

# PLAN COMMISSION

## INTER-DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW COMMITTEE REPORT

### Lombard Veterinary Hospital – 244-376 E. St. Charles Road

December 19, 2022

#### Title

PC 22-31

#### Petitioner

Georgianne Ludwig  
1300 S. Main Street  
Lombard, IL 60148

#### Property Owners

Georgianne Ludwig  
1300 S. Main Street  
Lombard, IL 60148

#### Property Location

244-376 E. St. Charles Road

#### Zoning

B2 – Neighborhood Shopping  
District

#### Existing Land Use

Veterinary hospital; vacant  
commercial building (former ice  
house)

#### Comprehensive Plan

Community Commercial

#### Approval Sought

Rezone property from B2 to B5A;  
establish a new planned development  
with associated conditional uses and  
zoning relief; grant site plan approval  
to the Plan Commission.

#### Prepared By

Anna Papke, AICP  
Senior Planner



LOCATION MAP

#### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The petitioner, Lombard Veterinary Hospital (LVH), has operated at 244 E. St. Charles Road since the late 1950s. The existing vet hospital building sustained significant damage during a storm in the summer of 2020. In addition to 244 E. St. Charles, the petitioner owns the vacant property north of the existing vet hospital and has recently acquired the property at 350-376 E. St. Charles Road (former ice house building). The petitioner intends to develop the entire subject property with an expanded veterinary hospital plus a second 2,400 square-foot building for future commercial use. The petitioner is seeking zoning entitlements for the proposed development.

#### EXISTING CONDITIONS

The property is developed with a veterinary hospital and a vacant commercial building. The parcels north of the veterinary hospital are undeveloped. The subject property comprises eight separate parcels that will be consolidated into one lot of record prior to redevelopment.

## PROJECT STATS

### Lot & Bulk

Site Area:	109,210 sq. ft.
Building Size	
Vet hospital:	14,726 sq. ft.
Future commercial:	2,400 sq. ft.
Parking Spaces:	105 spaces
Open Space:	40%

### Submittals

1. Petition for public hearing, submitted by petitioner, dated 11/22/2022;
2. Responses to standards, prepared by petitioner;
3. Architectural plan package, including site plan, building elevations, floor plans, signage plans, landscape plan and photometric plan, prepared by Linden Group and RWE Design Build, variously dated throughout 2022;
4. Final site improvement plans (civil engineering), prepared by Advantage Consulting Engineers, dated 11/23/2022; and
5. Boundary and topographic survey, prepared by Regional Land Services, dated 5/26/2022.

## APPROVAL(S) REQUIRED

The petitioner requests that the Village take the following actions on the subject property, located within the B2 Neighborhood Shopping District:

1. Approve a map amendment rezoning the subject property from the B2 Neighborhood Shopping District to the B5A Downtown Perimeter District;
2. Pursuant to Section 155.419(C) of Village Code, establish a new planned development for the property with the following zoning relief:
  - a. Pursuant to Section 155.419(C)(2), grant a conditional use for an animal hospital, animal kennel, animal day care, and animal training facility;
  - b. Pursuant to Section 155.419(C)(14), grant a conditional use for outside service areas associated with an animal hospital, animal kennel, animal day care, and animal training facility;
  - c. Pursuant to Section 155.208, grant a conditional use for more than one principal structure on a lot of record in the B5A Downtown Perimeter District;
  - d. Pursuant to Sections 155.419(K) and 155.707(B)(3), grant a variation pertaining to the placement of fencing and landscaping within the transitional landscape yard along the west property line of the subject property;
  - e. Pursuant to Section 153.507, grant a deviation to allow for 94 square feet of wall signage where 50 square feet of wall signage is permitted;
  - f. Pursuant to Section 153.507, grant a deviation to allow a freestanding sign with 27 square feet in surface area, where a sign of 20 square feet in surface area is permitted; and
3. Grant Site Plan Approval Authority to the Lombard Plan Commission, as set forth within Sections 155.504 and 155.511 of Village Code, and not being considered concurrent with the approval of the planned development.

## **INTER-DEPARTMENTAL REVIEW**

### **Building Division:**

The Building Division has the following comments regarding the petition. Additional comments may be forthcoming during permit review.

1. The proposed design shows only one exit from the second floor. This is allowed in the Building Code, but limits the occupancy to 29 people or less people. The plan shows 23 people based on square footage, but shows spaces (training room, conference room, offices, break room, etc.) that could bring the occupancy over 23 and possibly over 29. We would require this space to be posted at 29 people on the second floor. If the owner/operator would see where they would ever need to have more people than that, they would need to add a second exit.
2. There are no bathrooms shown on the plan on the second floor. Further clarification would be needed to offer comments on the second-floor space.

### **Fire Department:**

The Fire Department has the following comment the petition. Additional comments may be forthcoming during permit review.

1. A fire hydrant will be required within 75-100 feet of the Fire Department Connection.

### **Public Works:**

Public Works has no comments regarding the petition. The department has been participating in engineering plan review, and technical comments have been addressed. Additional comments may be forthcoming during permit review.

### **Private Engineering Services (PES):**

PES has no comments regarding the petition. Additional comments on the current engineering plans will be forthcoming during permit review.

### **Planning Services Division:**

The Planning Services Division (PSD) notes the following:

#### *1. Surrounding Zoning & Land Use Compatibility*

	<b>Zoning Districts</b>	<b>Land Use</b>
<b>North</b>	R2	Single-family residence
<b>South</b>	N/A	Union Pacific Railroad
<b>East</b>	B2	United States Post Office
<b>West</b>	B2 and R2	O'Neill's Pub, multi-family, and single-family residential

The subject property is located on East St. Charles Road, two blocks east of the Downtown and Downtown Perimeter Districts. Neighboring development consists of medium-intensity commercial and service uses along St. Charles Road, residential uses, and governmental services (Post Office). The vet hospital has operated on a portion of the subject property since 1959. The proposed redevelopment and expansion of the vet hospital is compatible with these surrounding land uses.

## **2. *Comprehensive Plan Compatibility***

The Comprehensive Plan recommends community commercial uses on the subject property. Community Commercial uses are described as commercial areas providing services extending beyond daily living needs. The existing and proposed expanded veterinary hospital are consistent with this land use recommendation for the subject property.

## **3. *Zoning Ordinance Compatibility***

The proposed zoning of the subject property is B5A, Downtown Perimeter District. With the exception of the deviations and variations discussed below, the proposed development is consistent with the Lombard Zoning Ordinance. Staff notes the following with respect to this petition's consistency with the Zoning Ordinance:

- The proposed use, an animal hospital with kennel and other associated uses, is a conditional use in the B5A District.
- The proposed building is 30 feet in height (measured to the mean level between the eaves and ridge of the roof). Maximum building height in B5A is 30 feet in height.
- The proposed development will maintain 40% of the site area as open space. There is no minimum requirement for open space in the B5A District.
- The site will provide 105 parking spaces serving a building with a gross floor area of 17,126 square feet, or six spaces per 1,000 square feet of building area. Currently, the Zoning Ordinance requires animal hospital offices and retail uses to provide four spaces per 1,000 square feet of floor area. The Village is currently advancing a comprehensive amendment to the parking requirements which would reduce the required parking to three spaces per 1,000 square feet of floor area (PC 22-27).
- The petitioner has submitted a preliminary parking lot photometric plan. A final photometric plan will be reviewed during the building permit phase.
- The petitioner has submitted a landscape plan. The landscape plan is compliant with Village Code, with the exception of the following:
  - Five parkway trees are required in the Windsor Avenue right-of-way along the north property line. This will be addressed during permit review.
  - The petitioner is requesting a variation for the placement of fencing and landscaping within the transitional landscape yard. This request is discussed in detail below.
- The subject property currently consists of eight separate parcels of property. The petitioner will be required to consolidate the subject property into one lot of record via an administrative platting process.

## **4. *Request for Map Amendment***

Based on a suggested and recommendation by staff, the petitioner is requesting a map amendment to rezone the subject property from B2 Neighborhood Shopping District to B5A Downtown Perimeter District. The B2 zoning designation promotes typical neighborhood commercial development and is consistent with the property's existing and proposed use as an animal hospital and small commercial building. However, the B2 District requires large front yard setbacks and other development standards that encourage commercial development with a suburban character. These development standards are inconsistent with the existing pattern of development along this stretch of St. Charles Road, which includes small commercial lots with buildings built to the front property line and limited open space.

The proposed animal hospital redevelopment will incorporate design elements more typical of traditional downtown development by locating the building toward the front of the property and creating a pedestrian-oriented aesthetic along the St. Charles Road frontage. The B5A zoning designation will better reflect the physical characteristics of the proposed development. As properties along this stretch of East St. Charles Road and other locations adjacent to the downtown have redeveloped in recent years, the Village has rezoned them to B5A Downtown Perimeter District in order to encourage the continuation of downtown development patterns along prominent commercial corridors. Recent examples of this approach include the block of 130-144 E. St. Charles Road (PC 20-11), and the Helen Plum Library site at 411 S. Main Street (PC 20-29).

Further, the Village Code states the intent of the B5A District as follows:

*The B5A Downtown Perimeter District is intended to be a transition between the downtown and other commercial areas that accommodates all retail, service, and specialty shops and necessary civic services characteristic of the traditional central area in a pedestrian environment while also recognizing compatible automotive land uses.*

The subject property is located on the east end of the Village's downtown area at a point of transition between the downtown to the west, the post office and local service businesses to the east, the railroad on the south side of St. Charles Road, and low-density residential development to the west and north. The B5A zoning designation will promote development on the subject property that is compatible with this mixture of uses. Again, staff supports the requested zoning map amendment.

**5. *Request to Establish a New Planned Development with Associated Zoning Relief***

Village Code Section 155.502(F) requires that a planned development be established whenever a property is rezoned to the B5A District and the property meets the area and width requirements for planned developments. Planned developments are intended to provide flexibility in zoning regulations in order to accommodate development that is in the public interest but that would not otherwise be permitted by the underlying zoning regulations. To accommodate the proposed development, the petitioner requests approval of a new planned development with companion zoning relief, enumerated below.

Staff points out that the proposed development on the property will be largely compliant with development regulations in the B5A Zoning District. The new animal hospital will replace an existing development that has a number of nonconforming site design characteristics, including:

- **Building setbacks:** The existing buildings on the site do not meet the setbacks required by the B2 Zoning District (the current zoning designation of the subject property). The proposed building meets the transitional building setbacks required by the B5A District.
- **Transitional landscape yard:** Existing development on the subject property does not provide the transitional landscape yard that is required where adjacent to residential uses. The proposed development will provide the transitional landscape yard.

Overall, staff finds the proposed redevelopment will increase compatibility between the subject property and surrounding land uses, and is supportive of the proposed planned development.

**A. *Conditional use for an animal hospital, animal kennel, animal day care, and animal training facility***

The petitioner will construct a new animal hospital facility to replace an animal hospital facility that has existed on the subject property since 1959. The proposed building will comply with the required 20-foot transitional setback from residential development adjacent to the west of the site. The petitioner will install fencing and landscaping along the west and north property lines

to buffer the animal hospital from nearby residences. The existing animal hospital has operated on the site without apparent impact on the adjacent neighborhood since the late 1950s. Operations in the new building will be similar to those in the existing building. At a neighborhood meeting held by the petitioner in November 2022, neighborhood residents expressed general support for the redevelopment of the animal hospital provided landscaping and fencing are installed along the north and west property lines. Staff supports the requested conditional use.

*B. Conditional use for outside service areas associated with the animal hospital and kennel*

The proposed development includes an animal play area adjacent to the north side of the building and several smaller animal walking areas around the perimeter of the building. The petitioner has operated an animal hospital on the subject property since 1959. In their response to standards, the petitioner states that the business has routinely used outdoor areas around the existing building for purposes of pet relief and outdoor play areas. They plan to continue to use the outside areas in this manner, with places for these uses formally noted on the site plan.

Staff notes that the proposed outside service areas will all be screened with an 8-foot tall solid PVC privacy fence. These areas are also outside the 10-foot transitional landscape buffer along the west property line. The petitioner has stated that the use of the proposed outdoor service areas will be similar to their current outside operations. Staff is not aware of any complaints resulting from the current outside operations. Staff supports the requested conditional use for outside service areas.

*C. Conditional use for more than one principal structure on a lot of record*

The proposed plan for the site includes a 2,400 square-foot building on the east side of the site. The use and construction date of this building are as yet undetermined. The petitioner has indicated that the building may serve as an ancillary space for the animal hospital/kennel operations in the main building. Should this occur, staff would consider the conditional use for the animal hospital/kennel granted for the main building to extend to the 2,400 square foot auxiliary building. Alternatively, the property owner may seek a tenant with an office/retail use. Any business requiring a conditional use other than the extension of the animal hospital use would require approval through the Plan Commission public hearing process.

Staff finds the site plan promotes an efficient use of land. There is adequate parking to serve both buildings, and circulation is sufficient. Staff supports the conditional use.

*D. Variation for fencing in the transitional landscape yard*

Village Code requires a transitional landscape yard on the west side of the property where adjacent to residential development. Transitional landscape yards require a fence that is six feet tall to be placed a minimum of eight feet inside the property line.

The west side of the subject property abuts the rear yards of single-family residences on Craig Street. Many of these properties already have six-foot tall solid fences located along the shared property line. The petitioner has pointed out that installing the fence eight feet inside the property line as required by Code will result in a landscaped alley between fences that is difficult to maintain. Instead, the petitioner proposes to install a 6-foot tall solid fence near the shared property line, next to the existing fences. Landscaping will be installed inside the fence. The petitioner believes locating the fence along the property line will enhance safety and allow for better property maintenance of the western portion of the subject property. Staff agrees with the petitioner's assessment, and notes that a variation was granted to the Helen Plum Library for a

fence in a transitional landscape yard under similar circumstances (PC 20-29). Staff is supportive of this variation request.

*E. A deviation to allow for 94 square feet of wall signage*

Village Code permits a maximum of 50 square feet of wall signage on the subject property. The petitioner is proposing a total of 94 square feet of wall signage: a 47-square foot sign on the south elevation of the building and a 47-square foot sign on the east elevation.

The size of the proposed wall signage is consistent with the scale of the proposed building. Staff notes that with over 400 feet of frontage along St. Charles Road, the subject property is larger than the typical property in the B5A District. Additional wall signage is reasonable given the specific characteristics of the site. The requested signage is similar to the amount of wall signage approved for the Helen Plum Library in similar circumstances (112 square feet). Staff supports the requested deviation.

*F. A deviation to allow freestanding sign with 27 square feet in surface area*

The petitioner proposes a 27-square foot freestanding monument sign. Village Code allows a freestanding sign with 20 square feet of sign surface area at this location.

Staff finds that the proposed sign is in scale with the size of the building and other site design elements. Again, staff notes that that subject property has substantially more street frontage than most other properties in the B5A District. Staff supports the requested deviation.

**6. Request to Grant Site Plan Approval Authority to the Plan Commission**

The petitioner requests the Village grant site plan approval authority for the proposed new planned development to the Plan Commission. Site Plan Approval authority will allow the Plan Commission to review certain zoning entitlement requests should they come forward in the future. It is standard for the Plan Commission to have site plan approval authority for planned developments. Staff supports this request.

**7. Neighborhood meeting comments**

The petitioner and petitioner's development team held a neighborhood meeting at Lombard Commons on November 10, 2022, to answer questions about the proposed redevelopment of the subject property. Over 100 letters were mailed to adjacent property owners. Seven members of the public attended the meeting. Attendees generally expressed support for the redevelopment of the subject property. The following comments were received:

- Several attendees were interested in the proposed landscaping and fencing for the north property line. They expressed a preference for a mix of fencing and landscaping to screen the site from the Windsor Avenue right-of-way. The submitted landscape plan shows a six-foot tall solid fence set back 10 feet from the north property line, with sod and trees proposed between the fence and property line.
- Attendees asked about parking lot lighting. The design team and staff discussed the parking lot lighting requirements in Village Code, noting that Code prohibits light spillover from commercial properties where adjacent to residential development. The petitioner has submitted a preliminary photometric plan. A final photometric plan will be reviewed during the permit submittal phase.

- Stormwater management was discussed. Several attendees noted the vet hospital parking lot currently holds water during heavy storm events. Adjacent residential properties are at a higher elevation than the subject property and stormwater runoff from the site does not drain or pond on the neighboring residential properties. The design team described stormwater improvements intended to mitigate this. Staff notes that the development will need to meet Village and County stormwater regulations. Several draft preliminary engineering plans have been reviewed by the Village Engineer and Public Works. Final engineering will be reviewed during the permit submittal phase.

## **SITE HISTORY**

*PC 86-3*

Conditional use for an animal hospital, to allow expansion of the existing animal hospital to include the building at 250 E. St. Charles Road.

*ZBA 19-05*

Request for variance to allow an eight-foot tall fence in the rear yard of a through-lot in the B2 District. Fence never constructed. Variance expired October 3, 2022.

## **FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS**

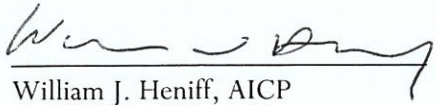
Based on the above findings, the Inter-Departmental Review Committee has reviewed the petition and finds that it complies with the standards established by the Lombard Village Code for the requested map amendment and the establishment of a new planned development with companion zoning relief, subject to the conditions of approval based on the above considerations. As such, the Inter-Departmental Review Committee recommends that the Plan Commission make the following motion recommending **approval** of PC 22-31:

Based on the submitted petition and the testimony presented, the proposed map amendment and planned development with companion zoning relief do comply with the standards required by the Village of Lombard Village Code; and, therefore, I move that the Plan Commission accept the findings of the Inter-Departmental Review Committee Report as the findings of the Plan Commission and I recommend to the Corporate Authorities approval of PC 22-31, subject to the following conditions:

1. That the petitioner shall develop the site in accordance with plans submitted as part of this request;
2. That the petitioner shall satisfactorily address all comments noted within the Inter-Departmental Review Committee Report;
3. The petitioner shall record a plat of consolidation of the subject property prior to obtaining a building permit; and
4. This approval shall be subject to the commencement time provisions as set forth within Section 155.103(F)(11).



Inter-Departmental Review Committee Report approved by:



William J. Heniff, AICP  
Director of Community Development

c. Petitioner

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