



REPORT TO THE HEARING EXAMINER
from the COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Permit Number: PLN-2017-0041

Applicant: Pastor Pam Osborne
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
915 Wood Avenue
Sumner, WA

Project Representative: Tom Osborne, Project Manager and
Mark Wheeler, Board of Trustees Chairperson
United Methodist Church
915 Wood Avenue

Location/Parcel(s): 915 and 913 Wood Avenue (corner of Wood and Maple);
(Parcel # 0420244181 and 0420244182)
in Low Density Residential (LDR-6) zone

Project Components: Conditional Use Permit for a new 1,790 s.f. parsonage house with
detached garage, involving demolition of 2 existing two homes on
church property, and landscaping.

Related Permits: Demolition, building and site development permits; boundary line
adjustment

Staff Representative: Ann Siegenthaler – Associate Planner

Date of Hearing: July 13, 2017

Recommendation: Conditionally Approve

Exhibits:

1. Staff report to Hearing Examiner
2. Application and applicant's cover letter
3. Site plan
4. Building elevations & floor plan
5. Comment letter from Department of Ecology

I. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

a. Site Location and Vicinity

The project will be located at the existing United Methodist Church site at the corner of Wood Avenue and Maple Street. The overall church site is approximately 36,500 square feet. The site currently consists of four parcels owned by the church, on which there is an existing main church building (approximately 6,300 square feet), 35-stall parking lot, and two single-family homes owned by the church.

The site and parcels directly to the east, to the west (across Wood Avenue) and to the south (across Maple Street) are zoned Low Density Residential (LDR-6). Wood Avenue and this downtown neighborhood are characterized by older, Craftsman-style homes. To the north of the site and abutting the north property line are businesses along Main Street, including Napa Auto parts store and the Dairy Freeze café. This area is commercially zoned as Central Business District. In the Low Density Residential zone, a church or church expansion requires approval through a Conditional Use Permit (CUP).



b. Proposal Description

The proposal is to construct a new 1,790 s.f. parsonage house to replace the two existing 1-1/2- story homes (built in the 1930s). The applicant intends to provide a single-story home that is more ADA accessible, and has deemed renovation of the existing homes as cost-prohibitive. The new home is a pre-fabricated model from Timberland Homes, with some custom Craftsman-type details. A detached garage will be built in the rear of the lot, and accessed from the church parking lot. It will be a single-story, 2-car garage with storage area. The project will involve demolition of the two existing homes, site work, and installation of a green “commons” area for the church (between the new home and the church).



II. PHYSICAL FEATURES

a. Topography and Hydrology

The site is relatively flat with less than 1% slopes. Across the site from north to south, there are several changes in grade, defined by low retaining walls 18 inches to 2 feet high. The driveway of one existing house drops steeply to a below-grade basement; this will be filled/regraded as part of site development permits. There are no designated shorelines as defined by the Sumner Shoreline Master Program within 200 feet of the site, and the site is not located within the 100-year floodplain. There are no wetlands as defined by the City of Sumner's adopted wetland inventory maps.

b. Access and Utility Features

The main entrance to the church parking lot is off of Maple Street on the south. Cars exit the church site via an alley that separates the church from the residential portion of the site. The main pedestrian entrances to the church are off of Wood Avenue, and off of the parking lot on the east side of the building. Parking is and will remain available onsite. The project does not propose to reduce the number of existing parking stalls on site. The City of Sumner provides water and sewer to the site.

III. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW and PUBLIC NOTICE

a. State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) Review

State law exempts a single family residence (and the associated grading/filling) (WAC 197-11-800 (1)(b)). The project's demolition of the two existing homes is also exempt as these are not listed on any historic register (WAC 197-11-800(2)(g)).

b. Public Notice

The proposed conditional use permit is classified as a Type V decision in accordance with

Sumner Municipal Code (SMC) 18.56.030(H).

- The Notice of Application was posted on site, posted at Sumner City Hall, mailed to property owners within 500 feet, and published in the official city newspaper, the News Tribune on June 7, 2017 in accordance with SMC 18.56.075 and 18.56.110(B).
- The Notice of Public Hearing was posted on site, posted at Sumner City Hall, mailed to property owners within 500 feet, and published in the official city newspaper, the News Tribune June 7, 2017 in accordance with SMC 18.56.075 and 18.56.110(B).
- The public comment period closed on June 22, 2017.

IV. DEPARTMENTAL COMMENTS and PUBLIC COMMENTS

a. Departmental Comments

Comments were solicited from the applicable City departments. No comments or concerns were stated for the CUP; however, applicable departments will provide specific comments at the time of site development requirements.

b. Public Comments

Public comments were solicited through the required public notices. The only comments received were in a letter from Department of Ecology, related to discharge of stormwater to waters of the State, primarily related to larger projects. Stormwater for this project will be addressed in site development permits that are required to meet City stormwater regulations. The Ecology letter is attached to this report.

V. ZONING and COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

a. Zoning

The site is zoned Low Density Residential (LDR-6). The purpose of the LDR zones is: "...to stabilize and preserve low density residential neighborhoods, to create a stable and satisfying environment for family life and to prevent intrusions by incompatible land uses" (SMC 18.12.010).

Under Sumner Municipal Code 18.12.040(E), churches and associated uses are listed as a Conditional Use in LDR zones, allowed so long as the CUP criteria under SMC 18.48 are met: "Churches, convents, monasteries and other religious institutions, and associated accessory structures including, but not limited to, assembly rooms, kitchen, library room or reading room, nurseries, recreation hall, adult day care, child day care, Sunday school rooms, private primary and secondary school facilities, and a one-family dwelling unit for use by church officials. In addition to meeting the criteria of chapter 18.48 SMC, new accessory one-family dwelling units shall be placed on site with sufficient distance between structures and in a manner that would allow for future subdivisions that would result in separate lots for the dwelling and church."

b. Comprehensive Plan

The site has a Comprehensive Plan designation of Low Density Residential. The Comprehensive Plan states that “Low density residential uses provide a transition from rural residential to higher density uses. Primary uses include detached single-family residential dwellings, private garages, and other accessory buildings. Secondary allowed uses include, accessory units ("mother-in-law units"), adult family homes, public and private educational facilities, utilities subject to compatibility criteria, and churches and religious institutions.”

See Section VI(4) for discussion of applicable elements policies.

VI. REVIEW CRITERIA AND ANALYSIS

In accordance with SMC 18.56, a Conditional Use Permit requires a public hearing before the Hearing Examiner followed by written findings and a decision appealable to the City Council. The Hearing Examiner shall be guided by the criteria in **SMC 18.48.050 Conditional Uses** in granting a conditional use permit. These criteria are discussed below.

- 1. The proposed use will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvements in the vicinity of the proposed use or in the district in which the subject property is situated.*

Discussion:

The current uses are a main church building, church parking lot, and two residences. The main church building can hold between 150-200 people. Regular church services are typically on Sunday mornings, and typically host approximately 100 people. In addition, the church is open for use by community service organizations in the evenings, and for special events such as weddings and memorial services. These typical church operations are not proposed to change or expand as part of this CUP.

There will be no additional parking or traffic impacts as a result of the proposal. The existing parking lot contains 33 parking stalls allocated for the church (24 regular plus 7 accessible stalls). Based on a range of building occupancy from 100-200 people, SMC 18.42.040(D) would require 20-40 stalls for the church. City code does not require any changes to this existing parking. However, SMC18.42.020 does not allow reduction of the existing parking (when it is already below the minimum required). Therefore, conditions of approval are established that will ensure continuation of at least the existing number of parking stalls for the lifetime of the project. (See Section 2 below.)

Two additional parking stalls for the existing two residences are currently provided in the existing church parking lot. Under the new proposal, there will be a new driveway for the garage, which will displace 2 parking stalls. However, since there are already 2 resident stalls on the site, the remaining stalls will be reallocated, and there will be no change in the total number of parking stalls on the site.

The proposal does not change the existing uses on the site. At completion, there will be one residence instead of two, and no change or expansion is proposed for the church. Additionally, the performance standards of the LDR-6 zone will be required to be satisfied (see discussion below). As conditioned, the proposal will not be materially detrimental to the public welfare or injurious to the property or improvement in the vicinity.

2. ***The proposed use shall meet or exceed the performance standards that are required in the district it will occupy.***

Discussion:

The proposal will comply with the performance standards set forth in SMC 18.12 the LDR-6 zone, as discussed individually below.

a. *SMC 18.12.040(E):*

The LDR-6 zone allows a one-family dwelling unit for use by church officials. In addition, SMC 18.12.040(E) requires that "...new accessory one-family dwelling units shall be placed on site with sufficient distance between structures and in a manner that would allow for future subdivisions that would result in separate lots for the dwelling and church." As shown on the submitted site plan, the proposed residence is placed on the church site with room on all sides to meet the minimum building setbacks from property lines. As a condition of approval, the project will be required to obtain approval of a Boundary Line Adjustment (BLA) prior to building permit issuance.

b. *SMC 18.12.060 Special conditions – Location of parking, single-family dwellings:*

This code section requires 2 on-site parking stalls for each single-family dwelling in this zone. The proposal provides the 2 on-site auto parking spaces, with at least one covered space as required. (Note that in addition to the 2 cars accommodated in the garage, the garage will have a separate storage area for the church.) As a condition of approval, 2 on-site parking stalls shall be provided for the church residence for the lifetime of the project.

c. *SMC 18.12.070 Property development standards:*

The site currently consists of 4 parcels, which will need to be revised to ensure buildings meet setbacks and property development standards. Following the CUP process, the applicant will complete a Boundary Line Adjustment/Consolidation (BLA) process with the City, creating a new lot for the residence and a new lot for the church site. Approximate lot lines are shown on the CUP site plan. As shown, the 8,000 s.f. residential lot will comply with the minimum lot size, width and frontage. The proposed residence and garage will meet the minimum building setbacks for the LDR-6 zone, height requirements and lot coverage. As a condition of approval, the project will be required to complete a BLA showing final lot lines in compliance with the property development standards of this section.

d. *SMC 18.12.080 Performance standards:*

A. *Exterior Mechanical Devices:* No such devices are proposed.

- B. *Landscaping*: The front yard of the new residence will be required to be landscaped, per this code section. This is further discussed at (O) below.
- C. *Outdoor Storage and Vehicle Parking*: No storage of vehicles is proposed.
- D. *Detached Accessory Structures*: As a detached structure, the garage can be placed within 3 feet of the side and rear property line. To ensure that the garage continues to be considered a “detached” structure that qualifies for the special setbacks, as a condition of approval, the area between the garage and house may not be enclosed.
- E. *Setbacks from Alleys*: The site does not have alley access.
- F. *Yard Projections*: The new residence will have a front porch, which is allowed to project into the front yard setback per this code section.
- G. *Residential Antennas*: None are proposed at this time.
- H. *Swimming Pools*: None are not proposed at this time.
- I. *Building Height Exceptions*: No exceptions are necessary.
- J. *Fences*: This code section restricts the height of fences in the front yard setback, and does not allow a 6-foot privacy fence along Wood Avenue as shown on the applicant’s site plan. The 6-foot fence will need to be moved back to the 15-foot setback line. (Note that fence height is measured from the bottom of the retaining wall.) As a condition of approval, all fences will need to comply with height and setback requirements in SMC 18.12.080(J)(2).
- K. *Site Distance Requirements*: No changes are proposed to existing driveways.
- L. *School and Church Height Exceptions*: There is no request for modification at this time.
- M. *Expansion of Specified Existing Uses*: Does not apply.
- N. *Manufactured Homes*: Does not apply.
- O. *A minimum of 50 percent of the area of front and street side yards shall be landscaped with vegetation or other landscaped features other than paving, gravel, or hard surfaces*. The church site is currently landscaped. Replacement landscaping for the new residence is proposed for a later date, after existing buildings are demolished and site work completed. To ensure that the new residence fits into the existing neighborhood character, the required landscaping per this code section shall be installed prior to building certificate of occupancy.
- P. *Professional offices*: Does not apply.

e. SMC 18.42.040 Required number of parking spaces:

As discussed above, the existing church parking lot might have 5- to 10 stalls less than what is currently required under SMC18.42.040 (depending on actual building occupancy). Per SMC18.42.020, there may be no reduction of parking below the current requirement. Therefore, conditions of approval are necessary. First, at the time of building permits, the site plan will need to show the number of parking stalls existing and proposed, and that there is no reduction in existing church parking. Second, the number of parking stalls provided on the church site for the church use shall not be reduced below the number existing as of July 1, 2017.

3. *The proposed development shall be compatible generally with the surrounding land uses in terms of traffic and pedestrian circulation, building and site design.*

Discussion:

The neighboring area is an older downtown neighborhood, consisting primarily of older single-family homes. Most homes are 1.5- to 2-story homes, with a traditional, Craftsman-style design.

As a single-family residence, the proposed development is generally compatible with the primarily single-family neighborhood. Although the proposed house is a prefabricated model, the applicant has made efforts to include additional, custom details in the exterior elevations of both the house and the garage. For examples, there will be wide window trim, a gabled porch with tapered columns, corbels and brick base, accent siding at the porch gable, band boards, etc., similar to the Craftsman-style details of surrounding homes. This will help ensure that the new residence does not detract from the neighborhood, and is more compatible with the character of surrounding homes. Landscaping will be required in the front yard, as required for other single-family residences, so the street-front character will be similar to that on adjacent streets. There will be 2 parking spaces for the new residence, the same as what is currently allocated for the 2 existing homes. Because the 2 existing homes will be replaced with one home, no increase in traffic is anticipated as a result of this proposal.

Adjacent to the future residence on the north is the commercial section of Main Street, including the bicycle shop and Dairy Freeze café. The rear wall of the bicycle shop abuts the property line. The café has a row of parking and an outdoor seating area along Wood Avenue. The north property line between the residence and the café property is proposed to have a 6-foot fence (starting approximately at the edge of parking). This will create an appropriate visual separation between the uses, and the outdoor seating area.

No changes are proposed to the church building itself; no expansion of the church or parking is proposed.

4. The proposed use shall be in keeping with the goals and policies of the Sumner comprehensive plan.

Discussion:

There are a number of policies in the Sumner Comprehensive Plan that support the proposed use, discussed below.

a. Values – Community Element

“Our sense of community is our greatest strength. Our understanding and respect for each other, our commonalities, and our diversity make our community stronger and better able to handle the tough challenges we face. Our sense of community brings together the places we work, live, play, learn, worship and govern to create the true “City of Sumner.”

Churches (and accessor uses such as a residence) are allowed in residential zones. Churches provide a gathering place, place of worship, and other community programs consistent with this Values element.

b. Land Use Sub-Element

Policy 1.1 Ensure that (sic) appropriate transitions so that more intensive uses do not adversely impact adjacent uses.

The new residence at the church is consistent with the low density residential zoning of the area, and it will be designed with architectural detailing to help it better fit the architectural character of the neighborhood.

c. Community Character Element

Policy 1.2: Endeavor to maintain a complete community, consistent and compatible in character and design, containing housing, shops, work places, schools, parks, civic facilities, and community services essential to the daily life of residents.

Policy 1.5 Encourage in the community a continuous commitment to maintaining Sumner’s character and quality of place, including land conservation and stewardship, wise management of streetscapes and public view sheds, property maintenance and historic preservation.

The proposed single-family residence is consistent with the low density residential uses in the neighborhood, and compatible with the character of other homes in the on the adjacent streets. Also, the residence is accessory to the existing church, which provides community services as supported in this element.

d. Family and Human Services Element

Policy 1.1 Utilize the following criteria when supporting human services delivery:

- 1.1.1. *Demonstrated Need. Encourage the development of programs that address specific, identified needs.*
- 1.1.2. *Priority Needs. Encourage programs to serve the basic human needs of the community with a strong emphasis on prevention.*
- 1.1.4. *Families. Emphasize programs which support strong, healthy and nurturing families.*
- 1.1.5. *Diverse Funding Support. Encourage human service programs to consider multiple funding sources so as not to be dependent on one. For example, municipalities could partner with private agencies, businesses and with public funding agencies to share the expense of providing service so that no single entity would bare the total cost.*

The proposed residence is accessory to the existing church, which provides various community services as supported in this element.

- 5. ***All measures have been taken to minimize the possible adverse impacts which the proposed use may have on the area in which it is located.***

Discussion:

Design and placement of the new residence minimizes any possible adverse effects. The new residence will be a small, single story home, with landscaping in front. There will be a single story garage with access from the rear of the property. It has been designed to appear and function much like any other home in the neighborhood. As designed, with the conditions of approval, conditioned all measures will be taken to minimize any possible adverse impacts to the surrounding area.

VII. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The proposal (PLN-2017-0041) for a conditional use permit for a church residential structure in a Low Density Residential zone should be APPROVED by the Hearing Examiner subject to the following CONDITIONS:

SMC 18.12.040(E) Conditional Uses and SMC 18.12.070 Property development standards:

- 1. The project must obtain approval of a Boundary Line Adjustment showing compliance with SMC 18.12.040 and SMC18.12.070 prior to approval of building permit.

SMC 18.12.060 Special conditions – Location of parking:

- 2. Two designated on-site parking stalls, with at least one covered, shall be provided for the residence for the lifetime of the project.

SMC 18.12.080 Performance standards:

3. The required landscaping per this code section shall be installed prior to building certificate of occupancy.
4. To ensure that the garage continues to be considered a “detached” structure that qualifies for the special setbacks, as a condition of approval, the area between the garage and house may not be enclosed.
5. All fencing shall meet the height and setback requirements in SMC 18.12.080(J)(2).
6. To ensure that the new residence fits into the existing neighborhood character, the required landscaping per this code section shall be installed prior to building certificate of occupancy.

SMC 18.42.040 Required number of parking spaces:

7. At time of building permits, the site plan shall show the number of parking stalls existing and proposed, and that there is no reduction in existing church parking.
8. The number of parking stalls provided on the church site for the church use shall not be reduced below the number existing as of July 1, 2017.