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MEMORANDUM

To: Tallmadge Charter Township Planning Commission
From: Gregory L. Ransford, MPA
Date: September 15, 2026
Re: Ironwood Manufacturing – Site Plan Review Application Phase Two Addition

Attached is a Site Plan Review application from Feenstra and Associates on behalf of Visser Brothers, Incorporated to construct a 140,000 square foot addition to their office and manufacturing facility located at 13960 Ironwood Drive within the Industrial Zoning District. As you may recall, the applicant was before you at the end of 2022 to seek the existing building, which was recently finished in July after a delay from a legal dispute between the two parties involved.

Consistent with the future plans presented in 2022, the proposed building addition will be located between the I-96 Freeway and the existing building. The application has been reviewed and found complete.

Below we provide our observations and findings regarding the application for the Planning Commission and applicant to consider. We believe approval may be appropriate.

Observations and Findings

Façade

The applicant is proposing insulated metal panels and stone veneer to match the existing building. As you know, insulated metal panels are not identified as a qualifying building material, however, as you permitted with the first phase of the building, you may permit building materials deemed compatible with surrounding properties and that meet appropriate architectural, aesthetic, and safety concerns. The Planning Commission will need to make the same determination for the addition.

Related, it is not clear to us that the Reveal Wall Panels are secured with hidden fasteners. The Planning Commission should confirm if the panels contain hidden fasteners.

Truck Docks

Similar to their existing building, the truck docks are proposed to be located in the same (generally) southwest location within the building. Given this, the truck docks, while technically in the side yard by the language of the Tallmadge Charter Township Zoning Ordinance (TCTZO) as a result of the orientation of the building to the road, they are fairly exposed to the Ironwood Drive right-of-way. Section 15.09(b)3 – Off-Street Loading Space Requirements of the TCTZO is below, in part, for your convenience. As you will note, the truck docks may be located in a side yard which does not “abut” a public right-of-way.

Section 15.09(b) – Off-Street Loading Space Requirements

3. Within the I-1 Zoning District, all loading and unloading spaces shall be provided in a rear yard or a side yard which does not abut a public right of way.

Similar to their existing building, the Planning Commission will need to determine whether the

proposed docks abut Ironwood Drive for the addition.

Ironwood Corridor Overlay District

Since the time of the existing building approval, the Ironwood Corridor Overlay District was adopted into the TCTZO. As a result, the proposed addition is subject two landscaping requirements, one of which has been satisfied (side lot line screening with a berm (west) and fence (east)). The second landscaping provision requires plantings along building walls to “reduce the visual impact of building mass viewed from the street.” In response, the applicant proposes a Sky Pencil Japanese Holly evergreen tree, which has a mature height of six to ten feet, and a Thin Man Arborvitae evergreen tree, which has a mature height of 12 to 15 feet. The proposed building height is approximately 30 feet at its peak. The Planning Commission will need to determine if the proposed plantings meet the intent of reducing visual impact of the building wall.

In combination with these plantings, the applicant will have three parking lot islands, each of which contain Little Leaf Linden tree, which has a mature height of 50 to 70 feet tall. It is important to note that this tree also has a mature spread (width) of 30 to 50 feet. While the property owner can prune these trees, the Planning Commission should consider a different species if there is concern about its longevity.

While the south end of the existing building could also be subject to the building wall plantings, there are at least four parking lot island trees that could satisfy the requirement. While these are not typically utilized for this purpose, given the building was under construction during the adoption of the new language it may be reasonable for the Planning Commission to find the south end satisfactory as built.

It is important to note that the existing building satisfies the first landscaping requirement through the constructed fence (east side) and the requirement to preserve the trees as noted on the previous site plan as “existing wooded area and greenspace” (west side).

Fire Department Review

As of the date of this memorandum, we have not received comments from the Township Fire Department. Once those are received, we will transmit them to you.

Engineer Review

As of the date of this memorandum, we have not received a second set of comments (addressing storm water calculations that were not provided with the first submission) from the Township Engineer. Once those are received, we will transmit them to you.

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 for the development. Given this, it appears that this standard has been met.

- (b) All required information has been provided.

All required information has been provided. As a result, it appears this standard has been met.

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

We believe the proposed development conforms to all regulations of the I-1 Zoning, pending Planning Commission deliberation regarding the above observations and findings. Following your deliberations, it appears this standard may be met.

- (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 given the proposed berm, fencing, and other landscaping. Given this, it appears this standard may be 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.

There is not a significant amount of landscaping to be preserved on the site, except for that identified on the previous site plan at the southwest corner of the property and the wooded buffer along Ironwood Drive, in part. Given this, it appears this standard may be 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.

No wetland areas appear to be within the proposed phase of the development. Given this, it appears this standard may be met.

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

We do not believe the proposed will cause any soil erosion or sedimentation problems given the required silt fencing from the Ottawa County Soil and Sedimentation Control Agency. As a result, it appears this standard may be 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.

Since storm water review will be conducted by the Township Engineer and although his review was not received by the time of distribution of our memorandum, with a condition of his approval, we expect this standard to be met.

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

There are no floodways or floodplains that we are aware of. Given this, it appears this standard may be met.

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

Both public water and sanitary sewer will be connected to the site. As aforementioned, the Township Engineer will review the proposed stormwater system. Given this, it appears this standard may be met.

- (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 given that minimum aisleways and parking has been met according to the TCTZO. Given this, it appears this standard may be 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.

While we are waiting for review comments from the Township Fire Department, we anticipate their approval given its similar design to the first building. However, the Planning Commission should condition approval on the review and approval of the site plan by the Fire Department. Following, it appears this standard may be met.

- (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.

As aforementioned, the trucks docks seem to be visible from Ironwood Drive. Given this, the Planning Commission will need to determine if screening is necessary. Following, it appears this standard may be met.

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

The provided photometrics show that no lighting will travel off of the property. As a result, it appears this standard may be met.

- (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 this is the final phase, it appears this standard may be met.

- (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:

- Whether the insulated metal panel is acceptable façade material
 - Whether the panels (Reveal Wall Panels) are constructed with hidden fasteners
- Whether the trucks docks are acceptable in their proposed location
- Whether the building wall landscaping is acceptable
- Whether the Little Leaf Linden tree mature width is a concern
- 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:

- Site Plan Review Application dated 8/4/2026 (1 page);
- Site Plan set including:
 - Existing Condition 13960 Ironwood Drive – Phase 2, prepared by Feenstra & Associates, Inc., dated 9/14/26, Sheet C1;
 - Site Plan 13960 Ironwood Drive – Phase 2, prepared by Feenstra & Associates, Inc., dated 9/1/2026, Sheet C2;

- Utility Plan 13960 Ironwood Drive – Phase 2, prepared by Feenstra & Associates, Inc., dated 9/1/2026, Sheet C3;
- Grading & SESC Plan 13960 Ironwood Drive – Phase 2, prepared by Feenstra & Associates, Inc., dated 9/1/2026, Sheet C4;
- Landscaping Plan 13960 Ironwood Drive – Phase 2, prepared by Feenstra & Associates, Inc., dated 9/1/2026, Sheet C5;
- Photometric for 13960 Ironwood Dr Phase II, dated 08/04/2026;
- Floor plan – Phase II Expansion Ironwood Industrial Building, prepared by Visser Brothers, Inc., dated 08-05-26, sheet A-1;
- Building elevations – Phase II Expansion Ironwood Industrial Building, prepared by Visser Brothers, Inc., dated 08-26-26, sheet A-2;
- SystemSelect Glass Product Builder performance datasheet dated 8/26/2026 (2 pages);
- Fluropon 70% PVDP Coatings sheet (3 pages);
- Outsulation System dryvit specification sheets (12 pages);
- Reveal Wall Panels specification sheet (1 page);
- ARRIS-cast specification sheets (6 pages);
- CTA Lighting and Controls specification sheets, dated Aug 4, 2026 (16 pages);
- GVMC LGROW Design Spreadsheet (6 pages) and;
- Drainage Calculations dated July 20, 2026 (4 pages)

with the following conditions:

1. All “existing wooded area and green space” identified in the first site plan approval shall remain undisturbed;
2. Compliance with the direction of the Township Fire Department;
3. Compliance with the direction of the Township Engineer;
4. [Insert Condition, if necessary]
5. [Insert Condition, if necessary]

The proposed is scheduled for your September 22, 2026, meeting. If you have any questions, please let us know.

GLR
Planner

Attachments

cc: Mark Bennett, Supervisor