, design review, and variances for a wetland buffer and parking setback.

Recommended Action:

- a. Motion to approve a conditional use permit resolution for a religious facility at 1701 Gervais Avenue East, subject to certain conditions of approval.
- b. Motion to approve a design review resolution for a building addition and parking lot expansion at 1701 Gervais Avenue East, subject to certain conditions of approval.
- c. Motion to approve a wetland buffer and parking setback variance resolution for a building addition and parking lot expansion to be constructed at 1701 Gervais Avenue East.

Fiscal Impact:

Is There a Fiscal Impact? No Yes, the true or estimated cost is \$0.00

Financing source(s): Adopted Budget Budget Modification New Revenue Source
 Use of Reserves Other: n/a

Strategic Plan Relevance:

Safety Focus Area:

Sustainability Focus Area:

Development Focus Area: Strengthen human connection and community growth

The city deemed the project application complete on September 10, 2025. The initial 60-day review deadline for a decision is November 9, 2025. As stated in Minnesota State Statute 15.99, the city can take an additional 60 days, if necessary, to complete the review. To ensure adequate review time, the city has extended the deadline to January 8, 2026.

Background:

The Church of Pentecost proposes to construct a building addition to the south side of the existing church, located at 1701 Gervais Avenue East. This includes expanding the sanctuary, remodeling the interior reception area, classrooms, and offices. On the exterior, the plan expands the parking lot, adds three stormwater basins, and overall site landscaping.

Conditional Use Permit

City code requires a conditional use permit (CUP) for a religious facility in any zoning district. While a religious facility has operated for many years on the site, the property does not have an existing CUP. The expansion requires the property to comply with the city requirements.

Design Review

The existing one-story building is 3,126 square feet in size, situated at the center of the property. The proposed addition to the south side of the building is 3,668 square feet in area. The site is accessed from the existing entrance off Gervais Avenue and Flandrau Street. Both access points are to be rebuilt, with access off Flandrau being relocated slightly south, closer to the building entrance. The parking lot is proposed to be expanded on the south side of the addition and the north side of the existing building.

Setbacks

The building is required to be 30 feet from the property lines along Flandrau Street and Gervais Avenue, and 61 feet from the residential property line to the north. There is no required building setback to the west property line. The existing building and proposed addition will meet required building setbacks as shown to be 205.8 feet from the north residential property line, 88.4 feet from Gervais Avenue, 35.2 feet from Flandrau Street, and 50 feet from the west property line.

The required parking setback is 15 feet from the Flandrau Street and Gervais Avenue property lines, 20 feet from the north residential property line, and 5 feet from the west property line. The current parking lot for the church encroaches between two and five feet into the 15-foot required setback along Flandrau Street. The expanded parking area north of the building is five feet from the east property line, requiring a parking setback variance. The parking lot setbacks to the north, south, and west property lines are achieved.

Building Elevations

The existing one-story masonry brick building has a pitched roof and is 30.5 feet in height at its peak. The building addition will also be 30.5 feet in height but will feature a flat roof. The materials for the addition are cement panel siding in an off-white color, accompanied by aluminum metal trim and framing in natural and silver grays.

Signage

The elevations show wall signage for the church. However, any signage on the property is subject to review by the city and requires a separate permit for the installation of signs. All site signage must meet the city's sign code.

Landscaping and Screening

The proposed landscape plan shows that 32 trees would be removed, and 50 new trees would be planted. Additional shrubs, grasses, and perennial flowers are planned for the site. The environmental review details the specific requirements for plantings and mitigation strategies related to the wetland. The applicant will work with staff to submit a revised tree plan and landscape plan that incorporates all remaining environmental review requirements and recommendations before obtaining a permit. A landscaped area within the 20-foot parking setback to the north property line is shown, screening the parking lot from the adjacent residential property as required.

Parking

City code requires a religious facility to provide one parking space for every four people, based on the maximum occupancy of the building. Once the addition is complete, the maximum building occupancy would be 270, requiring 67.5 parking stalls. The site currently has 38 parking stalls, and the plans show an additional 30 stalls with the parking lot expansion, which will meet the City's parking code.

Lighting

The applicant submitted a lighting plan that illustrates the location and types of lighting that meet ordinance requirements. The site plan confirms that the light spread and foot-candle levels at the property lines meet code requirements.

Wetland Buffer Variance

The site has a wetland on the northwest corner, and before the applicant's proposal to the city it was classified as a manage A wetland. The applicant submitted a wetland delineation and reclassification to the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District. The watershed district approved the delineation to reclassify the wetland from Manage A to Manage B.

City code requires a 75-foot wetland buffer around a Manage B wetland. The project will involve grading up to the wetland edge for the installation of a stormwater discharge pipe, one of the infiltration basins, and a portion of the expanded parking lot, requiring a variance of 75 feet for the wetland buffer. The details are further outlined in the applicant's narrative and the environmental review.

Wetland Buffer Mitigation Plan

In areas where grading occurs in the wetland buffer, the applicant proposes adding native seed, planting native trees, and installing plugs along the rain garden. In the undisturbed areas of the wetland buffer, the applicant proposes removing all invasive species, overseeding with native seed, and planting native plugs along the graded buffer area. The addition of the sizable rain garden adjacent to the parking lot will include native plantings that retain parking lot runoff, promote infiltration, and provide water quality before discharging stormwater downstream to the wetland.

Parking Setback Variance

The parking lot expansion on the northeast side of the site will encroach into the required 15-foot setback to the east property line along Flandrau Street, requiring a 10-foot parking lot setback variance. The current parking lot along the east side of the site encroaches between two and five feet into the required setback. The applicant considered various parking alternatives, including proof of parking, locating stalls elsewhere on the property, and shared parking or on-street parking, which were discussed with staff, the planning commission, and the ENR commission.

The site has significant grade changes along the west side of the building, making it an impractical location for the parking expansion. The applicant does not wish to pursue shared parking with properties across Gervais Avenue, as this wouldn't be a long-term solution for the property and would require their visitors to cross the road frequently. The proposed parking lot expansion will increase on-site parking to meet the city's parking requirements and reduce any impact on the adjacent residential neighborhood from on-street parking.

Variance Findings

To approve a variance, the City Council shall apply the findings for variance approval as required in Minnesota Statutes, which state:

1. The variance is in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the ordinance.
2. The variance is consistent with the comprehensive plan.
3. The applicant establishes practical difficulties in complying with the ordinance. Practical difficulties mean: (1) the proposed use is reasonable, (2) the need for a variance is caused by circumstances unique to the property, not created by the property owner, and (3) the proposal will not alter the essential character of the locality.

Summary

The applicant proposes a reasonable expansion of the building and parking lot, considering the narrow parcel, the grade changes on the west side of the site, and the proximity to the wetland. The expanded parking area will closely match the existing setback along the Flandrau property line and will not encroach further or alter the neighborhood's essential character. The site currently lacks screening between the parking lot and the residential property across Flandrau Street; however, with the proposal, landscaping will be incorporated into the setback and right-of-way area, providing a visual barrier that does not currently exist.

The applicant has proactively worked with city staff to revise the project plans and incorporate best practices into the wetland buffer mitigation plan. The water runoff in the area is currently untreated before being discharged into the wetland. The proposal, although it will immediately affect the wetland buffer during grading and construction, will have a long-term positive impact and improve water quality in the future. The proposal meets the intent of the zoning ordinance and is consistent with the city's comprehensive plan.

Commission and City Council Review

Community Design Review Board

October 21, 2025: The CDRB reviewed the design plans. The board inquired about phasing the parking expansion by providing proof of parking on the site plan to mitigate the impact on the wetland buffer. The board recommended the applicant discuss with staff, the planning commission, and the city council about phasing in parking to reduce immediate encroachment on the wetland in the northern portion of the parking lot. The board voted to approve the design plans as presented.

Planning Commission

October 21, 2025: The Planning Commission held a public hearing and reviewed the proposal. The commission discussed phasing in parking by providing proof of parking or adding parking stalls elsewhere on the site with the applicant and staff. Following the discussion, the commission did not recommend changes to the plans. The commission voted to approve the conditional use permit and the variances for the wetland buffer and parking setback as presented.

Environmental and Natural Resources Commission

November 12, 2025: The ENR reviewed the proposal and discussed the wetland buffer impact and required mitigation strategies. The commission discussed changes to the site plan to reduce the buffer variance and tree removal, including underground stormwater management, proof of parking, and shared parking. Following the discussion, the commission did not recommend changes to the plans but added one mitigation strategy to ensure the removal and management of invasive species in the wetland buffer and in the areas on the north and west sides of the church, as well as overseeding this area with native seed. The commission recommended approval of the wetland buffer variance as presented.

Department Comments

Fire – Jerry Novak, Fire Marshal

A sprinkler system and fire alarm system will be required for the building.

Building – Randy Johnson, Building Official

The proposed building must be constructed to meet the minimum requirements of the Minnesota State Building Code. The addition and existing building will need a fire sprinkler system in accordance with Minnesota Rule 1306. The building is required to be accessible in accordance with the Minnesota Accessibility Code. The exterior accessible route shall be a slope not steeper than 1:20 and 48 inches wide in accordance with Minnesota Rule 1341.0403. Additional details must be provided with the building permit regarding the intended use of the lower-level hall, upper mezzanine, and the chair lift serving the lower level to ensure code compliance.

Environmental – Shann Finwall, Sustainability Coordinator, and Katelyn Bergstrom, Natural Resources Coordinator

Please see the environmental review dated November 11, 2025 (attached).

Engineering – Jon Jarosch, Assistant City Engineer

Please see the engineering review dated September 9, 2025 (attached).

Public Comments

Staff sent a public hearing notice and application details to the properties within 500 feet of the subject property. One emailed comment was received (attached).

Reference Information

Site Size: 1.43 Acres

Surrounding Land Uses

North: Residential Dwellings
 South: Light Manufacturing/Commercial Businesses
 East: Residential Dwellings
 West: Open Space/Park Land

Planning

Existing Land Use: Institutional
 Existing Zoning: R1, Single-Dwelling Residential

Attachments:

1. Conditional Use Permit Resolution
2. Design Review Resolution
3. Wetland Buffer and Parking Setback Variance Resolution
4. Overview Map
5. Future Land Use Map
6. Zoning Map
7. Wetland Overlay Map
8. Application Narrative
9. Site and Elevation Plans
10. Engineering Review Dated September 9, 2025
11. Environmental Review Dated September 5, 2025
12. Public Comment Dated October 18, 2025
13. Draft CDRB Meeting Minutes Dated October 21, 2025
14. Draft Planning Commission Meeting Minutes Dated October 21, 2025
15. Draft ENR Meeting Minutes Dated November 12, 2025
16. Presentation

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Maplewood, Minnesota, as follows:

Section 1. Background.

1.01 The Church of Pentecost has requested a Conditional Use Permit for a religious facility on the property at 1701 Gervais Avenue East.

1.02 The property located at 1701 Gervais Avenue East is legally described as: The South Half of the West Half of Lot 3, E.G. Roger's Garden Lots, Ramsey County, Minnesota, according to the recorded plat thereof. Except: The East 30.00 feet and the North 180.00 feet thereof.
PIN: 102922140047

Section 2. Standards.

2.01 General Conditional Use Permit Standards. The City Ordinance states that the City Council must base approval of a Conditional Use Permit on the following nine standards for approval.

1. The use would be located, designed, maintained, constructed, and operated to be in conformity with the City's Comprehensive Plan and Code of Ordinances.
2. The use would not change the existing or planned character of the surrounding area.
3. The use would not depreciate property values.
4. The use would not involve any activity, process, materials, equipment or methods of operation that would be dangerous, hazardous, detrimental, disturbing or cause a nuisance to any person or property, because of excessive noise, glare, smoke, dust, odor, fumes, water or air pollution, drainage, water run-off, vibration, general unsightliness, electrical interference or other nuisances.
5. The use would not exceed the design standards of any affected street.
6. The use would be served by adequate public facilities and services, including streets, police and fire protection, drainage structures, water and sewer systems, schools and parks.
7. The use would not create excessive additional costs for public facilities or services.
8. The use would maximize the preservation of and incorporate the site's natural and scenic features into the development design.
9. The use would cause minimal adverse environmental effects.

Section 3. Findings.

3.01 The proposal meets the specific Conditional Use Permit standards.

Section 4. City Review Process

4.01 The City conducted the following review when considering this conditional use permit request.

1. On October 21, 2025, the Planning Commission held a public hearing. City staff published a hearing notice in the Pioneer Press and sent notices to the surrounding property owners. The Planning Commission allowed everyone to speak and present written statements at the hearing. The Planning Commission recommended that the City Council approve this resolution.
2. On November 24, 2025, the City Council discussed this resolution. They considered reports and recommendations from the planning commission and City staff.

Section 5. City Council

5.01 The City Council hereby _____ the resolution. Approval is based on the findings outlined in section 3 of this resolution. Approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. All ground-mounted and roof-mounted mechanical equipment and trash receptacles shall be screened according to the ordinance.
2. All construction shall follow the approved plans. The director of community development may approve minor changes.
3. The proposed construction must be substantially started within one year of council approval, or the permit shall become null and void.
4. The city council shall review this permit in one year.
5. The applicant shall meet the conditions outlined in the design review resolution.

DESIGN REVIEW RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Maplewood, Minnesota, as follows:

Section 1. Background.

1.01 The Church of Pentecost has requested design review approval to construct a building and parking lot addition on the property at 1701 Gervais Avenue East.

1.02 The property located at 1701 Gervais Avenue East is legally described as:
The South Half of the West Half of Lot 3, E.G. Roger's Garden Lots, Ramsey County, Minnesota, according to the recorded plat thereof. Except: The East 30.00 feet and the North 180.00 feet thereof.
PIN: 102922140047

Section 2. Site and Building Plan Standards and Findings.

2.01 City ordinance requires that the community design review board make the following findings to approve plans:

1. That the design and location of the proposed development and its relationship to neighboring, existing, or proposed developments and traffic is such that it will not impair the desirability of investment or occupation in the neighborhood; that it will not unreasonably interfere with the use and enjoyment of neighboring, existing or proposed developments; and that it will not create traffic hazards or congestion.
2. That the design and location of the proposed development are in keeping with the character of the surrounding neighborhood and are not detrimental to the harmonious, orderly, and attractive development contemplated by this article and the city's comprehensive municipal plan.
3. That the design and location of the proposed development would provide a desirable environment for its occupants, as well as for its neighbors, and that it is aesthetically of good composition, materials, textures, and colors.

2.02 The community design review board reviewed this request on October 21, 2025, and voted to approve it.

2.03 The proposal meets the specific findings for design review approval.

Section 3. City Council Action.

3.01 On November 24, 2025, the city council discussed this resolution. They considered reports and recommendations from the community design review board and City staff.

3.02 The above-described site and design plans are hereby _____ based on the findings outlined in Section 2 of this resolution. Subject to staff approval, the site must be developed and maintained in substantial conformance with the design plans. Approval is subject to the applicant doing the following:

1. If the city has not issued a building permit for this project, repeat this review in two years.

2. All fire marshal and building official requirements must be met.
3. Satisfy the requirements in the engineering review by Jon Jarosch, dated September 9, 2025.
4. Satisfy the requirements in the environmental review by Shann Finwall, dated November 11, 2025.
5. The applicant shall obtain all required permits from the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District.
6. The applicant shall install a stop sign at the property exits on Gervais Avenue and Flandrau Avenue.
7. Per city ordinance standards, all mechanical equipment and trash receptacles shall be screened from the view of all nearby residential properties or adjacent public streets. The location and type of screening must meet city ordinance requirements.
8. Any signage on the property is subject to review by the city and requires a separate permit for signs. All site signage must meet the city's sign code.
9. The applicant shall install and maintain a landscaped and screened area not less than 20 feet in width along the north property line. Screening may be satisfied with landscaping or a combination of landscaping and a screening fence per ordinance requirements.
10. The applicant shall install and maintain a landscaped area on the east side of the property between the edge of the parking lot and within the city right-of-way along Flandrau Street. The applicant must work with the city engineering staff to obtain a ROW permit. The applicant shall ensure that the trees are at least six feet in height at the time of planting. The planting screen shall consist of evergreen plantings. Trees shall be a minimum of 2½ inches in trunk diameter, two feet above grade. Shrubs may be used in combination with a berm and shall be a minimum of two feet in height. Spacing of trees and shrubs shall be designed to create an 80-percent opaque screening at least six feet in height.
11. Before the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit for staff approval the following items:
 - a. The applicant shall provide the city with a cash escrow or an irrevocable letter of credit for all required exterior improvements. The amount shall be 150 percent of the cost of the work.
 - b. An updated tree and landscape plan.
12. The applicant shall complete the following before occupying the building:
 - a. Replace any property irons that were removed because of this construction.
 - b. Provide continuous concrete curb and gutter around the parking lot and driveways.

- c. Install all required landscaping and an in-ground lawn irrigation system for all landscaped areas.
 - d. Install all required outdoor lighting.
 - e. Install all required sidewalks and trails.
13. If any required work is not done, the city may allow temporary occupancy if:
- a. The city determines that the work is not essential to public health, safety, or welfare.
 - b. The above-required letter of credit or cash escrow is held by the City of Maplewood for all required exterior improvements. The owner or contractor shall complete any unfinished exterior improvements by June 1 of the following year if occupancy of the building is in the fall or winter or within six weeks of occupancy of the building if occupancy is in the spring or summer.
14. All work shall follow the approved plans. The director of community development may approve minor changes.

WETLAND BUFFER AND PARKING SETBACK VARIANCE RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Maplewood, Minnesota, as follows:

Section 1. Background.

- 1.01 The Church of Pentecost has requested a wetland buffer and parking setback variance to construct a building addition and parking lot expansion on the property at 1701 Gervais Avenue East.
- 1.02 The property located at 1701 Gervais Avenue East is legally described as:

The South Half of the West Half of Lot 3, E.G. Roger's Garden Lots, Ramsey County, Minnesota, according to the recorded plat thereof. Except: The East 30.00 feet and the North 180.00 feet thereof.
PIN: 102922140047
- 1.03 The site has a Manage B wetland on the northwest portion of the property, which requires a 75-foot buffer. The project will involve grading up to the wetland edge for the installation of a stormwater discharge pipe and encroachment into the buffer in other areas for an infiltration basin and a portion of the parking lot. The project will require a 75-foot wetland buffer variance.
- 1.04 The existing parking lot for the church, located along the east side of the property, encroaches between two and five feet into the 15-foot required setback along Flandrau Street. The parking lot will be repaved and expanded on the south side of the building addition and the north side of the existing building. The parking area along the northeast side of the site is proposed to be five feet from the east property line, requiring a 10-foot parking setback variance.

Section 2. Standards.

- 2.01 City Ordinance Section 18-221 (d) (1) requires a minimum buffer width of 75 feet around a Manage B wetland and Section 18-221 (h) (1) provides procedures for granting a variance to the wetland buffer requirements.
1. Before the city council acts on a wetland ordinance variance, the Environmental and Natural Resources Commission and the Planning Commission will make a recommendation to the city council. The city shall hold a public hearing for the variance. The city shall notify property owners within 500 feet of the property for which the variance is being requested at least ten days before the hearing.
 2. The city may require the applicant to mitigate any wetland, stream, or buffer alteration impacts with the approval of a variance, including, but not limited to, implementing one or more of the strategies listed in subsection 18-221(e)(4) (mitigation).
 3. To approve a variance, the city council shall apply the findings for variance approval as required in Minnesota Statutes.
 4. The applicant for a variance shall submit, with the variance application and any other required materials, a statement showing how the proposal would meet the findings for variance approval.

2.02 City Ordinance Section 44-20 (c) (5) requires the developer of any project, other than single or double dwellings, to construct parking lots with a minimum setback of 15 feet from a street right of way, and Section 44-13 provides that the city may grant variances to the requirements of the zoning ordinance. All variances must follow the criteria provided in Minnesota State Statutes.

1. The variance is in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the ordinance.
2. The variance is consistent with the comprehensive plan.
3. When the applicant establishes that there are practical difficulties in complying with the ordinance. Practical difficulties mean: (1) the proposed use is reasonable; (2) the need for a variance is caused by circumstances unique to the property, not created by the property owner; (3) the proposal will not alter the essential character of the locality.

Section 3. Findings.

3.01 The proposal meets the wetland and zoning ordinance variance standards.

1. The proposal is in harmony with the purpose and intent of city ordinance standards.
2. The proposal is consistent with the intent of the comprehensive plan.
3. The request is reasonable. The proposed improvements within the wetland buffer enhance stormwater management and will be mitigated by removing invasive plants and adding native seeds and plugs to the remaining wetland buffer areas. The project will require the installation and maintenance of landscaping between the parking area and the adjacent residential properties to the east, providing a visual screen that currently does not exist.
4. The existing conditions on this property are unique and not caused by the property owner. The site has significant grade changes and a narrow lot size, which limits site development in other areas. The water runoff in the area is currently untreated before being discharged into the wetland. The proposal improves water quality and existing site conditions.
5. The expanded parking area will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood. The proposal will closely match the existing setback along the Flandrau property line, not encroaching further into the setback.

Section 4. City Review Process

4.01 The City conducted the following review when considering the wetland buffer and parking setback variance requests.

1. On October 21, 2025, the Planning Commission held a public hearing. City staff published a hearing notice in the Pioneer Press and sent notices to the surrounding property owners. The Planning Commission allowed everyone to

speak and present written statements at the hearing. The Planning Commission recommended that the City Council approve this resolution.

2. On November 12, 2025, the Environmental and Natural Resources Commission held a public meeting to discuss the proposal. The Environmental and Natural Resources Commission recommended that the City Council approve this resolution.
3. On November 24, 2025, the City Council discussed this resolution. They considered reports and recommendations from the planning commission and City staff.

Section 5. City Council

5.01 The City Council hereby _____ the resolution. Approval is based on the findings outlined in section 3 of this resolution. Approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. All construction shall follow the approved plans. The director of community development may approve minor changes.
2. The applicant shall meet the conditions outlined in the design review resolution.

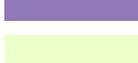
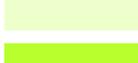


Legend



 Parcels
  Subject Parcel

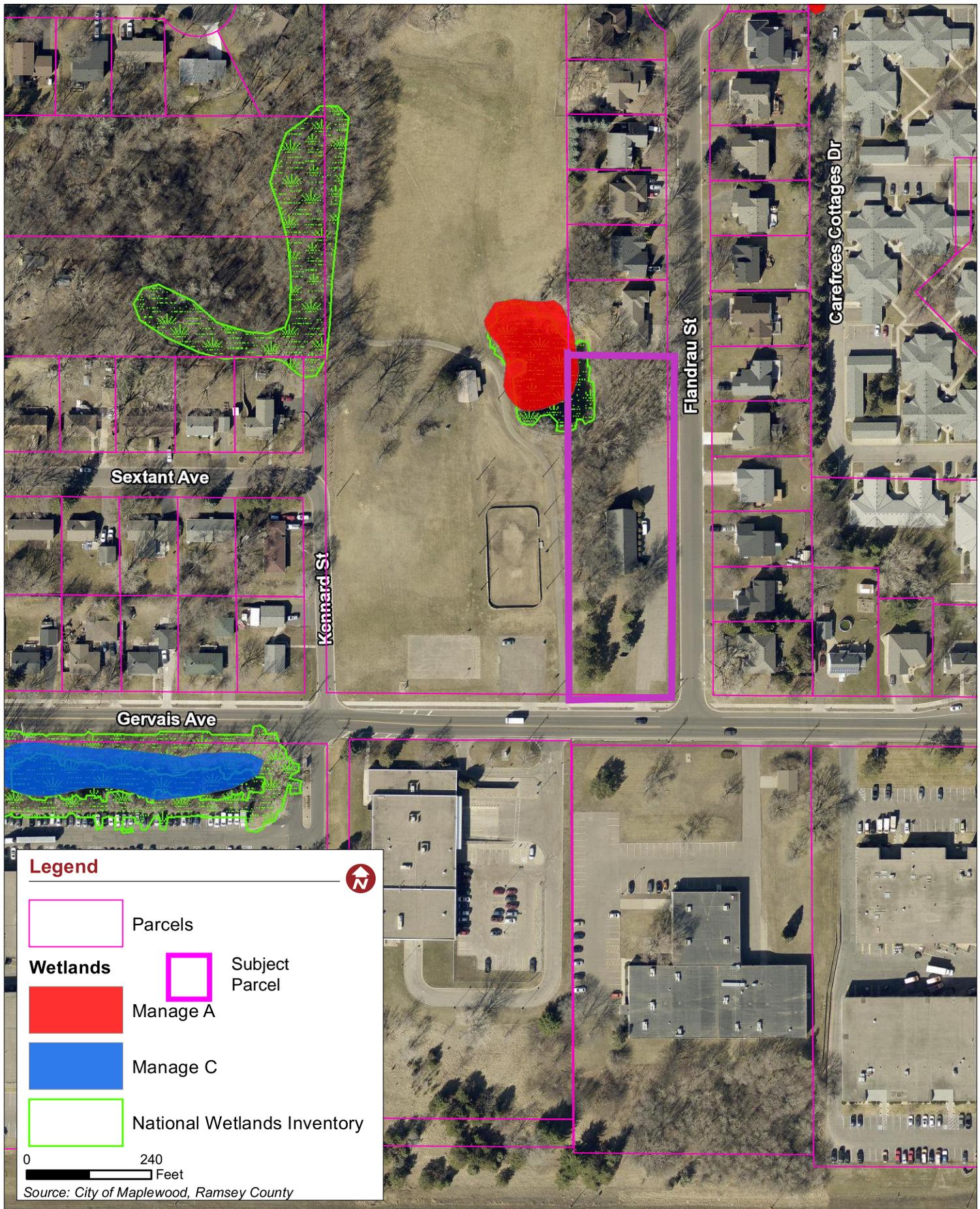
Future Land Use - 2040

-  Low Density Residential
-  High Density Residential
-  Commercial
-  Public/Institutional
-  Employment
-  Open Space
-  Park



Source: City of Maplewood, Ramsey County







Memorandum

Project Name:	Church of Pentecost
Project Number:	24.1038.01
To:	City of Maplewood – Community Development Department
From:	LSE Architects, Inc (Brian Tempas, AIA – Project Architect)
Date:	06.17.2025
Subject:	CUP/ Community Design Review Narrative of Use

Copy To:	Church of Pentecost Contact: Joseph Oppong Church of Pentecost Owner Representative: Kwadwo Boadi-Aboagye LSE Architects: Patrick Wozniak, Designer LSE Architects: Mohammed Lawal, FAIA
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The following is a narrative addressing the expansion of the Church of Pentecost located at 1695 Gervais Avenue in Maplewood, MN.

The Church of Pentecost has been located at 1695 Gervais Avenue for many years and is a thriving and dynamic community of worshippers serving a broad range of citizens in Maplewood and beyond. The church has experienced growth over the last few years and is planning on expanding the worship center and remodeling the existing space into reception, classrooms and offices. Parking is planned to be expanded as well to meet the occupancy needs of the new space. The intended use will not change but be expanded.

The city should approve this expansion for a number of strong reasons:

- The proposed use does not change the current use or timing of activities.
- The use enhances the current character of the parcel and neighborhood.
- The expanded facility will increase the value of the adjacent properties with new construction and square footage.
- The expansion will have minimal impact on traffic into the site, increasing the numbers slightly, a majority which will be on Gervais. The times will be at low traffic hours and days of the week.
- The expansion does not create excessive costs or loading for public utilities.
- The building expansion directly south preserves many mature trees, the owner will replace, meeting or exceeding replacement calculations.
- The Church of Pentecost has been an excellent neighbor for years. Maintaining the building and site and being careful to inform the immediate neighbors of events and discussing any parking inconvenience.
- The Church of Pentecost is a perfect neighbor to the adjacent park. With meetings happening on Sundays and Wednesday nights, the property is quiet most days. When events occur at the church, they may use the park without adding parking in the park.
- With church growth happening, if the city supports expanding the facility and therefore the attendees, it would be a great signal that being in Maplewood is positive for families and individuals alike.
- The Church of Pentecost has a very diverse membership made up primarily of people from Ghana and Northern Africa in general. By approving this application, the City of Maplewood sends a message to its neighboring cities that welcoming diverse nationalities into the city has a positive impact on commerce, housing, and business in general.

As Architect for Church of Pentecost, LSE believes that supporting this project will be positive for the City of Maplewood.



Memorandum

Project Name:	Church of Pentecost
Project Number:	24.1038.01
To:	City of Maplewood – Community Development Department
From:	LSE Architects, Inc (Brian Tempas, AIA – Project Architect)
Date:	08.18.2025
Subject:	Variances – Application Narrative – Wetland Buffer Parking setback
Copy To:	Church of Pentecost Contact: Joseph Oppong Church of Pentecost Owner Representative: Kwadwo Boadi-Aboagye LSE Architects: Patrick Wozniak, Designer LSE Architects: Mohammed Lawal, FAIA

The following is a narrative addressing the Church of Pentecost Expansion Project and the “practical difficulties” that have led the design team to request variances for East Property Parking Setback Variance and the related Wetland Buffer Variance - located at the property at 1695 Gervais Avenue in Maplewood, MN.

The Church of Pentecost has been active and influential at the 1.434 acre site at 1695 Gervais Avenue for many years, serving a broad range of citizens in Maplewood and beyond. Continuous membership growth over the last few years has led church leadership to plan an expansion to the worship center. The addition creates a new sanctuary with a Sunday morning occupancy of 270 at maximum capacity. The result of this proposed expansion affects the calculable parking count, raising it from 38 existing stalls to 68 required stalls (270/ 4 = 67.5). The building use remains the same with after the expansion. When church services are in session, the rest of the church has negligible occupancy. When services are over, the occupants either depart the church or use the classrooms and social hall. The church has Sunday morning services (between 7:00 and 12:00) only. The church plans on one monthly social function in the lower level hall (occupancy 130) on Sunday or Wednesday nights which generate less attendance due to space availability. The Architect has used the sanctuary maximum capacity for parking calculations.

The site geometry is unusually challenging, predominantly in the east | west direction with a very narrow width of 135'-0". In addition to the existing geometry, there are two other site layout matters concerning topography and existing landscaping. Several mature oak and maple trees exist that the owner desires to maintain, so parking surface location must be carefully managed as well as the terrain in the north third of the site.

East Property Line Setback Variance:

At the east property line, the existing 15-year-old parking surface is only 2'-6" from the property line. The east setback calls for a 15' with the intention of providing enough space for landscaping which reduces vehicle impact (lights and view) on the adjacent properties. The proposed distance from the existing curb to the new parking surface is 20'-0", which we strongly feel addresses the intention of a setback. If the required setback is applied, it results in the elimination of 17 vehicles from the required 68, representing a 25% reduction. Considering visual impact, it is key to note that the east property line length (north to south) is 457'-0" in which the existing parking surface represents 323'-0", or 71% of the length. As shown on the site drawings, the proposed additional parking surface is 91'-9" (an increase of 20%). Keeping the site proportions in mind, this is a minimal distance, and we feel it has no visual impact on parking surface perception. Church leadership feels a 17-car reduction, coupled with the trend that fewer people drive together to church, places an extreme difficulty in the church on typical Sunday mornings. Street parking is one option,

but there is little available, and this may become an irritant to the neighbors on Flandeau Street which is a cul-de-sac condition (one way in and one way out).

Wetland Buffer Variance:

The same “tight and narrow” geometry has a considerable influence with the Detention Pond in relationship to the required parking. A 75’ buffer depth has been identified. As indicated on the most recent Site Plan - Setbacks (C2.1) the green area indicates the encroachment into the 75’ buffer width. The parking will encroach up to 39.5 feet into the buffer. The Rain Garden will encroach up to 45.8 feet into the Buffer. The grading extents will encroach up to 58.7 feet into the buffer although this area will be replanted and restored post construction. The stormwater discharge pipe will encroach up to the wetland edge mirroring the existing city discharge into the wetland on the north property line. This is good practice to avoid scour and erosion over time, which may occur if the discharge is too far away from the water edge. The practical difficulty with the required parking to the buffer is most evident and does not have an alternate resolution, regardless of expenditure. One optimistic characteristic to this dilemma is that parking provides a minimal negative visual impact for the neighbors. (*it already exists along this street*). Because the buffer encroachment involves parking & plantings rather than structures, it preserves the essential character and viewshed of neighbors. Another practical element that the design team integrated into the solution is the sizable Rain Garden with native plantings providing a visually and environmentally appealing feature. This system will retain parking lot runoff, promote infiltration, and provide water quality before discharging stormwater downstream to the existing wetland, making the environmental result essentially stable. The encroachment into the buffer is minimized to what is necessary for parking and storm water management. Without the variance the church cannot reasonably accommodate parking demand for its congregation size. Additional landscaping measures are being considered to mitigate the impacts of the project and improve the condition of the wetland such as; removal of invasive species identified and re-establishing of native plantings for wetland restoration. What the Owner wanted to achieve was a win-win in the process of growing their facility, and we believe that this balance is achieved through a minimally impactful end product. The requested variances are consistent with the practical difficulties standard established by Minnesota Statutes. They allow the property to be put to reasonable use, arise from unique site constraints outside of the applicant’s control, and do not alter the essential character of the neighborhood. The design minimizes and mitigates encroachment into the buffer, preserves existing mature trees, and ensures that the spirit of the ordinance is upheld. For these reasons, approval of the variances is warranted.

The Owners | Architects | Engineers recommend the city consider approving these variances for the following reasons:

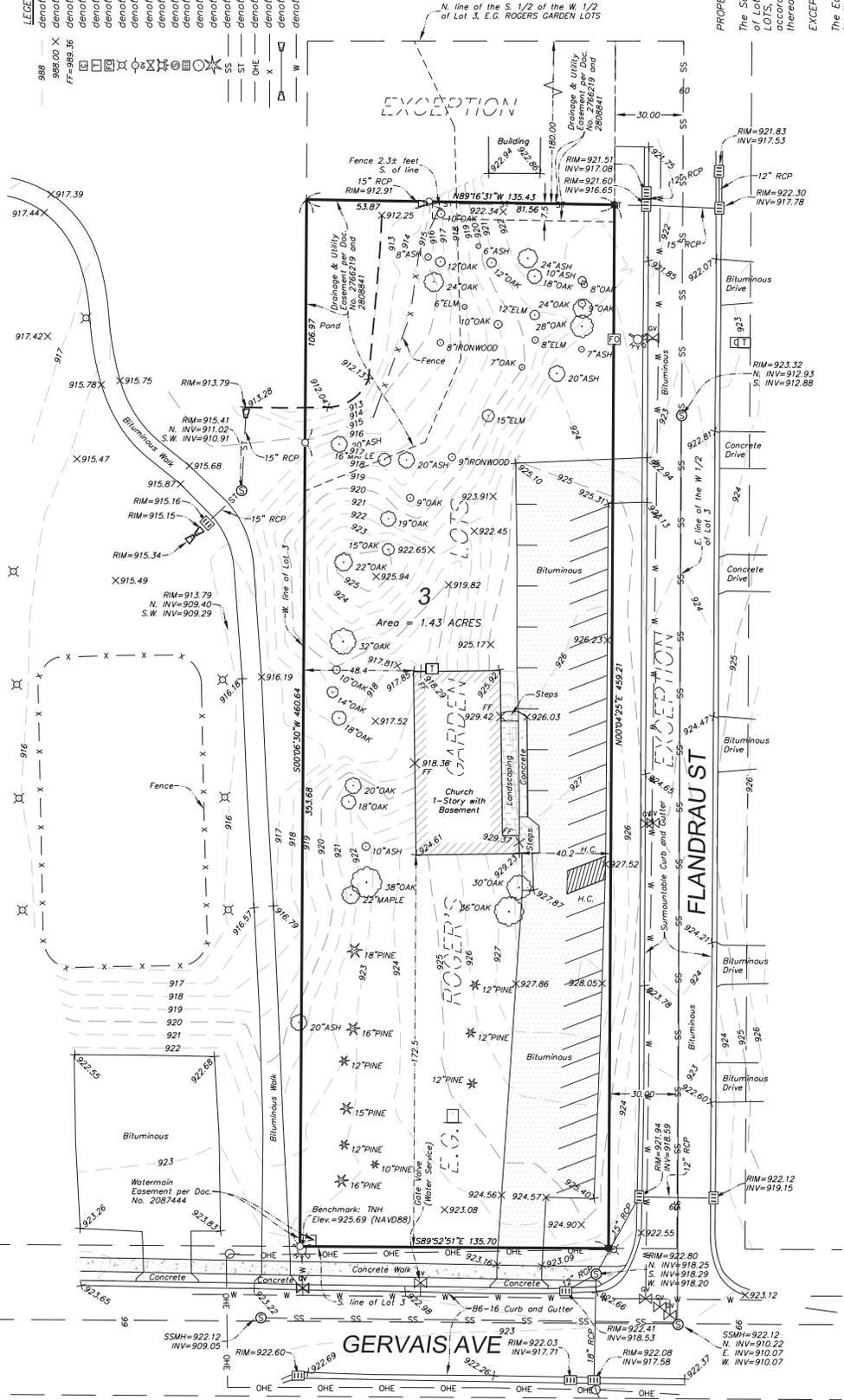
- The proposed variance minimally alters the current conditions and appearance (both parking and buffer)
- The area between the curb and proposed parking surface allows generous landscaping and positively impacts neighborhood character.
- The variance will prevent parking from spilling into the street and negatively affecting neighborhood vehicle flow
- The variance allows parking to occur on the site, increasing safety and security for those attending night events
- The enlarged parking surface creates no additional loading for public utilities.
- The parking size and location maintains large trees north and west, preserving privacy with neighbors
- The retention basin addresses the negative possible runoff issues with pond with filtering and retaining
- The required parking expansion is an addition to the existing surface current on the lot (not new)
- The Church of Pentecost has been a proactive neighbor, maintaining the site and informing the neighbors of events and discussing any parking inconveniences.
- With church growth happening, if the city supports this variance, it would be a great signal to the neighborhood that consolidating parking is positive for all involved

As Architect for Church of Pentecost, LSE believes that supporting this project will be positive for the City of Maplewood.

Certificate of Survey and Topographic Survey



- LEGEND**
- 988 Existing Contour
 - 988.00 X denotes Existing Spot Elevation
 - FF-988.36 denotes Finished Floor Elevation
 - denotes Cable Box
 - denotes Telephone Pedestal
 - denotes Fiber Optic Pedestal
 - denotes Light Pole
 - denotes Power Pole
 - denotes Water Valve
 - denotes Hydrant
 - denotes Sanitary Manhole
 - denotes Catch Basin
 - denotes Deciduous Tree
 - denotes Coniferous Tree
 - SS denotes Sanitary Sewer Line
 - ST denotes Storm Sewer Line
 - OHE denotes Overhead Electric Line
 - X denotes Fence Line
 - W denotes Existing Culvert
 - denotes Water Line



PROPERTY DESCRIPTION:
 The South Half of the West Half of Lot 3, E.G. ROGERS GARDEN LOTS, Ramsey County, Minnesota, according to the recorded plat thereof.
EXCEPT:
 The East 30.00 feet and the North 180.00 feet thereof.

www.ottoassociates.com
 9 West Division Street
 Buffalo, MN 55513
 (763) 662-3622
 Fax: (763) 662-3622

OTTO ASSOCIATES
 Engineers & Land Surveyors, Inc.

Requested By:
Vanman Architects & Builders, Inc.

Date: 7-18-22
Scale: 1"=30'
Checked By: P.E.O.
Drawn By: M.L.O.

I hereby certify that this survey, plan, or report was prepared by me or under my direct supervision and that I am a duly Licensed Land Surveyor under the laws of the State of Minnesota.

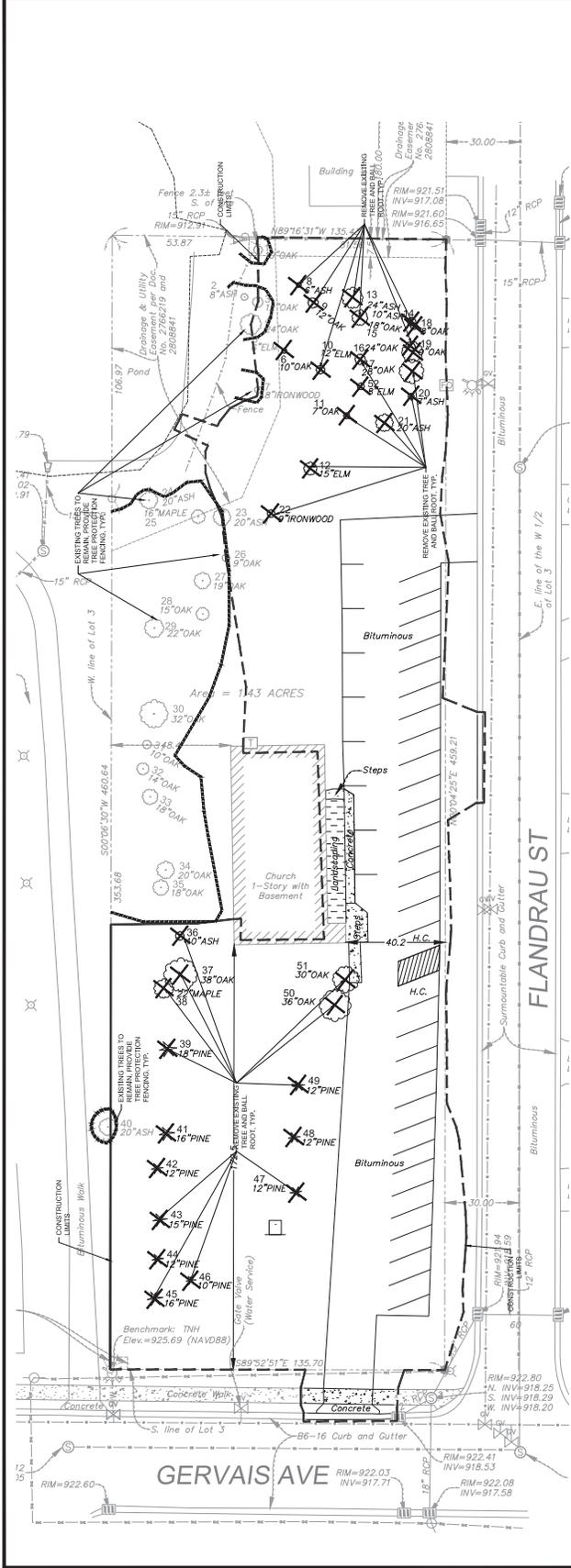
Paul E. Otto
 Paul E. Otto
 License #40062 Date: 4-15-25

Revised:
 4-14-25 utilities/Easements

Certificate of Survey & Topographic Survey on part of the S. 1/2 of the W. 1/2 of Lot 3, E.G. ROGERS GARDEN LOTS, Ramsey County, Minnesota.

Project No. 22-0284

NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1	11/15/2017	ISSUE SUBMITTAL SUMMARY
2	11/15/2017	REVISION SUMMARY
3	11/15/2017	REVISION SUMMARY
4	11/15/2017	REVISION SUMMARY
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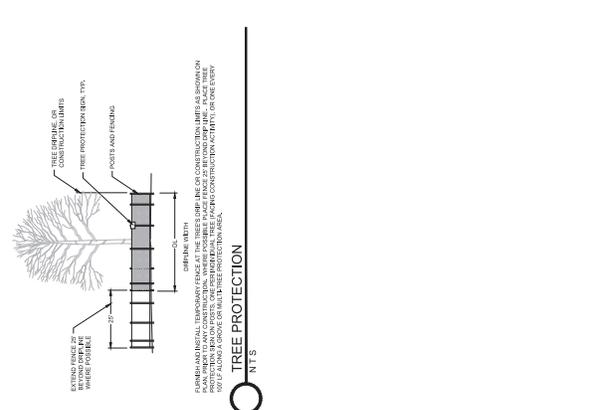
TREE REPLACEMENT CALCULATION

(11.8 x 20) x (1.1 x 1.0) = 264
 A = 264 Total diameter inches of significant trees lost as a result of the land alteration (includes significant and specimen trees)
 B = 794 Total diameter inches of significant trees retained on the property (includes significant and specimen trees)
 C = 15 Tree replacement constant (1.5)
 D = 1500 Total diameter inches of significant trees to be replaced (includes significant and specimen trees)
 E = 400 Replacement trees (Number of Caliper Trees)
 400 / 3.5 = 114.3 in. cal. trees

REPLACEMENT TREES REQUIRED AT 3.5 CALIPER INCHES

TREES TO BE REMOVED	REPLACEMENT TREES REQUIRED
11" DECIDUOUS TREE - HARDWOOD	4
11" DECIDUOUS TREE - SOFTWOOD	1
11" CONIFEROUS TREE	1
COMMON TREES ON SITE	1
SPECIMEN TREES ON SITE	1
SIGNIFICANT TREES ON SITE	1
SIGNIFICANT TREES TO BE REMOVED	31
SPECIMEN TREES ON SITE	4
SPECIMEN TREES TO BE REMOVED	4
TOTAL	48

NO.	TYPE	SIZE	SPECIES	TREE SURVIVAL	SIGNIFICANT	SPECIMEN	REMOVE
1	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
2	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
3	TND	24" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
4	TND	24" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
5	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
6	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
7	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
8	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
9	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
10	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
11	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
12	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
13	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
14	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
15	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
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17	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
18	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
19	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
20	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
21	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
22	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
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56	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
57	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
58	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
59	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X
60	TND	18" OAK	X	X	X	X	X



TREE PRESERVATION PLAN LEGEND:

- CONSTRUCTION LIMITS
- PROPERTY LINE
- TREE PROTECTION
- TREE REMOVAL - INCLUDING ROOTS AND STUMPS

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- CONSTRUCTION LIMITS
- PROPERTY LINE
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Engineering Plan Review

PROJECT: Church of Pentacost Expansion
1701 Gervais Avenue

PROJECT NO: 25-27

COMMENTS BY: Jon Jarosch, P.E. – Assistant City Engineer

DATE: 9-9-2025

PLAN SET: Civil plans dated 8-19-2025

REPORTS: None

The applicant is seeking a conditional use permit and design review for an expansion of the church, along with associated site amenities, at 1701 Gervais Avenue.

This review does not constitute a final review of the plans, as the applicant will need to submit construction documents for final review. The following are engineering review comments on the design and act as conditions prior to issuing permits.

Drainage and Stormwater Management

The amount of disturbance on this site is greater than ½ acre and the project proposes to add more than 5,000 square feet of new impervious surfaces. As such, the applicant is required to meet the City's stormwater quality, rate control, and other stormwater management requirements. The applicant is proposing to meet these requirements via the use of three infiltration basins.

- 1) A stormwater management plan, with supporting calculations, shall be submitted detailing how the project meets the City's Stormwater Management Standards.
- 2) Soil boring or infiltration test data shall be submitted to support the infiltration rates assumed in stormwater calculations.
- 3) The project shall be submitted to the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District (RWMWD) for review. All conditions of RWMWD shall be met.
- 4) A joint storm water maintenance agreement shall be prepared and signed by the owner for the proposed infiltration basins and pretreatment devices. The Owner shall submit a signed copy of the joint storm-water maintenance agreement with the RWMWD to the City.

Grading and Erosion Control

- 5) All slopes shall be 3H:1V or flatter.
- 6) Inlet protection devices shall be installed on all existing and proposed onsite storm sewer until all exposed soils onsite are stabilized. This includes storm sewer on adjacent streets that could potentially receive construction related sediment or debris.
- 7) A double row of heavy-duty silt fencing is required between the grading limits and the wetland to protect the wetland from sedimentation during construction.
- 8) Adjacent streets and parking areas shall be swept as needed to keep the pavement clear of sediment and construction debris.
- 9) All pedestrian facilities shall be ADA compliant.
- 10) The total grading volume (cut/fill) shall be noted on the plans.
- 11) A copy of the project SWPPP and NDPEs Permit shall be submitted prior to the issuance of a grading permit.

Sanitary Sewer and Water Service

- 12) The applicant shall be responsible for paying any SAC, WAC, or PAC charges related to the improvements proposed with this project. A SAC determination is required.
- 13) All modifications to the water system shall be reviewed by Saint Paul regional Water Services. All requirements of SPRWS shall be met.
- 14) All new sanitary sewer service piping shall be schedule 40 PVC or SDR35 or approved superior material.

Other

- 15) All work within the rights-of-way along Gervais Avenue and Flandrau Street shall be restored per the City's right-of-way ordinance.

Public Works Permits

The following permits are required by the Maplewood Public Works Department for this project. The applicant should verify the need for other City permits with the Building Department.

- 16) Right-of-Way Permit

- 17) Grading and erosion control permit
- 18) Storm Sewer Permit

- END COMMENTS -

Environmental Review

Project: Church of Pentecost

Location: 1701 Gervais Avenue

Date of Plans: November 5, 2025

Date of Review: November 11, 2025

Reviewer: Shann Finwall, Sustainability Coordinator
(651) 249-2304, shann.finwall@maplewoodmn.gov

Background: The Church of Pentecost is proposing an expansion of the church building and parking lot. There is a Manage B wetland and significant trees located on the property. The proposal must comply with the City's wetland and tree preservation ordinances, and landscape and infiltration basin policies.

Trees:

1. Tree Preservation Ordinance:
 - a. Significant Trees: Maplewood's tree preservation ordinance describes a significant tree as a healthy tree as follows - hardwood tree with a minimum of 6 inches in diameter, an evergreen tree with a minimum of 8 inches in diameter, and a softwood tree with a minimum of 12 inches in diameter.
 - b. Specimen Trees: A specimen tree is defined as a healthy tree of any species which is 28 inches in diameter or greater.
 - c. Tree Replacement: Tree replacement is based on a calculation of significant trees located on the parcel and significant trees removed. Credits are given for all specimen trees that are preserved.
2. Tree Impacts and Replacement Requirements: The tree preservation plan shows 52 significant trees equaling 808 diameter inches. The applicant is proposing to remove 32 significant trees equaling 507 diameter inches, which is 63 percent of the tree coverage on the site. Based on the City's tree preservation ordinance tree replacement calculation, the applicant is required to replace 309 caliper inches of replacement trees, which equals 155 - 2 caliper inch trees.
3. Tree Replacement: The landscape plan includes 50 new trees, for a total of 157.5 caliper inches, which is 151.5 caliper inches less than the 309 required. Eleven of the replacement trees are proposed to be planted within the Flandrau Street right-of-way, not on the church property.

4. Tree Recommendations:
 - a. Prior to issuance of a grading permit the applicant must submit the following:
 - 1) Revised Tree Plan: A revised tree plan that reflects the correct tree replacement calculation. The plan submitted includes errors in the number of significant trees on the site, and significant trees removed, resulting in an increased number of replacement trees in the applicant's plan.
 - 2) Revised Landscape Plan: A revised landscape plan showing the addition of 151.5 caliper inches of tree replacement on the site; or alternatively, the applicant can pay into the City's tree fund at a rate of \$60 per caliper inch of replacement tree that cannot be planted on site. Under the current tree removal and replacement plan, the applicant would pay a nonrefundable tree fund payment in the amount of \$9,090.
 - 3) Site Plan Changes: To reduce the extensive tree removal proposed under the current development proposal, including the removal of four specimen oak trees, the following site plan changes are recommended:
 - a) Reduced on-site parking with proof of parking or a shared parking agreement with commercial properties located across Gervais Avenue.
 - b) Underground stormwater management to replace two of the three above-ground infiltration basins.
 - 4) Tree Maintenance Agreement: A tree maintenance agreement to be drafted by the City of Maplewood requiring that the church maintain and replace dead trees planted in the right-of-way.
 - 5) Surety: A cash escrow or letter of credit to cover the cost of the replacement trees. This surety will be refunded once all trees are planted with a one-year warranty.

Wetland:

1. Wetland Ordinance:
 - a. Wetland Classification and Required Wetland Buffer: The Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District approved the wetland delineation on July 31, 2025. During that review, the watershed district reclassified the wetland from a Manage A to a Manage B wetland. The City's wetland ordinance requires a 75-foot wetland buffer around a Manage B wetland.
 - b. Wetland Buffer Averaging: The wetland ordinance allows flexibility in instances where, because of the unique physical characteristics of a specific parcel of land, the averaging of buffer width for the entire parcel

may be necessary to allow for the reasonable use of the land during a development or construction project. The wetland ordinance allows encroachments to a Manage B wetland within 50 feet of the wetland edge if the buffer width will be compensated for by increased buffer widths elsewhere in the same parcel to achieve the required average buffer width.

- c. Wetland Buffer Averaging and Variance Assessment: Wetland buffer averaging and wetland buffer variances are allowed based on an assessment of the following:
- 1) Undue hardship would arise from not allowing the average buffer or would otherwise not be in public interest.
 - 2) Size of parcel.
 - 3) Configuration of existing roads and utilities.
 - 4) Percentage of parcel covered by wetland.
 - 5) Configuration of wetlands on the parcel.
 - 6) Averaging will not cause degradation of the wetland or stream.
 - 7) Averaging will ensure the protection or enhancement of portions of the buffer which are found to be the most ecologically beneficial to the wetland or stream.
 - 8) A wetland buffer mitigation plan is required for construction of development projects that will require averaging. In reviewing the mitigation plan, the city may require one or more of the following actions:
 - a) Reducing or avoiding the impact by limiting the degree or amount of the action, such as by using appropriate technology.
 - b) Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the buffer.
 - c) Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by prevention and maintenance operations during the life of the actions.
 - d) Compensating for the impact by replacing, enhancing, or providing substitute buffer land at a two-to-one ratio.
 - e) Monitoring the impact and taking appropriate corrective measures.
 - f) Where the city requires restoration or replacement of a buffer, the owner or contractor shall replant the buffer with

native vegetation. A restoration plan must be approved by the city before planting.

- g) Any additional conditions required by the applicable watershed district and/or the soil and water conservation district shall apply.
 - h) A wetland or buffer mitigation surety, such as a cash deposit or letter of credit, of 150 percent of estimated cost for mitigation. The surety will be required based on the size of the project as deemed necessary by the administrator. Funds will be held by the city until successful completion of restoration as determined by the city after a final inspection. Wetland or buffer mitigation surety does not include other sureties required pursuant to any other provision of city ordinance or city directive.
2. Wetland Impacts: The development will have grading up to the wetland edge for the installation of a stormwater discharge pipe, and grading encroachments toward the wetland for the installation of one of the infiltration basins and parking lot. The development requires a 75-foot wetland buffer variance.
3. Wetland Buffer Recommendations:
- a. Prior to issuance of a grading permit the applicant must submit the following:
 - 1) Wetland Buffer Mitigation Plan showing the following additional strategy:
 - a) Invasive Species Removal and Native Overseeding: Removal of buckthorn and other invasive species within the remaining undisturbed wetland buffer and the open space area north and west of the church and overseeding with native seed. The applicant must maintain this area for three years.
 - c) Revised Landscape Plan: Revised landscape plan showing detailed native plug planting. The plan should include location, species, spacing, soil preparation, and mulching details.
 - d) Revised Wetland Buffer Sign Plan: Work with staff on the number and appropriate placement of the wetland buffer signs to ensure no future mowing, grading, and building within the established wetland buffer. The City supplies wetland buffer signs identifying that no building, mowing, or grading should take place within the buffer. There is a \$35 fee per sign.

- 2) **Wetland Buffer Sign Installation:** Install the City wetland buffer signs that specify that no building, mowing, cutting, grading, filling or dumping are allowed within the buffer.
- 3) **Maintenance Agreement:** Sign a three-year agreement with the City requiring that the applicant establish and maintain the required native seed and plugs within the wetland buffer, and remove and manage invasive species within the wetland buffer and the open space area north and west of the church.
- 4) **Surety:** A cash escrow or letter of credit to cover 150 percent of the required maintenance agreement work outlined above. The City will retain the surety for up to three years as outlined in the maintenance agreement to ensure the native plants are established and invasive species are removed and managed.

Landscape Policies and Recommendation:

Review of the overall landscape plan to ensure nonnative and invasive species are avoided, seed mix is appropriate for use in areas proposed, and plantings are climate resilient.

1. Prior to the issuance of a grading permit the Natural Resources Coordinator must review and approve the final landscape plan to ensure it meets the City's landscape policies.

Infiltration Basin Policies and Recommendations:

1. **Infiltration Basin Policy:** To ensure successful vegetation establishment in basins, the city requires one of the following approaches:
 - a. Plant shrubs with shredded hardwood mulch in the lower portion of the basin and seed on the slopes; or
 - b. Plant a combination of seed and plugs. The basin is seeded with a native seed mix, then grasses, sedges, and flowers 18" apart. This spacing of plants does not provide full coverage, it just helps ensure establishment of native species in the basin in case seed is washed away or does not establish; or
 - c. Plant native seed. If native seed is used in a project, the developer should have a three-year maintenance contract to ensure establishment of native vegetation.
2. **Infiltration Basins Proposed:** The applicant proposes three infiltration basins to help manage stormwater on the site. All three infiltration basins will have a mix of native seeds and plugs.
3. **Infiltration Basin Recommendations:**

- a. Prior to the issuance of a grading permit the Natural Resources Coordinator must review and approve final landscape plans to ensure it meets the City's infiltration basin policies.

From: [Josh Hengemuhle](#)
To: [Elizabeth Hammond](#)
Subject: Objection to Proposed Expansion at 1701 Gervais Avenue East
Date: Saturday, October 18, 2025 2:55:57 PM

You don't often get email from jhengemuhle@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

External message alert: This message originated from outside the City of Maplewood email system. **Use caution** when clicking hyperlinks, downloading pictures or opening attachments.

Josh Hengemuhle
2456 Flandrau St
Maplewood, MN 55109

October 17, 2025

Maplewood City Council
Maplewood Planning Commission
City of Maplewood
1830 County Road B East
Maplewood, MN 55109

RE: Objection to Proposed Expansion at 1701 Gervais Avenue East

Dear Maplewood City Officials,

I am writing to express my objection to the proposed expansion of The Church of Pentecost at 1701 Gervais Avenue East. While I respect the congregation's desire to grow, as a resident of the neighboring block, I believe this particular expansion plan is incompatible with our residential neighborhood and would diminish the quality of life for area residents.

My primary concerns are as follows:

Scale Incompatible with Residential Character: The proposed expansion represents a substantial increase in scale that does not fit the residential nature of our block. The addition would create a facility more appropriate for a commercial corridor than a quiet residential area where families live and children play.

Encroachment on Wetland Buffer and Setbacks: According to the city's documentation, the expansion would encroach into the 75-foot wetland buffer zone on the northern portion of the property and violate the 15-foot setback requirement along Flandrau Street. These protective measures exist for good reasons – to preserve natural resources and maintain appropriate spacing in residential areas. Granting variances to accommodate this oversized project sets a concerning precedent. Specifically, granting these variances would allow the complete removal of the tree line along the northern edge of the property, placing the new commercial parking lot in full view of the entire residential block, and right up to the property line of the neighbor to the north. This would negatively impact that property's value and likely the others on the block as well.

Impact on Neighboring Park: The expansion's proximity to the neighboring park would diminish this valuable community green space and alter its character. Parks serve as essential buffers in residential neighborhoods, and this expansion would compromise that function. Additionally, the plan removes a significant portion of the tree buffer between the park and the property, putting a parking lot right next to a well-traveled walking path in the park.

Inadequate Traffic Capacity: The property is located on a residential cul-de-sac that was designed to

serve neighborhood homes, not a facility of this scale. Our street infrastructure simply does not have the capacity to handle the increased traffic volume that this expansion would generate. The cul-de-sac configuration creates safety concerns as increased traffic will lead to congestion, difficulty for emergency vehicle access, and hazards for children and pedestrians who use these streets. The proposed parking expansion acknowledges that more visitors are anticipated, but fails to address how our residential street will accommodate this influx.

Ongoing and Worsening Noise Issues: The lived experience in this neighborhood has already been negatively impacted by the current facility. While the Sunday day-time worship is not an issue, within the last week alone, loud bass music from the property was audible indoors down the block late into the night. This is not an isolated incident – noise disturbances like this have only increased in frequency over the past few years. An expansion of this scale will inevitably amplify these problems and potentially expand them to other times, further eroding our neighborhood's peace and residential character.

I urge the Planning Commission, City Council, and all reviewing bodies to deny the Conditional Use Permit, variance requests, and site design approval for this project. The applicant should be encouraged to pursue a more appropriately scaled renovation and alternative parking solutions* that respect wetland buffers, setback requirements, and the residential nature of the neighborhood.

Thank you for considering my concerns. I regret that I am not able to attend the hearing in person due to work commitments, but I am available to discuss this matter further. I hope you will prioritize the interests of the established residential community.

Sincerely,
Josh Hengemuhle

*one parking possibility might be renting parking lot space from the post office across Gervais. That lot is never used on Sundays which applicants own materials indicate is the time when they would need the parking capacity. I would even favor installation of a crosswalk at that location to make that option more tenable.

MINUTES
MAPLEWOOD COMMUNITY DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

6:00 P.M. Tuesday, October 21, 2025
City Hall, Council Chambers
1830 County Road B East

E. NEW BUSINESS

2. Design Review Resolution, Church of Pentecost, 1701 Gervais Avenue East

Elizabeth Hammond, Planner, gave the presentation. Joseph Oppong, Church of Pentecost, and Brian Tempas, LSE Architects, addressed the board and answered questions.

Chairperson Kempe moved to approve a design review resolution for a building addition and parking lot expansion at 1701 Gervais Avenue East, subject to certain conditions of approval, and with the friendly amendment that the applicant have a discussion with staff, planning commission, and city council on phasing in parking to reduce immediate encroachment on the wetland in the northern portion of the parking lot.

DESIGN REVIEW RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Maplewood, Minnesota, as follows:

Section 1. Background.

1.01 The Church of Pentecost has requested approval of a design review to construct a building and parking lot addition on the property at 1701 Gervais Avenue East.

1.02 The property located at 1701 Gervais Avenue East is legally described as:

The South Half of the West Half of Lot 3, E.G. Roger's Garden Lots, Ramsey County, Minnesota, according to the recorded plat thereof. Except: The East 30.00 feet and the North 180.00 feet thereof.

PIN: 102922140047

Section 2. Site and Building Plan Standards and Findings.

2.01 City ordinance requires that the community design review board make the following findings to approve plans:

1. That the design and location of the proposed development and its relationship to neighboring, existing, or proposed developments and traffic is such that it will not impair the desirability of investment or occupation in the neighborhood; that it will not unreasonably interfere with the use and enjoyment of neighboring, existing or proposed developments; and that it will not create traffic hazards or congestion.
2. That the design and location of the proposed development are in keeping with the character of the surrounding neighborhood and are not detrimental to the harmonious, orderly, and attractive development contemplated by this article and the city's comprehensive municipal plan.

3. That the design and location of the proposed development would provide a desirable environment for its occupants, as well as for its neighbors, and that it is aesthetically of good composition, materials, textures, and colors.
- 2.02 The community design review board reviewed this request on October 21, 2025, and voted to approve it.
- 2.03 The proposal meets the specific findings for design review approval.

Section 3. City Council Action.

- 3.01 On November 24, 2025, the City Council discussed this resolution. They considered reports and recommendations from the community design review board and City staff.
- 3.02 The above-described site and design plans are hereby _____ based on the findings outlined in Section 2 of this resolution. Subject to staff approval, the site must be developed and maintained in substantial conformance with the design plans. Approval is subject to the applicant doing the following:
1. If the city has not issued a building permit for this project, repeat this review in two years.
 2. All fire marshal and building official requirements must be met.
 3. Satisfy the requirements in the engineering review by Jon Jarosch, dated September 9, 2025.
 4. Satisfy the requirements in the environmental review by Shann Finwall, dated September 5, 2025.
 5. The applicant shall obtain all required permits from the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District.
 6. The applicant shall install a stop sign at the property exits on Gervais Avenue and Flandrau Avenue.
 7. Per city ordinance standards, all mechanical equipment and trash receptacles shall be screened from the view of all nearby residential properties or adjacent public streets. The location and type of screening must always meet city ordinance requirements.
 8. The applicant shall install and maintain a landscaped and screened area not less than 20 feet in width along the north property line. Screening may be satisfied with landscaping or a combination of landscaping and a screening fence per ordinance requirements.
 9. The applicant shall install and maintain a landscaped area on the east side of the property between the edge of the parking lot and within the city right-of-way along Flandrau Street. The applicant must work with the city engineering staff to obtain a ROW permit. The applicant shall ensure that the trees are at least six feet in height at the time of planting. The planting screen shall consist of evergreen plantings. Trees shall be a minimum of 2½ inches in trunk diameter, two feet above grade. Shrubs may be used in combination with a berm and shall be a minimum of two feet in height. Spacing of trees and shrubs shall be designed to create an 80-percent opaque screening at least six feet in height.

10. Before the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit for staff approval the following items:
 - a. The applicant shall provide the city with a cash escrow or an irrevocable letter of credit for all required exterior improvements. The amount shall be 150 percent of the cost of the work.
 - b. An updated tree and landscape plan as outlined in the environmental review.
11. The applicant shall complete the following before occupying the building:
 - a. Replace any property irons that were removed because of this construction.
 - b. Provide continuous concrete curb and gutter around the parking lot and driveways.
 - c. Install all required landscaping and an in-ground lawn irrigation system for all landscaped areas.
 - d. Install all required outdoor lighting.
 - e. Install all required sidewalks and trails.
12. If any required work is not done, the city may allow temporary occupancy if:
 - a. The city determines that the work is not essential to public health, safety, or welfare.
 - b. The above-required letter of credit or cash escrow is held by the City of Maplewood for all required exterior improvements. The owner or contractor shall complete any unfinished exterior improvements by June 1 of the following year if occupancy of the building is in the fall or winter or within six weeks of occupancy of the building if occupancy is in the spring or summer.
 - c. All work shall follow the approved plans. The director of community development may approve minor changes.

Seconded by Vice Chairperson Oszman

Ayes – All (via roll call)

The motion passed.

This item will go to the city council on November 24, 2025.

MINUTES
MAPLEWOOD PLANNING COMMISSION
7:00 P.M. Tuesday, October 21, 2025
City Hall, Council Chambers
1830 County Road B East

E. PUBLIC HEARING

1. **Church of Pentecost, 1701 Gervais Avenue East**
 - a. **Conditional Use Permit Resolution**
 - b. **Wetland Buffer and Parking Setback Variance Resolution**

Elizabeth Hammond, Planner, gave the presentation.

Chairperson Desai opened the public hearing.

The following individuals addressed the commission regarding the project:

Brian Tempas, LSE Architects
Joseph Rief, Civil Site Group
Merrilee Horton, 2464 Flandrau Street

Chairperson Desai closed the public hearing.

Commissioner Oszman moved to approve a conditional use permit resolution for a religious facility at 1701 Gervais Avenue East, subject to certain conditions of approval.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Maplewood, Minnesota, as follows:

Section 1. Background.

- 1.01 The Church of Pentecost has requested a Conditional Use Permit for a religious facility on the property at 1701 Gervais Avenue East.
- 1.02 The property located at 1701 Gervais Avenue East is legally described as:
The South Half of the West Half of Lot 3, E.G. Roger's Garden Lots, Ramsey County, Minnesota, according to the recorded plat thereof. Except: The East 30.00 feet and the North 180.00 feet thereof.
PIN: 102922140047

Section 2. Standards.

- 2.01 General Conditional Use Permit Standards. The City Ordinance states that the City Council must base approval of a Conditional Use Permit on the following nine standards for approval.
 1. The use would be located, designed, maintained, constructed, and operated to be in conformity with the City's Comprehensive Plan and Code of Ordinances.
 2. The use would not change the existing or planned character of the surrounding area.

3. The use would not depreciate property values.
4. The use would not involve any activity, process, materials, equipment or methods of operation that would be dangerous, hazardous, detrimental, disturbing or cause a nuisance to any person or property, because of excessive noise, glare, smoke, dust, odor, fumes, water or air pollution, drainage, water run-off, vibration, general unsightliness, electrical interference or other nuisances.
5. The use would not exceed the design standards of any affected street.
6. The use would be served by adequate public facilities and services, including streets, police and fire protection, drainage structures, water and sewer systems, schools and parks.
7. The use would not create excessive additional costs for public facilities or services.
8. The use would maximize the preservation of and incorporate the site's natural and scenic features into the development design.
9. The use would cause minimal adverse environmental effects.

Section 3. Findings.

- 3.01 The proposal meets the specific Conditional Use Permit standards.

Section 4. City Review Process

- 4.01 The City conducted the following review when considering this conditional use permit request.

1. On October 21, 2025, the Planning Commission held a public hearing. City staff published a hearing notice in the Pioneer Press and sent notices to the surrounding property owners. The Planning Commission allowed everyone to speak and present written statements at the hearing. The Planning Commission recommended that the City Council approve this resolution.
2. On November 24, 2025, the City Council discussed this resolution. They considered reports and recommendations from the planning commission and City staff.

Section 5. City Council

- 5.01 The City Council hereby _____ the resolution. Approval is based on the findings outlined in section 3 of this resolution. Approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. All ground-mounted and roof-mounted mechanical equipment and trash receptacles shall be screened according to the ordinance.
2. All construction shall follow the approved plans. The director of community development may approve minor changes.
3. The proposed construction must be substantially started within one year of council approval, or the permit shall become null and void.
4. The city council shall review this permit in one year.

The applicant shall meet the conditions outlined in the design review resolution.

Seconded by Vice Chairperson Yang

Ayes – All

The motion passed.

Vice Chairperson Yang moved to approve a wetland buffer and parking setback variance resolution for a building addition and parking lot expansion to be constructed at 1701 Gervais Avenue East.

WETLAND BUFFER AND PARKING SETBACK VARIANCE RESOLUTION

BE IT RESOLVED by the City Council of the City of Maplewood, Minnesota, as follows:

Section 1. Background.

- 1.01 The Church of Pentecost has requested a wetland buffer and parking setback variance to construct a building addition and parking lot expansion on the property at 1701 Gervais Avenue East.
- 1.02 The property located at 1701 Gervais Avenue East is legally described as:
The South Half of the West Half of Lot 3, E.G. Roger's Garden Lots, Ramsey County, Minnesota, according to the recorded plat thereof. Except: The East 30.00 feet and the North 180.00 feet thereof.
PIN: 102922140047
- 1.03 The site has a Manage B wetland on the northwest portion of the property, which requires a 75-foot buffer. The project will involve grading up to the wetland edge for the installation of a stormwater discharge pipe and an infiltration basin, which will extend 45.8 feet into the 75-foot buffer. Additionally, the parking lot on the north side of the building will encroach 29.5 feet into the buffer. The building addition and parking lot expansion project will require a 75-foot variance for the wetland buffer.
- 1.04 The existing parking lot for the church, located along the east side of the property, encroaches between two and five feet into the 15-foot required setback along Flandrau Street. The parking lot will be repaved and expanded on the south side of the building addition and the north side of the existing building. The parking area along the east side of the site is proposed to be between two and five feet from the east property line, requiring a parking setback variance.

Section 2. Standards.

- 2.01 Wetland Buffer and Parking Setback Variance Standards. The City Ordinance states that the City Council must base approval of a variance on the following standards.
 1. Before the city council acts on a wetland ordinance variance, the Environmental and Natural Resources Commission and the Planning Commission will make a recommendation to the city council. The city shall hold a public hearing for the variance. The city shall notify property owners within 500 feet of the property for which the variance is being requested at least ten days before the hearing.
 2. The city may require the applicant to mitigate any wetland, stream, or buffer alteration impacts with the approval of a variance, including, but not limited to, implementing one or more of the strategies listed in subsection 18-221(e)(4) (mitigation).

3. To approve a variance, the city council shall apply the findings for variance approval as required in Minnesota Statutes.
4. The applicant for a variance shall submit, with the variance application and any other required materials, a statement showing how the proposal would meet the findings for variance approval.

Section 3. Findings.

3.01 The proposal meets the specific wetland buffer and parking setback variance standards.

Section 4. City Review Process

4.01 The City conducted the following review when considering this wetland buffer and parking setback variance request.

1. On October 21, 2025, the Planning Commission held a public hearing. City staff published a hearing notice in the Pioneer Press and sent notices to the surrounding property owners. The Planning Commission allowed everyone to speak and present written statements at the hearing. The Planning Commission recommended that the City Council approve this resolution.
2. On November 12, 2025, the Environmental and Natural Resources Commission held a public meeting to discuss the proposal. The ENR recommended that the City Council _____ this resolution.
3. On November 24, 2025, the City Council discussed this resolution. They considered reports and recommendations from the planning commission and City staff.

Section 5. City Council

5.01 The City Council hereby _____ the resolution. Approval is based on the findings outlined in section 3 of this resolution. Approval is subject to the following conditions:

1. All construction shall follow the approved plans. The director of community development may approve minor changes.

The applicant shall meet the conditions outlined in the design review resolution.

Seconded by Commissioner Oszman

Ayes – All

The motion passed.

This item will go to the city council on November 24, 2025.

**MINUTES
CITY OF MAPLEWOOD
ENVIRONMENTAL AND NATURAL RESOURCES COMMISSION
Wednesday, November 12, 2025
6:00 P.M.**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Chairperson Lates called a meeting of the Environmental and Natural Resources Commission to order at 6:02 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Rebecca Bryan, Commissioner	Present
Joanne Cryer, Commissioner	Present
Benjamin Guell, Commissioner	Present
David Lates, Chairperson	Present
Ted Redmond, Commissioner	Absent
Wes Saunders-Pearce, Commissioner	Present

Staff Present

Shann Finwall, Sustainability Coordinator

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Chairperson Lates moved to approve the agenda.

Seconded by Commissioner Saunders-Pearce. Ayes – All

The motion passed.

4. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

a. October 8, 2025

Commissioner Guell moved to approve the October 8, 2025, Environmental and Natural Resources Commission meeting minutes as written.

Seconded by Commissioner Saunders-Pearce. Ayes – All

The motion passed.

5. NEW BUSINESS

a. Church of Pentecost, 1701 Gervais Avenue East – Wetland Buffer Variance

Shann Finwall, Sustainability Coordinator, introduced the subject.

The Church of Pentecost had the following representatives speak on the project:

- Rob Binder, Civil Site Group

- Joseph Rief, Civil Site Group
- Joseph Gyamfi, Church of Pentecost

The Environmental and Natural Resources Commission discussed the following:

- Required escrows.
- Invasive species outside of the wetland buffer area.
- Proof of parking and shared parking.
- Usable lawn area.
- Increased wetland buffer area.
- Wetland buffer mitigation plan.

Commissioner Saunders-Pearce moved to approve the wetland buffer resolution for the Church of Pentecost with an additional wetland buffer mitigation strategy including:

- Removal and management of invasive species in the wetland buffer and in the open space area located on the north and west side of the church, and overseeding this area with native seed.

Seconded by Chair Lates.

Ayes – All

The motion passed.

6. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

7. VISITOR PRESENTATIONS

None

8. COMMISSIONER PRESENTATIONS

None

9. STAFF PRESENTATIONS

Shann Finwall, Sustainability Coordinator, updated the Environmental and Natural Resources Commission on the following:

- a. October 27, 2025, City Council Update
 - 1) Resolution of Appreciation for Nancy Edwards
 - 2) Wakefield Park Community Building Solar Project
 - 3) Century Ponds Development
- b. Board and Commission Appreciation Dinner – February 5, 2026, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m.
- c. Environmental and Natural Resources Commission Calendar

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Lates adjourned the meeting at 7:04 p.m.

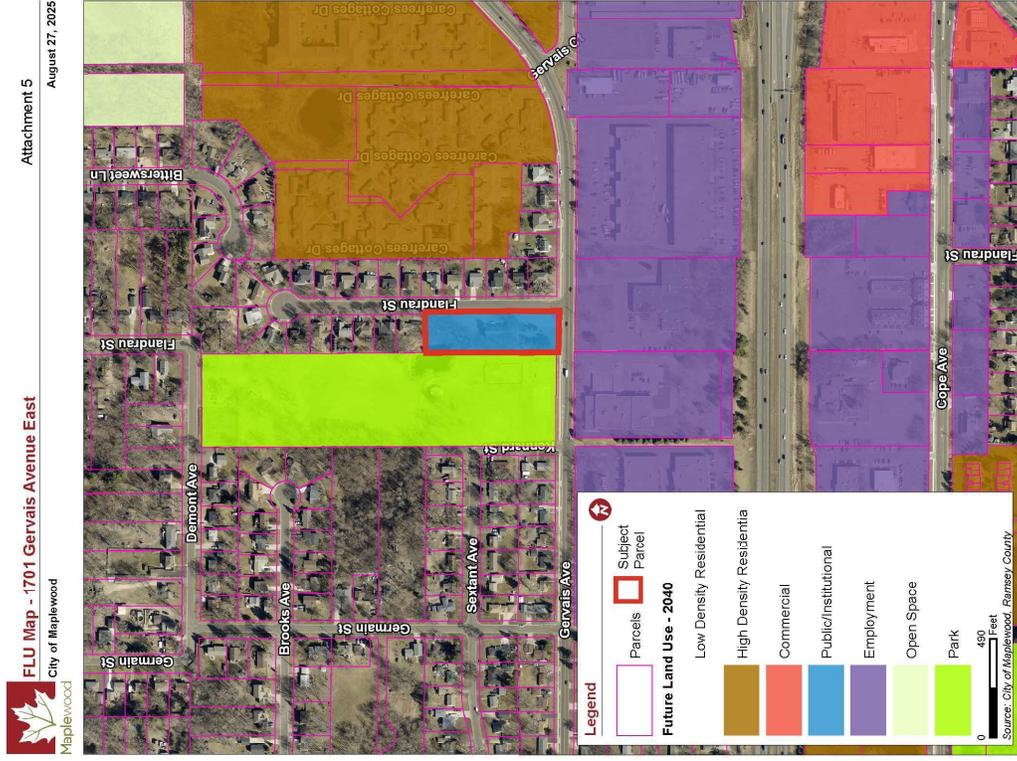
Church of Pentecost

- The Church of Pentecost is proposing an expansion of its building and parking lot at 1701 Gervais Avenue East
 - Addition on the south side of the building to expand the sanctuary and allow for interior remodeling of offices/reception area and classrooms
 - Expansion of the parking lot (30 additional stalls), and adding stormwater retention and ponding, as well as landscape improvements
- The applicant requests:
 - Conditional use permit
 - Design review approval
 - Variances for a wetland buffer and parking lot setback



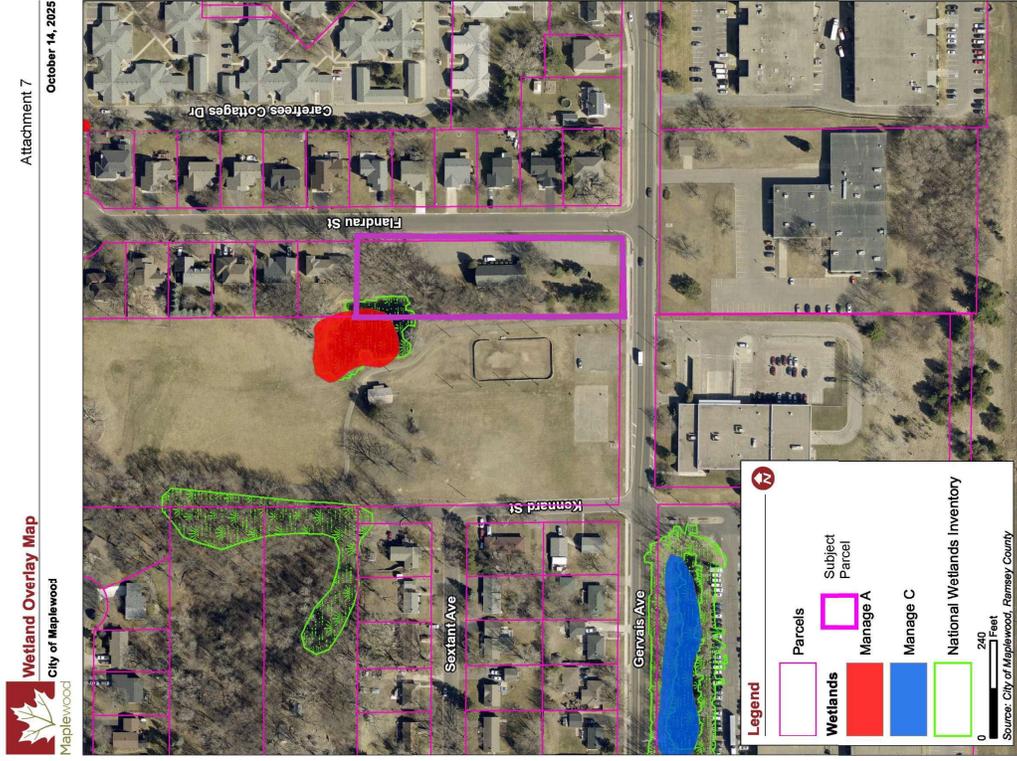
Church of Pentecost

- The city's 2040 comprehensive plan guides the property as *institutional*
 - This includes uses such as schools, fire stations, libraries, religious institutions, cemeteries, and other City, County, and State properties
 - Public/ institutional uses allowed in all zoning districts with a CUP
 - When the church began operating on the site, a CUP was never obtained
 - The proposed expansion triggers the requirement to obtain a conditional use permit
- The proposed land use meets the intent of the comprehensive plan



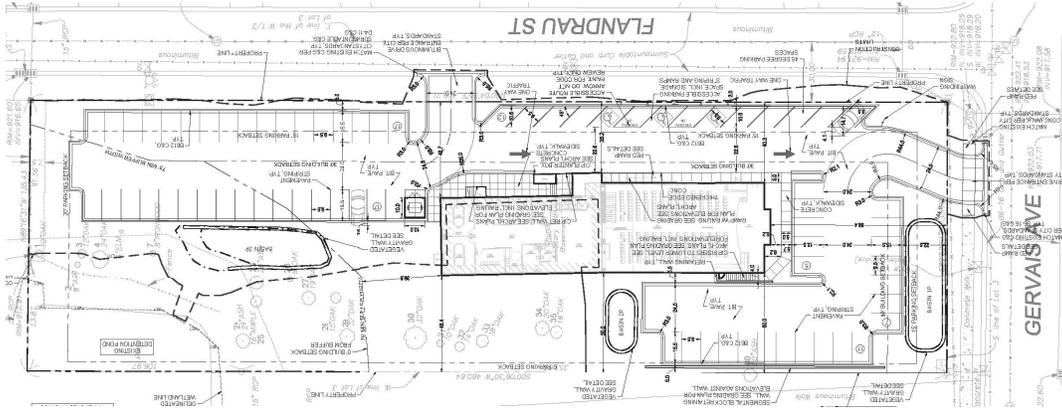
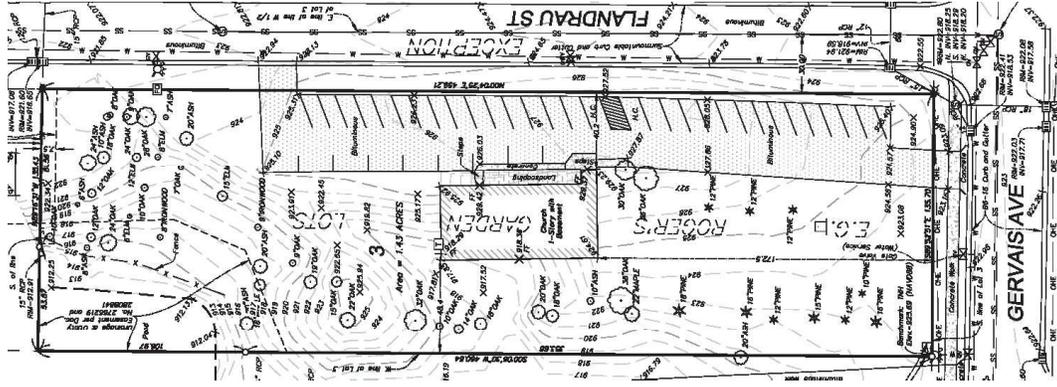
Church of Pentecost

- The site features a Manage B wetland in its northwest corner, and a portion of the expanded parking lot and site grading during construction will encroach on the required 75-foot wetland buffer
- The applicant had the wetland reviewed by the watershed district, and it was reclassified from a Manage A to a Manage B
- The parking lot expansion on the east side of the building will also encroach into the required 15-foot setback to the property line along Flandrau Street



Church of Pentecost

- The existing one-story building is 3,126.6 square feet
 - The parking lot currently encroaches 2-5 feet into the 15-foot required setback along Flandrau Street
- The proposed addition to the south side of the building is 3,668 square feet
- The parking lot is expanded on the south side of the addition and the north side of the existing building
- The site is accessed from Gervais Avenue and Flandrau Street
 - Both access points are to be rebuilt, with the access point off Flandrau being relocated slightly south, closer to the building entrance



Church of Pentecost

- The proposed building addition will meet all setback requirements.
- The parking lot is required to be 15 feet from the Flandrau and Gervais property lines, 20 feet from the north property line (which is residential), and 5 feet from the west property line
- The parking area along the east side of the site is proposed to be between two and five feet from the east property line, requiring a parking setback variance
- The parking lot setbacks to the north, south, and west property lines are achieved.

Church of Pentecost

- The existing one-story masonry brick building has a pitched roof and is 30.5 feet in height at its peak
- The proposed building addition will also be 30.5 feet in height but will feature a flat roof



VIEW FROM EAST (FLANDRAU)



VIEW FROM SOUTHEAST (FLANDRAU)

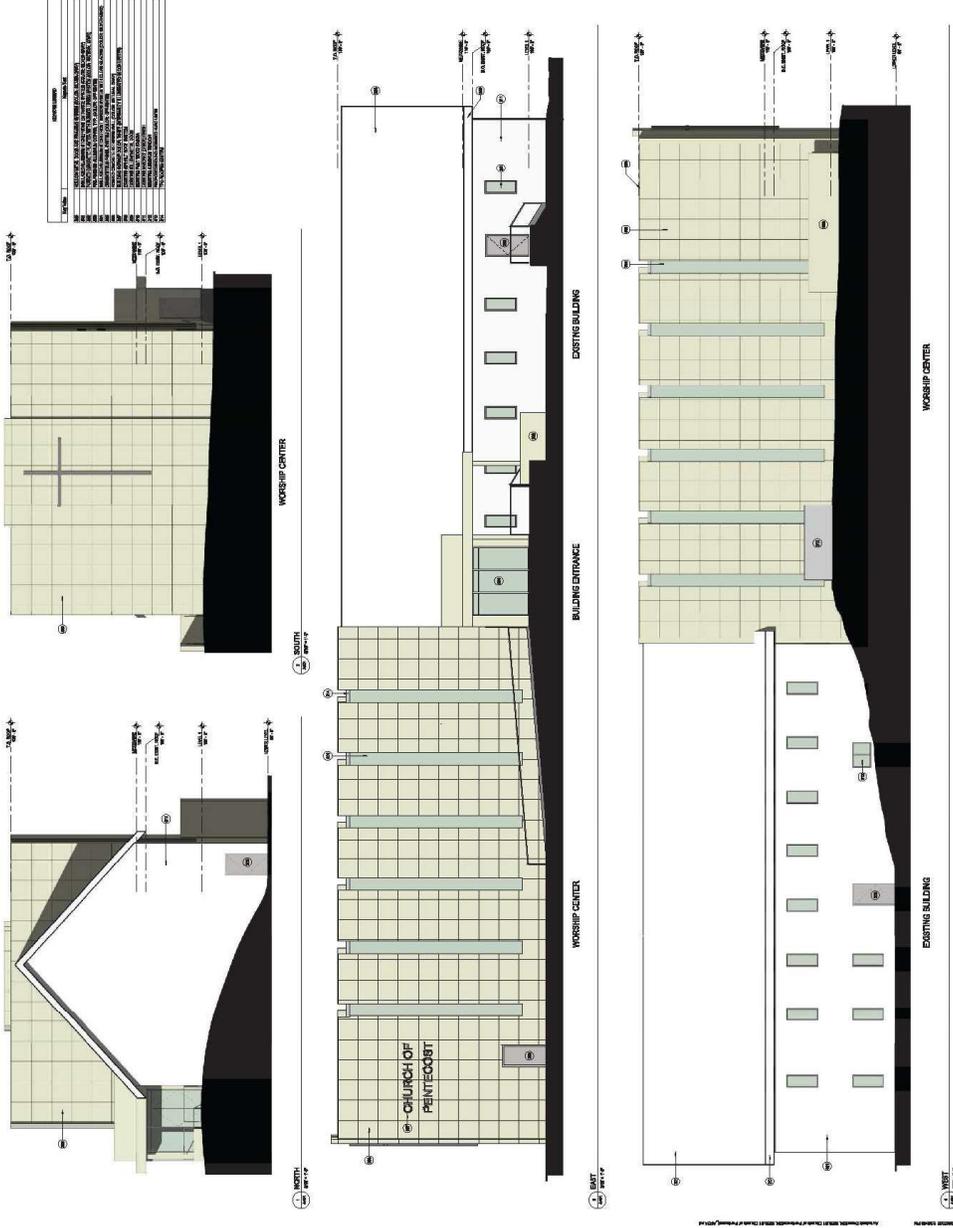


VIEW FROM NORTHEAST (FLANDRAU)

NOTE: FOR BUILDING FINISH MATERIALS AND COLORS, PLEASE REFER TO THE ELEVATION SHEETS

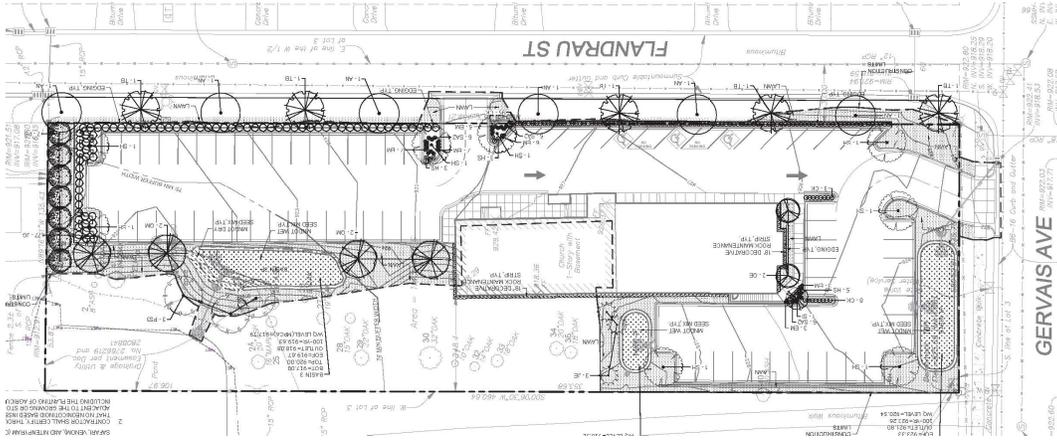
Church of Pentecost

- The proposed materials for the addition are cement panel siding in an off-white color, accompanied by aluminum metal trim and framing in natural and silver grays



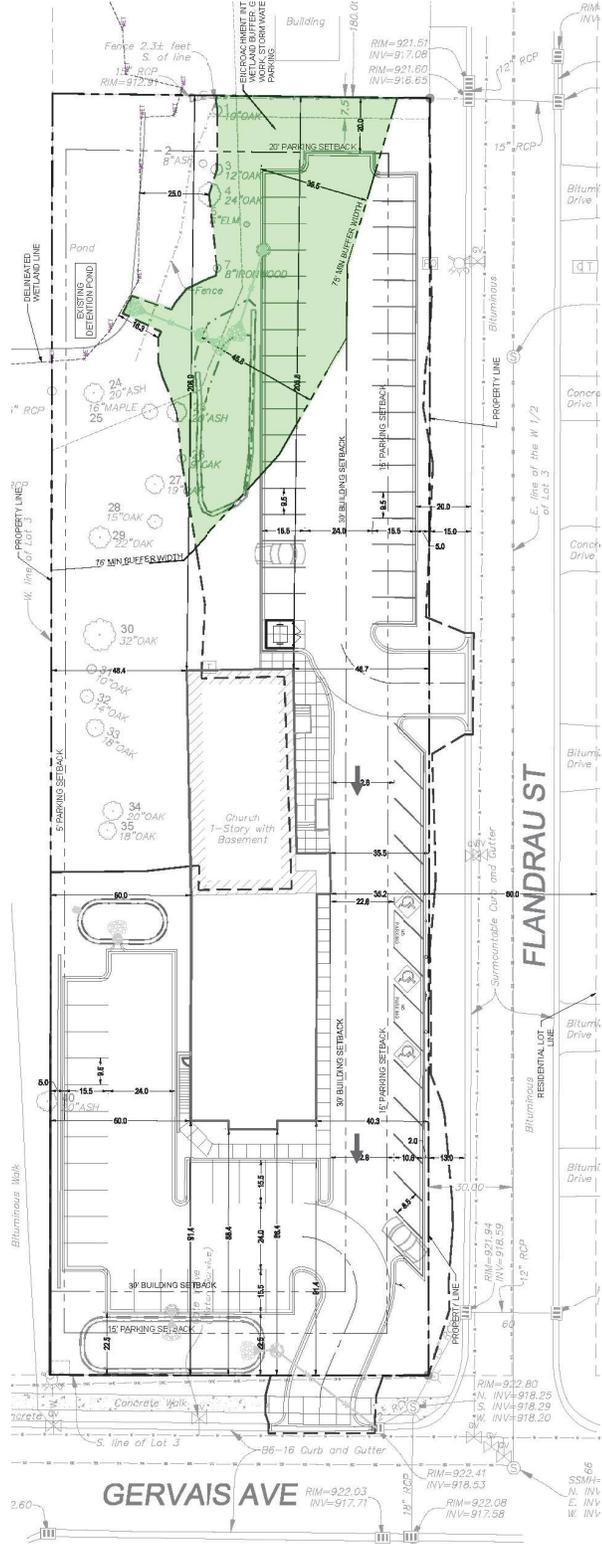
Church of Pentecost

- The proposed landscape plan shows that 31 trees would be removed, and 39 new trees would be planted
- 77 shrubs, 111 feather reed grasses, and 59 perennial flowers are proposed throughout the site
- A landscaped area within the 20-foot parking setback to the north property line is provided, screening the parking lot from the adjacent residential property
- According to the environmental review, the applicant will submit a revised tree plan and landscape plan that reflects the code requirements regarding tree removal and replacement, and uses recommended species where applicable



Church of Pentecost

- The site has a Manage B wetland on the northwest portion of the property, which requires a 75-foot buffer
- The project will involve grading up to the wetland edge for the installation of a stormwater discharge pipe and an infiltration basin, which will extend 45.8 feet into the buffer
- The parking lot on the north side of the building will encroach 29.5 feet into the buffer.



Church of Pentecost

- Public Review
 - Notice sent to properties within 500 feet
 - One comment was received with concerns regarding the project – the letter is attached to the report.
- City Review
 - October 21, 2025: Community Design Review Board and Planning Commission, November 12, 2025: Environmental and Natural Resources Commission
 - All commissions recommended approval
 - CDRB and PC did not make any recommended changes. The ENR recommended a mitigation strategy to ensure the removal and management of invasive species.

Church of Pentecost

1. Motion to approve a conditional use permit resolution for a religious facility at 1701 Gervais Avenue East, subject to certain conditions of approval.
2. Motion to approve a wetland buffer and parking setback variance resolution for a building addition and parking lot expansion to be constructed at 1701 Gervais Avenue East.
3. Motion to approve a design review resolution for a building addition and parking lot expansion at 1701 Gervais Avenue East, subject to certain conditions of approval.