

September 16, 2025

Jennifer Stilling, PE (she/her)
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RE: 7105 W. North Ave: Landscaping Exemption Application
To the Board of Public Works
Email Follow-up received on September 16, 2025

To Jennifer Stilling, PE,

As requested by your email, below is a narrative response addressing the comments and questions desired for the staff to prepare the Board of Public Works report.

Why do the proposed planters in the perimeter must be provided above grade?

Response: The proposed 18" high planters along North Avenue were designed to be above grade to serve as both a barrier between the sidewalk and parking stalls, and to add additional good soil for the plantings above the contaminated soil identified in the DNR report. No requirements for a raised bed were identified in the Guide to Landscaping and Screening Code. If the planters are being classified as a fence under 15.28.030(B.1), we are willing to reduce the width of the planter by 18" to be compliant. If a raised planter is not desired by the board, we ask that we be given a variance on the guarantee for plantings located above the contaminated soil.

Any information/requirements from the DNR regarding the existing site contamination would be helpful as to why the Landscaping Code cannot be fully followed.

Response: During a phone conversation with David Hanson (DNR - Redevelopment Specialist – Remediation and Redevelopment Program), he commented that the contaminated soils are not a danger to the public. Our

request for a variance on landscaping is not due to the DNR report, it is due to the size of the lot and number of required plantings.

Per the Guide to Landscaping and Screening Code, we are required to provide a 10'-0" deep landscape buffer along North Avenue, to include (4) trees and (16) shrubs. Within the parking area, we are required to have 10% landscaped with (3) shade trees. Given the size of the lot, this would cause us to lose (3) parking stalls from the plans. This reduction would make the project infeasible, so we are requesting a variance to avoid reducing the parking count.

The plans show that 9 parking spaces are required, but because this property is within the North Ave overlay district, there is no parking requirement.

Response: If the North Ave Overlay District overrides the standard parking requirement, we will omit that line item from the drawings.

The previously approved site plan from 1981 showed that there were 13 parking spaces. The proposed plan shows 14 parking spaces.

Response: The proposed project is for the auto shop to be replaced with a Flash Laundromat. The number of parking stalls within walking distance for a customer carrying laundry is directly tied to the financial viability of this use. If we are unable to gain any additional stalls from the (13) identified in the 1981 approved site plan, we will need to withdraw this application and either leave the site as-is or restore it to the 1981 condition, to be determined by the City of Wauwatosa.

Our calculations show that the interior landscaping area that is being provided is 353 SF + 126 SF = 479 SF, or 9.3%.

Response: We would like to understand why the 76 sq ft of interior landscaping along the building does not count towards the calculation, and where else within the site would be counted. If a different location is identified that does not reduce the parking count, we will remove the landscaping in front of the building and add it in the desired location.

Only the tree within the 353 SF landscaping area can be counted towards the tree requirement (the two trees next to North Ave are being counted toward the perimeter).

Response: We understand that per the Guide to Landscaping and Screening Code, (7) total trees are required for this lot. Given the size of the lot, we do not see a way to meet these requirements without eliminating (3) parking stalls from the plans. This reduction would make the project infeasible, so we are requesting a variance to avoid reducing the parking count.

I am concerned about how someone parking in the van accessible spot will be able to back out based on its close proximity to the building. Does a turning template show that a vehicle can safely back out of this spot if there are vehicles parked in the adjacent spot or across the drive aisle?

Response: A turning template using an 11'-6" interior and 19'-2" exterior radius was used during the drafting of the site plan and does clear the building and angled parking. In order to meet the clearances for a 14'-6" interior and 25'-6" exterior radius turning template, the van accessible stall would need to switch places with the second stall, and the second stall would be identified as a compact stall. If this change is desired, we will update the plan accordingly.

Could this area be reconfigured such that it is for van spot and access aisle only? The spots could then be moved south from the building and then angled to match what is being proposed on the other side of the access aisle. A small landscaping island could then be added in between the van spot and the building to get the overall site to meet the 10% requirement.

Response: If this area is reconfigured to be a van spot only, we would be reduced to (13) parking stalls and the site plan revisions would become infeasible.

Please let us know if you have any further questions or comments on the Landscaping Exemption Application.

Thank you,

Chris Doerner
Project Manager
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