

Meeting Date:
October 9, 2023

Location:
160 College Street

Parcel Number
3201951

Request:
Conditional Use and Site Plan request for an addition to Western Reserve Academy's Ellsworth Hall

Applicant:
Seth Duke, Bialosky Cleveland

Property Owners:
Western Reserve Academy

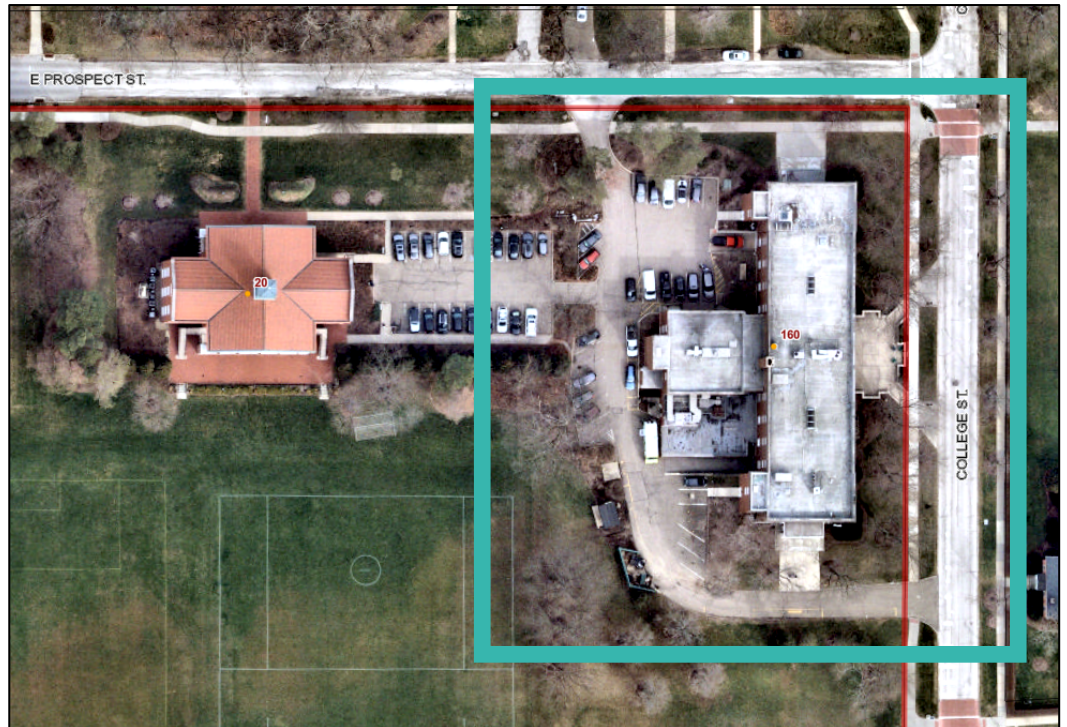
Zoning:
D4 – Historic Residential Neighborhood (Historic District)

Case Manager:
Nick Sugar, City Planner

Staff Recommendation
Approval subject to conditions on pages 7 and 8.

Contents

- Use Compliance Letter from applicant, 8.14.23
- Site Plans, 6.21.23
- Elevations, 6.21.23
- Trip Generation Study, 9.14.23
- Asst. City Engineer review dated 9.29.23



Existing Conditions, Hudson GIS

Project Background:

Ellsworth Hall is located at the corner of East Prospect Street and College Street. The building's first floor serves as the campus dining hall. The second and third floors serve as dormitories. The proposal would construct a 7,539 sq. ft. one story addition. The addition would replace an existing 1990s addition for a net increase of 4,800 sq. ft. Interior work would include additional cafeteria seating, a serving area, a culinary lab, kitchen space, elevator and geothermal heating and cooling system for the building. Additional site modifications would include removal of a drive and curb cut along College Street, additional drive and expanded curb cut along East Prospect Street, and addition of an outdoor, tiered seating area. The request would require conditional use review and site plan review. Private secondary schools are a conditional use in Zoning District 4.

Use Standards (Section 1206)

The overall use is classified as a *School, public or private*. Private schools are conditional uses in Zoning District 4. The application is subject to compliance with the following conditional use standards of Section 1206.02. Staff has reviewed the conditional use standards relative to the proposed field and associated work.

The below Conditional Use Standards are applicable to the proposed use

(1) *The use is consistent with the policies and intent of the Comprehensive Plan.*

Staff Comment: The Comprehensive Plan categorizes the use as “*public, semi-public*” within the Community Facilities Plan. The plan is fairly generalized towards community facilities; however, states *The City should support the operations of the Hudson City Schools, Western Reserve Academy, Hudson Montessori School, Seton Catholic School, and the Hudson Library and Historical Society in their missions, as well as supporting expansion or relocation, as necessary and appropriate.* The applicant states the additional would create a more functional dining hall and exterior gathering space to meet the needs of the students. The building would also be upgraded to include an elevator and geothermal heating and cooling.

(2) *The use is physically and operationally compatible with the surrounding neighborhood. Conditions may be imposed on a proposed conditional use to ensure that potential significant adverse impacts on surrounding existing uses will be reduced to the maximum extent feasible, including, but not limited to, conditions or measures addressing:*

- A. Location on a site of activities that generate potential adverse impacts such as noise and glare;*
- B. Hours of operation and deliveries;*
- C. Location of loading and delivery zones;*
- D. Light intensity and hours of full illumination;*
- E. Placement and illumination of outdoor vending machines;*
- F. Loitering;*
- G. Litter control;*
- H. Placement of trash receptacles;*
- I. On-site parking configuration and facilities;*
- J. On-site circulation;*
- K. Privacy concerns of adjacent uses.*

Staff Comment: Staff notes the following related to the above criteria:

- The existing trash and recycling containers would be consolidated into a trash and recycling compactor. The compactor would be screened by a brick wall. Trash pickup would be reduced from daily to one pick up a week.
- Hours of operation and deliveries would not change.
- A loading dock would be located to the rear of the building and screened by a masonry wall.
- The proposal would add an additional driveway along East Prospect Street, adjacent to an existing drive. The two driveways would be connected by a continuous 95 ft apron. The size of the apron would conflict with the intent of the code to minimize curb cuts along the road. It would also negatively impact the pedestrian focused campus design. Therefore, staff recommends revising the

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design to a single access and reduced curb width. Question if a turnaround area could be constructed that would not extend all the way through to East Prospect Street.

(3) *The use can generally be accommodated on the site consistent with any architectural and design standards set forth in the applicable district regulations of this Code, and in conformance with all dimensional, site development, grading, drainage, performance, and other standards for the district in which it will be located.*
Staff comment: The proposal would be compliant with the applicable requirements. Staff notes the applicant received preliminary comments from the Architectural and Historic Board of review. The board’s comments were generally favorable, and the applicant has addressed the areas of concern with updates to the design.

(4) *To the maximum extend feasible, access points to the property are located as far as possible, in keeping with accepted engineering practice, from road intersections and adequate sight distances are maintained for motorists entering and leaving the property proposed for the use.*
Staff Comment: The proposed curb cut and driveway design along East Prospect Street is problematic due to its size and as a convergence point with an existing curb cut located across the street.

(5) *On-site and off-site traffic circulation patterns shall not adversely impact adjacent uses.*
Staff Comment: The applicant has submitted a trip generation report verifying there is no anticipated change to traffic as there would be no increase to staffing or the student population. The analysis offered a “worst case” scenario of an increase of ten new trips in the AM peak hour and ten trips in the PM peak hour and determined these increases would not have an impact on the surrounding street network system. The City’s Engineering Department has reviewed the report and is acceptable with the findings.

(6) *The use will be adequately served by public facilities and services.*
Staff Comment: The building is served by existing public facilities. The applicant is coordinating with Hudson Water to increase the service to accommodate a sprinkler system. The result would be a fully sprinkled building.

The Engineering Department is requiring the applicant to verify the proposed sanitary connection at the new loading dock has adequate slope to the existing manhole.

(7) *The use provides adequate off-street parking on the same property as the use.*
Staff Comment: The use provides adequate off-street parking. Staff notes Western Reserve Academy has recently constructed additional parking to serve the adjacent Morgan Hall and redistribute parking to Ellsworth Hall. The parking requirements are further detailed in the parking analysis section on page 6 of the staff report.

(8) *The use will be screened with fencing and/or landscaping in excess of what is required in this Code if the use may otherwise result in an adverse impact.*
Staff Comment: Proposed improvements with potential for impact would be the trash and loading dock; however, these areas would be located behind the building and would be screened by a masonry wall.

(9) *The residential use is proposed at a density consistent with that of the existing neighborhood density or is compatible by its use of architecture, orientation of structures and parking, and landscape buffer.*

Staff Comment: Not applicable

Schools are also subject to the following special conditions:

(1) *The only dwelling on the property, if one is provided, shall be for the priest, deacon, minister, or rabbi associated with the place of worship, or for a facility's manager, caretaker, or maintenance person, and related family provided the underlying zoning district permits residential use.*

Staff Comment: No dwellings are proposed.

(2) *All preschools shall provide a play area of at least 6,000 square feet, and all elementary and secondary schools shall be accredited and licensed by the State of Ohio and shall include academic instruction.*

Staff Comment: Not applicable

(11) *The parking area for the use shall be a minimum of fifty feet from adjacent properties used for residential purposes.*

Staff Comment: Acceptable - The parking area would be located within 50 ft from residential buildings; however these are part of the Western Reserve Academy’s campus.

(12) *Safe areas for pick-up and discharge of persons shall be provided.*

Staff comment: Staff notes College Street has historically been utilized for immediate pick up and drop off for the building as it is located adjacent to the main entrance. No parking is permitted along East Prospect Street. Question if any of the spaces located directly behind the building would be designated short-term pick up or drop off?

(14) *Adequate provisions shall be made for access by emergency medical and fire vehicles on two sides of the building*

Staff comment: Although the south drive would be removed, Hudson emergency services is acceptable with the design. The building would be fully sprinkled and accessible via the northern parking lot and southern walkways.

Nonresidential Accessory Uses – Fences and Walls 1206.03(b)(5)(B)

The land development code only permits a nonresidential wall to have a maximum height of 8 ft above the elevation of the surface of the ground. Staff notes the proposed wall along the loading dock would be in excess of 8 ft.

District Standards (Section 1205)

Building Setback 1205.07(d)(5)

Staff notes the building addition area would be compliant with the following setback requirements:

- Front Yard Setback: Minimum of one and one-half times the maximum height of the principal building.
- Side Yard Setback N/A
- Rear Yard Setback: 40 ft.

- Maximum Building Height 1205.07(d)(8)(D)** Staff notes the building addition would have a height of 24 ft and would include an addition 3 ft for rooftop equipment screening. The proposal would be compliant with the maximum height allowance of 40 ft.
- Driveway Curb Cuts 1205.07(13)(C)** The Land Development code permits a maximum of two driveway curb cuts per lot for non-residential uses. Staff notes the proposed 95 ft apron serving two separate drives would not meet the intent of this code standard. The design should be revised to a single access and reduced curb width.

Site Plan Standards (Section 1207)

- Maximum Impervious Surface Coverage 1207.01** The maximum impervious surface coverage is determined on a case-by-case basis, but in no case shall exceed 60 percent of the total gross area of the underlying lots. Staff notes the proposed improvements would occur on already developed land and the total impervious surface on the lot would only be approximately 20 percent.

- Tree and Vegetation Protection 1207.02** Community Development staff reviewed the proposed tree clearing and landscaping plan with the City Arborist onsite. The City Arborist provided the following comments:

- A significant white oak tree was observed in the area highlighted in blue in Figure 1. The plans depict protective fencing around the tree; however, a concrete sidewalk is depicted directly adjacent. Document how this tree will be protected through construction.
 - A mature red oak would be removed to construct the detention pond. This area is highlighted in orange in Figure 1. Question if the pond area could be adjusted to preserve this tree.
 - A stand of Sweetgum trees are proposed to be removed to construct the outdoor seating area. These trees are highlighted in purple in Figure 1. These trees do not appear significant and could be considered a nuisance tree.
 - The plan depicts grading directly through the Locust tree highlighted in red in Figure 1. Revise the grading plan to be outside of the critical root zone if the intent is to preserve this tree.
 - Question if one access drive could be maintained along East Prospect Street to preserve the mature Honey Locust, Sawtooth Oaks, and White Linden in this area.

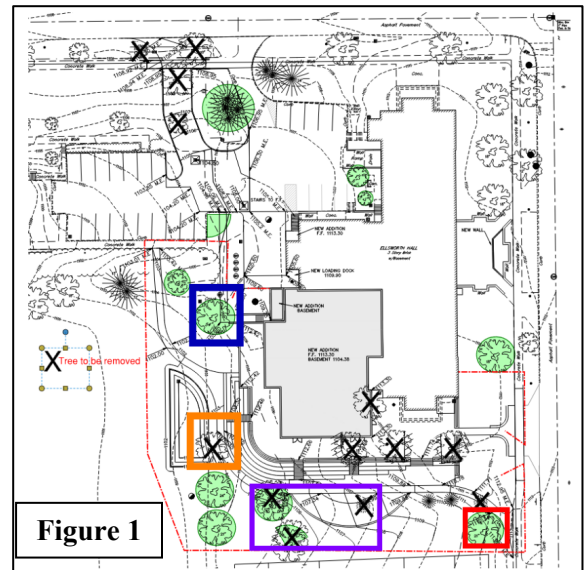


Figure 1

- Wetland/Stream Corridor Protection 1207.03** Staff notes the site improvements would occur within already developed areas. There are no known wetlands on site.

Additionally, staff has verified overall compliance with the Index of Ecological Integrity. The study classifies this area as the lowest category of undeveloped land for potential impacts.

**☑ Landscaping/
Buffering 1207.04**

The applicant has submitted a landscape plan depicting additional trees and shrubs. A substantial number of shrubs would be planted at the front of the building along College Street. Staff notes specific bufferyard requirements would not be applicable as the site is located interior to the campus. Interior parking lot landscaping is not applicable as the lot has less than twenty parking spaces. A landscape bond is required per Section 1207.04 in an amount equal to 110 percent of the cost of the installations.

**☑ Stormwater
Management
1207.07**

A stormwater detention basin would be constructed to the west of the building to serve the addition. The net increase to impervious surface on the site would be minimal. The Engineering Department is requiring the applicant to verify the designed slope to the storm inverts is adequate to prevent potential backflow.

**☑ Parking
1207.12**

The Land Development Code requires the following for the High School land use:

- One parking space per two teachers, employees and administrators,
- One parking space per ten students.

While the proposal would remove 14 parking spaces from the Ellsworth building site, the use would still be compliant with the requirements as the adjacent parking lot to the west also serves the building. Staff notes the new parking lot located on the corner of North Main Street and E. Prospect Street was also built to offset and distribute parking from Morgan Hall. The parking calculations for both Morgan Hall and Ellsworth Hall are captured below.

The applicant has also indicated the building’s existing staffing and occupancy would remain unchanged. General populations students have dedicated parking elsewhere to ensure there is adequate parking for the dormitory students in Ellsworth Hall.

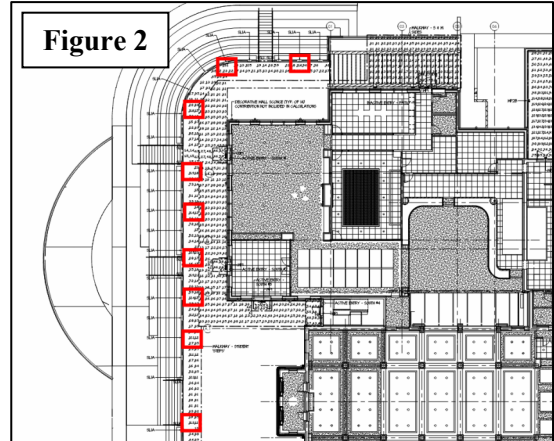
	Required Spaces	Spaces Provided
Morgan Hall	35	35 (Recently Constructed Lot)
Ellsworth Hall	28	28 (Lots between Ellsworth and Morgan)

**☑ Exterior Lighting
1207.14**

The proposed lighting plan would include:

- Sconce lighting fixtures mounted to the building.
- Step lighting at the outdoor, tiered seating area.
- Pedestrian scale light poles around the parking area. The light poles would match design of the existing poles located around campus.

Staff notes compliance with the required lighting standards; however, there are a few specific locations along the southern seating area with high lighting levels in excess of 10 footcandles (see Figure 2). Though the lighting levels are calculated on an average, staff recommends these levels be reduced as they are pedestrian areas that should have lower lighting levels.



City Departments:

Engineering

Assistant City Engineer David Rapp has submitted a review letter dated 9.29.23. Mr. Rapp has the following general findings:

- An inspection escrow will be required prior to a pre-construction meeting.
- Additional notes shall be added to the plans detailing the demo phasing to ensure pedestrian safety is maintained through construction.
- Verify sanitary and storm connections have adequate slope.
- Provide final drainage calculations and detail for the proposed storm outlet structure. An orifice is required to restrict flow.

Fire Department

Fire Marshal Shawn Kasson has reviewed the request and has no comments.

Hudson Public Power

Public Works Assistant Superintendent Dave Griffith has reviewed the request and will coordinate with the applicant to service the facility.

Required PC Action

The PC shall consider the development application, the staff report, and then take final action. PC shall approve, approve with conditions, or deny the application based on its compliance with the appropriate review standards. All decisions of the Commission shall be based on findings of fact related to the relevant standards of the Code.

Recommendation

Approve the Conditional Use and Site Plan application for the Western Reserve Academy addition to Ellsworth Hall with associated site work per Case 2023-789, according to plans received September 6, 2023 subject to the following conditions:

1. Revise the East Prospect Street access design to a single access and reduced curb width.
2. Revise the height of the loading dock wall to have a maximum height of eight feet to be compliant with Section 1206.03(b)(5)(B).
3. Revise the proposed landscaping plan to address the comments of the City Arborist, including:
 1. Document how the mature White Oak located at the rear of the building would be protected through construction subject to approval by the city arborist.
 2. Revise the pond layout to preserve the adjacent, mature Red Oak.

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3. Revise the grading plan to relocate grading outside of the existing Locust tree along College Street, near the location of the existing driveway.
4. Preserve additional trees along East Prospect Street per staff's previous comments #1 above.
5. Submit a landscape bond in an amount equal to 110 percent of the cost of the installations.
4. Reduce lighting levels in the areas along the proposed outdoor seating area depicted in Figure 2 of the staff report.
5. The comments of Assistant City Engineer David Rapp shall be addressed per the September 29, 2023 correspondence.