



Fresh Coast Planning

119 1/2 Washington Avenue, Studio B
Grand Haven, MI 49417
www.freshcoastplanning.com

Gregory L. Ransford, MPA
616-638-1240
greg@freshcoastplanning.com

Kevin Yeomans
616-349-0223
kevin@freshcoastplanning.com

Alexis Gulker
616-773-4638
alexis@freshcoastplanning.com

Aaron Bigelow
616-919-2370
aaron@freshcoastplanning.com

Andrea Goodell
616-313-9333
andrea@freshcoastplanning.com

MEMORANDUM

To: Tallmadge Charter Township Planning Commission
From: Alexis Gulker
Date: February 12, 2026
Re: 13953 Ironwood VerWoert – Contractor Offices and Units - Site Plan Review Application

Attached is a Site Plan Review application from Ken VerWoert to construct two office and warehouse/unit buildings located at parcel numbers 70-10-01-400-055 and 70-10-01-400-053 on the south side of Ironwood Drive. The properties are located within the General Commercial Zoning District (C-2) and Ironwood Corridor Overlay (I-C).

The application has been reviewed and found generally complete, pending comments from the Township Engineer and Township Fire Department. We outline our several observations and ordinance findings below. We believe approval may be appropriate.

Observations and Findings

ZBA Variance Needed - Side Yard

As shown on the site plan, the applicant proposes a ten-foot (10-foot) setback along the southwest portion of the property where it abuts land zoned Rural Preserve. The Tallmadge Charter Township Zoning Ordinance (TCTZO) requires that, when a lot within the C-2 District abuts any other zoning district, a side yard setback of not less than twenty-five (25) feet be provided, pursuant to Section 11.04(c)(2) of the TCTZO. As a result, the applicant has requested that the Planning Commission condition approval of the site plan upon obtaining a variance from this requirement.

Façade

As you know, the C-2 Zoning District requires the front façade to contain a minimum of twenty percent (20%) glass along with eighty percent (80%) of the remaining façade to consist of face brick, wood, glass, stone, fluted cement, cut stone, split face block, scored architectural block, native field stone, cast stone, granite, marble or ceramic tile.

The applicant proposes on the north front façades of both buildings a combination of a stone concrete knee wall and LP Smart siding that looks like wood, proposing the color "Saffron Cedar." The sides (west, east) are hidden fastener metal siding and a stone concrete knee wall on the sides of employee/guest parking. The rears (south) are hidden fastener metal siding.

The Planning Commission will need to determine if the front, sides, and rear facade of the warehouse is acceptable pursuant to Section 11.06(a) of the TCTZO. For your convenience, below is a copy of part of Section 11.06(a). We have bolded a section where it talks about the Planning Commission having the ability to approve other materials if compatible with surrounding areas and meet appropriate architectural and aesthetics standards since the applicant is proposing siding that is not wood but looks like wood.

SECTION 11.06. DEVELOPMENT STANDARDS.

- a) Required Conditions. Except as otherwise noted for specific uses, buildings and uses in the C-2 District shall comply with the following required conditions:
 1. Seventy-five (75%) percent of all goods produced and services performed on the premises shall be sold at retail on the premises where produced.

2. A minimum of eighty percent (80%) of the front facade of all buildings, exclusive of window areas, shall be finished with face brick, wood, glass, stone, fluted cement, cut stone, split face block, scored architectural block, native field stone, cast stone, granite, marble or ceramic tile. A minimum of twenty percent (20%) of the front facade shall be glass windows. Calculations are exclusive of the roof area. Cement or cinder block front facades are prohibited. **In recognition of developing technologies in building materials, the Planning Commission may agree to approve other materials provided they are compatible with surrounding properties, and further provided that such materials meet appropriate architectural, aesthetic, and safety concerns.**
3. Exterior walls facing a public or private right-of-way or customer, visitor, vendor or employee parking areas, shall contain at least four (4) vertical feet or greater of the same type of materials as used on the front facade of the building and identified in Section 11.06(a)2 for the entire width of the exterior wall. Window area shall be the same or greater percentage as used on the front facade of the building. Wherever possible, meter boxes, dumpsters, and mechanical equipment should not be located on a side of the building that faces residentially-zoned or used property, or public street rights-of-ways.

Lot Line Adjustments Needed

The site plan is on two separate lots and during the site plan review process it was discovered “Parcel B” was too small for the size building they are proposing. Section 11.04(g) of the TCTZO requires buildings or structures to not contain more than 35% of the lot area. The proposed building as the land sits today would be taking up more than 35%. Therefore, the applicant has updated their site plan to propose a lot line adjustment with their adjacent parcel to meet this requirement. As a result, the applicant has requested that the Planning Commission condition approval of the site plan upon obtaining approval for the lot line adjustment.

Shared Parking, Drives, Dumpster Access

As aforementioned, the applicant owns both parcels that they are using for the site plan. The parcels would share a drive entrance, parking, and the dumpster enclosure. As you will note on site plan sheet C-101, site plan note 7 discusses parking requirements, and that parcel B is short of four parking spaces required but parcel A makes up for those parking spaces with eight extra parking spaces. As a result, the applicant has requested that the Planning Commission condition approval of the site plan upon the submittal and approval of easement and shared parking agreements.

Additionally, due to the proposed use of the buildings being used for contractors/tenants the exact uses and/or users or the number of employees for the remaining units are unknown currently it is understood that it is difficult to determine the adequacy of the proposed onsite parking without knowing the exact use or number of employees. As a result, the owner and applicant have requested the Planning Commission condition approval of the site plan upon when building permit applications/uses are submitted to build out the spaces as they are leased a summary of all existing users will be provided along with the proposed new tenant that demonstrates that the site provides adequate parking based on the parking requirements in Chapter 15 of the zoning ordinance in general and in Section 15.06 in particular. If the required onsite parking cannot be provided, then the potential user will not be allowed to occupy the space.

Section 12A.04(b)1 – Overall Site Design and Landscaping

The two properties are within the Ironwood Corridor Overlay District therefore one of the regulations is that properties within this overlay district shall have landscaping provided along building walls to reduce visual impact of buildings mass from the street (Section 12A.04(b)1 – Overall Site Design and Landscaping). In response to this requirement, the applicant has proposed some landscaping along the north building walls. The Planning Commission will need to determine whether the proposed satisfies this provision.

Meter boxes and Mechanical Equipment

Both buildings on the property propose their meter boxes in their side yards adjacent to neighboring parcels. The TCTZO encourages meter boxes whenever possible, and mechanical equipment should not be located on the side of the building that faces residentially zoned or used property. The applicant proposes to screen the equipment with the required six-foot-high fence that they are required to have on the west and east property lines. The Planning Commission will need to determine if the location and method of screening the equipment is acceptable or if the equipment will need to be moved to a different location.

Lighting

The photometric plan shows on the edge of the property lines on the west and east side a lighting scale of 0.5 where 0.3 is the equivalent of moonlight. The equivalent of moonlight is typically the townships standard for property lines adjacent to residential lots. The west and east side does abut residentially used property. Therefore, the Planning Commission will need to determine if the proposed lighting is acceptable or if the applicant will need to update their lighting plan.

Loading/Unloading Areas

While two 10x50 loading/unloading areas are required, eight 10x25 loading zones are provided for on the site plan in the side yards in front of overhead doors for the purpose of loading and unloading for each unit (there are eight units). Given that this is not just two 10x50 loading/unloading areas, but it does provide over double the required space of loading/unloading areas (1,000 square feet required, 2,000 square feet provided) we defer its review and determination of compliance with the TCTZO to the Planning Commission.

Fire Department Review

As of the date of this memorandum, we have not received comments from the Township Fire Department. Once we receive their comments, we will transmit them to you. We recommend that the Planning Commission condition approval on the applicant satisfying any review comments the Fire Department may have.

Engineer Review

As of the date of this memorandum, we have not received comments from the Township Engineer. Once we receive their comments, we will transmit them to you. We recommend that the Planning Commission condition approval on the applicant satisfying any review comments the Township Engineer may have.

Site Plan Standards

As you know, the Planning Commission shall review the standards provided by Section 18.06 of the Tallmadge Charter Township Zoning Ordinance during its deliberations. For your convenience, below is a copy of Section 18.06 along with our comments in italic font to assist with your review.

SECTION 18.06. STANDARDS. The Planning Commission shall review the site plan for compliance with the requirements of this Ordinance and conformance with the following general standards:

- (a) The applicant may legally apply for site plan review.

The applicant is the owner of the property. Given this, it appears that this standard has been met.

- (b) All required information has been provided.

We believe all required information has been generally provided, pending your review of our observations and findings and the review comments from the Township Fire Department and Township Engineer. Given this, it appears this standard has been met.

- (c) The proposed development conforms to all regulations of the zoning district in which it is located.

The proposed development does not conform to all regulations of the C-2 Zoning District, and as aforementioned the applicant will need to obtain a variance for their proposed side yard and apply for a lot line adjustment for their lot coverage. Given this, it appears this standard has not been met but may be met if the Planning Commission conditions approval on the variance being approved and lot line adjustment being approved.

- (d) All elements of the site plan shall be harmoniously and efficiently organized in relation to topography, the size and type of the lot, the character of adjoining property, and the type and size of buildings. The site shall be so developed as not to impede the normal and orderly development or improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in this Ordinance.

We believe all elements of the site plan are harmoniously and efficiently organized, they share a drive, parking, and a dumpster enclosure that will require easement agreements. They also are avoiding a wetland to the southwest portion of the property. Given this, it appears this standard has been met.

- (e) The landscape shall be preserved in its natural state, insofar as practical, by minimizing tree and soil removal, and by topographic modifications which result in maximum harmony with adjacent areas.

The applicant is proposing minimal impact on the existing landscaping and will keep a good number of the existing trees on the south side of the site. Additionally, the applicant will significantly improve the property with the required front yard and building landscaping. Given this, it appears this standard has been met.

- (f) Natural resources will be preserved to and protected to the maximum feasible extent and organic, wet, or other soils which are not suitable for development will be undisturbed or will be modified in an acceptable manner.

Other than the existing drainage courses and an existing wetland to the southwest portion of their property that they are not developing within, there do not appear to be any organic or wet soils not suitable for development. Given this, it appears this standard has been met.

- (g) The proposed development will not cause soil erosion or sedimentation problems.

Given the applicant must provide silt fencing prior to construction in accordance with the Soil Erosion and Sedimentation Control Agency, we do not believe the proposed will

cause any soil erosion or sedimentation problems. As a result, it appears this standard has been met.

(h) The drainage plan for the proposed development is adequate to handle anticipated storm water runoff and will not cause undue runoff onto neighboring property or overloading of water courses in the area.

Given that Ottawa County Water Resources Commissioner's office will review drainage for the site, and pending Township Engineer review comments, it appears this standard has been met.

(i) The proposed development properly respects floodways and floodplains on or in the vicinity of the subject property.

Given that no floodways or floodplains exist or are within the vicinity of the property, it appears this standard has been met.

(j) The plan meets the specifications of Tallmadge Township for water supply, sewage disposal or treatment, storm drainage, and other public facilities.

As aforementioned, we have not received comments from the Township Engineer. Once comments are received, we will transmit them to you.

(k) With respect to vehicular and pedestrian circulation on the site, including walkways, interior drives, and parking; special attention shall be given to the location, number and spacing of access points; general interior circulation; separation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic; the avoidance of building corners next to access drives; and the arrangement of parking areas that are safe and convenient, and insofar as practicable, do not detract from the design of the proposed buildings and structures, neighboring properties and flow of traffic on adjacent streets.

We believe the proposed site plan generally accommodates vehicular and pedestrian circulation within this site; they have provided a truck turning template and garbage truck template proving adequate access. Also pending review comments from the Township Engineer regarding the sidewalk. As a result, it appears this standard has been met.

(l) All buildings or groups of buildings shall be so arranged as to permit emergency vehicle access by some practical means as required by the Township fire department.

As aforementioned, we have not received comments from the Township Fire Department. Once comments are received, we will transmit them to you.

(m) The site plan shall provide reasonable, visual, and sound privacy for all dwelling units located therein. Fences, walks, barriers, and landscaping shall be used, as appropriate, for the protection and enhancement of property and for the privacy of its occupants.

Given that no dwelling units are proposed for this development, we believe this standard does not apply.

(n) All loading and unloading areas and outside storage of materials which face or are visible from residential districts or public thoroughfares, shall be screened by a vertical screen consisting of structural or plant materials. Also, outdoor storage of garbage and refuse shall be contained, screened from view, and located so as not to be a nuisance to the subject property or neighboring properties.

There are eight 10x25 loading and unloading areas proposed in the side yards in accordance to the TCTZO, where at least two 10x50 loading and unloading areas are required. Additionally, the proposed dumpster enclosure is in accordance with the TCTZO. Therefore, it appears the standard has been met.

(o) All lighting shall be shielded from adjacent properties and public right-of-way.

Pending your review of the photometric plan and our observations and the proposed fixtures, this standard can be considered accordingly.

(p) Phases of development are in logical sequence so that any phase will not depend upon a subsequent phase for adequate access, public utility services, drainage, or erosion control.

Given that no phases are proposed, we believe this standard does not apply.

(q) Site plans shall conform to all applicable requirements of state and federal statutes and approval may be conditioned on the applicant receiving necessary state and federal permits before a building permit or occupancy permit is granted.

We believe this standard can be considered accordingly.

Planning Commission Considerations, Recommendation, and Draft Motion

As the Planning Commission deliberates regarding this application, we believe the following warrant your review and consideration. They are listed in no particular order:

Considerations

- The proposed front façade
- Easement agreements
- Shared parking agreement
- Meter boxes in side yard but screened
- The proposed lighting photometrics
- Landscaping along building walls
- Whether the loading/unloading areas are acceptable
- A condition that the Township Engineer is satisfied with the proposed plans
- A condition that the Township Fire Department is satisfied with the proposed plans
- A condition of approval that the applicant receives a variance from the ZBA
- A condition that the applicant submits a lot line adjustment application and receives approval before a building permit is issued

- Consideration of the Site Plan Review Standards provided in Section 18.06

Recommendation and Draft Motion

Given our recommendation of approval and in an effort to assist with your formulation of a motion in that regard, we offer the following motion for your consideration. In the event a motion is offered to deny, we will gladly draft that motion for consideration at your next meeting based on your direction.

Motion to approve the site plan as presented, which includes:

- Architectural Plan sheets prepared by Jeffery Cuppy Hardwood dated January 12, 2026, Sheet A1.1 Exterior Elevations Building A, Sheet A1.2 Exterior Elevations Building A, Sheet A1.3 Exterior Elevations Building B, Sheet A1.4 Exterior Elevations Building B, Sheet A1.5 Building A Renderings, Sheet A1.6 Building B Renderings, Sheet A2.1 Overall Plans, Sheet A2.2 Building A Floorplan, Sheet A2.3 Building B Partial Floor Plan, Sheet A2.4 Building B Partial Floor Plan
- Proposed Use and Parking for 13953 Ironwood Explanation by Ken VerWoert dated January 5, 2026.
- Resubmittal for Site Plan Approval 13953 Ironwood Drive by Paul G. Henderson, Roosien & Associates, dated February 6, 2026.
- Site Plan Sheets prepared by Paul G. Henderson, Roosien & Associates, Millboard Siding specification sheets dated February 10, 2026, Sheet C -101 Site Plan, Sheet C-102 Grading and Storm Water Plan, Sheet C-103 Existing Conditions & Natural Features Plan, Sheet C-104 Truck Turning Details, Sheet C-105 Landscape Plan, Sheet C-106 Area Zoning Plan
- LP Smartside Trim & siding specification sheets, Saffron Cedar, dated September 2025
- Nucor Buildings Group Standing Seam Roof Panel Hidden Fastener specification sheets, received February 10, 2026
- Nucor Buildings Group CF Light Mesa Insulated Metal Wall Panel Hidden Fastener, dated March 2022
- Stone Pattern Form Liner Solutions Oklahoma Native Stone Symons, dated 2023
- Storm Water Calculations, prepared by Paul G. Henderson, Roosien & Associates, dated January 28, 2026
- Site Photometric Plan, by J. Yonkers dated January 28, 2026

with the following conditions:

1. The applicant shall receive a permit from MDOT for the drive approach on Ironwood Drive and the pathway prior to the issuance of a building permit
2. Compliance with the Township Fire Department review comments prior to the issuance of a building permit
3. Compliance with the Township Engineer review comments prior to the issuance of a building permit
4. Submission to the Ottawa County Water Resources Commissioner for review and approval of the proposed stormwater system prior to the issuance of a building permit
5. The applicant shall receive approval from the Zoning Board of Appeals for a side yard setback variance. If approval is denied, the applicant shall return to the Planning Commission for revised approval.
6. The applicant shall submit and receive approval for lot line adjustment as presented on the site plan
7. The applicant shall establish shared parking, drive entrance, and dumpster enclosure easement agreements
8. The applicant shall establish an east and west internal cross-access easement

9. If the site plan is impacted by any agency permit approval processes, the Zoning Administrator has the authority to require the applicant to return to the Planning Commission for amended approval.
10. [Insert Condition, if necessary]
11. [Insert Condition, if necessary]

The proposed is scheduled for your February 24, 2026, meeting. If you have any questions, please let us know.

ACG
Associate Planner

Attachments

cc: Mark Bennett, Supervisor