



SPECIAL USE REPORT

▶ **FILE #:** 6-B-26-SU

AGENDA ITEM #: 9

AGENDA DATE: 6/11/2026

▶ **APPLICANT:** MICHAEL SEEMER

OWNER(S): Burley Lee Lawson

TAX ID NUMBER: 109 A F 005, 006, 018

[View map on KGIS](#)

JURISDICTION: City Council District 1

STREET ADDRESS: 510 YARNELL AVE (520 YARNELL AVE; 2409 ATCHLEY ST)

▶ **LOCATION:** South side of Yarnell Ave, west side of Atchley St

▶ **APPX. SIZE OF TRACT:** 0.71 acres

SECTOR PLAN: South City

GROWTH POLICY PLAN: N/A (Within City Limits)

ACCESSIBILITY: Access is via Yarnell Avenue, a local street with a pavement width which varies between 16.5 ft and 22.5 ft within a right-of-way which varies between 36 ft and 39 ft.

UTILITIES: Water Source: Knoxville Utilities Board

Sewer Source: Knoxville Utilities Board

FIRE DISTRICT: Knoxville Fire Department

WATERSHED: Tennessee River

▶ **ZONING:** RN-2 (Single-Family Residential Neighborhood), HP (Hillside Protection Overlay)

▶ **EXISTING LAND USE:** Public/Quasi Public Land (Church)

▶ **PROPOSED USE:** Neighborhood Nonresidential Reuse (Office)

HISTORY OF ZONING: This property was part of a larger rezoning in 2000 from R-2 (General Residential) to R-1 (Single Family Residential) (8-R-00-RZ).

SURROUNDING LAND USE AND ZONING: North: Single family residential, agriculture/forestry/vacant land - RN-2 (Single-Family Residential Neighborhood), HP (Hillside Protection Overlay)

South: Single family residential, agriculture/forestry/vacant land - RN-2 (Single-Family Residential Neighborhood), HP (Hillside Protection Overlay)

East: Single family residential, agriculture/forestry/vacant land - RN-2 (Single-Family Residential Neighborhood), HP (Hillside Protection Overlay)

West: Single family residential - RN-2 (Single-Family Residential Neighborhood), HP (Hillside Protection Overlay)

NEIGHBORHOOD CONTEXT: This area is comprised of single-family dwellings on small lots interspersed with multi-family dwellings. Commercial and quasi-public uses are

concentrated along Sevier Avenue approximately 0.25 miles to the north, with the exception of a commercial warehousing and office operation which sits along the former railroad right-of-way.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

► **Approve the requested neighborhood nonresidential reuse of a church for office spaces, subject to 5 conditions.**

1. Meeting all applicable requirements of the City of Knoxville Zoning Ordinance, including, but not limited to, Article 10.2 (Exterior Lighting), Article 12 (Landscape), and Article 13 (Signs).
2. Meeting all applicable requirements of the City of Knoxville Department of Plans Review and Inspections.
3. Meeting all applicable requirements of the City of Knoxville Department of Engineering.
4. During the permitting phase, merging parcel 109AF006 with parcel 109AF005 in accordance with all applicable requirements of the Subdivision Regulations and standard platting process.
5. Before a permit is issued for the proposed picnic tables on parcel 109AF018, merging this parcel with parcels 109AF005 and 109AF006 in accordance with all applicable requirements of the Subdivision Regulations and standard platting process. The lot boundary can remain as is if no accessory structure is proposed for this lot.

COMMENTS:

The applicant proposes redeveloping a church into flexible office spaces available for rent. Although new office structures are not permitted in the RN-2 district, a nonresidential reuse of a structure originally constructed for a nonresidential use within a residential neighborhood can be approved via special use review, subject to the Principal Use Standards of Neighborhood Nonresidential Reuse (Article 9.3.V).

The property comprises three parcels. Parcel 109AF005 (520 Yarnell Ave) contains two structures, the main church structure comprising 2,500 sq ft, and a smaller, 650 sq ft structure directly adjacent to but not connected to the church. There is also a shed behind the church. The parcel to the rear of the site (109AF006, 2409 Atchley St) contains an overflow parking area that would remain.

The applicant proposes converting the main church structure into nine individual office suites and the smaller structure into a single flexible office space. Additionally, the applicant intends to install outdoor tables as a future development on the western parcel (109AF018, 510 Yarnell Ave), which would be used as a picnic and smoking area. These would replace the tables and overhead structures seen on the Aerial Map in Exhibit A, as these have been removed. The planned office hours are from 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM, with tenant access allowed at any time.

A subdivision plat combining the eastern two subject parcels is required because the RN-2 (Single-Family Residential Neighborhood) district does not permit standalone parking areas. The western parcel would not need to be merged with the other two parcels unless a permit was requested for an accessory structure. All applicable requirements for accessory structures (Article 10.3) can be verified during the permitting process.

STANDARDS FOR EVALUATING A SPECIAL USE (ARTICLE 16.2.F.2)

1) THE USE IS CONSISTENT WITH ADOPTED PLANS AND POLICIES, INCLUDING THE GENERAL PLAN AND THE ONE-YEAR PLAN.

A. The General Plan does not include any specific policy regarding office uses in residential areas, but Development Policy 4.12 and 5.13 generally support the reuse of vacant buildings. The plan's Development Policy 8.2 encourages locating neighborhood commercial services to enhance, rather than hinder, the stability of residential areas. The request to renovate the church into small-scale office spaces maintains the stability of this community-serving nonresidential space.

B. The One Year Plan's and the South City Sector Plan's LDR (Low Density Residential) land use classification is primarily intended for residential development. However, compatible, lower-intensity nonresidential uses may be considered in this area, provided they are permitted by the zoning district.

C. The South Waterfront Vision Plan (2006) acknowledges the nonresidential use of this property, and the proposed reuse has no conflicts with the plan.

2) THE USE IS IN HARMONY WITH THE GENERAL PURPOSE AND INTENT OF THIS ZONING CODE.

A. The RN-2 district intends to accommodate low density single-family residential development and permits a limited range of nonresidential uses that are compatible with the character of the district. As mentioned above, office uses can be permitted as neighborhood nonresidential reuse via special use approval.

B. The proposed use is consistent with the Principal Use Standards (9.3.V) and must operate within the applicable restrictions. For example, all business and storage uses must be located within the structure, and signs shall be limited to one monument sign and one attached sign (wall or projecting) on each street-facing façade. Any change of an approved use to another nonresidential use would require a new special use approval.

C. The Principal Use Standards state that no off-street parking is required, but existing parking must be maintained. The applicant proposes to remove two existing parking spaces at each end of the front parking area to provide safer access to Yarnell Avenue, as required by the Engineering Department.

D. Article 12.8 requires a 10-ft Class A landscape buffer for nonresidential uses located within a residential district. This shall be reviewed by the Plans Review and Inspections Department during the permitting process.

3) THE USE IS COMPATIBLE WITH THE CHARACTER OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD WHERE IT IS PROPOSED, AND WITH THE SIZE AND LOCATION OF BUILDINGS IN THE VICINITY.

A. The one-story church structure has existed at this location since the 1980s. The proposed conversion into small-scale office suites is intended for individual professionals and small businesses, and they will primarily serve the surrounding Old Sevier community. This use is compatible with the surrounding residential context.

4) THE USE WILL NOT SIGNIFICANTLY INJURE THE VALUE OF ADJACENT PROPERTY OR BY NOISE, LIGHTS, FUMES, ODORS, VIBRATION, TRAFFIC, CONGESTION, OR OTHER IMPACTS DETRACT FROM THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT.

A. The required Type A landscape buffer will provide a visual separation between these different land uses. The development is required to comply with Articles 10.2 (Exterior Lighting), 10.5 (Environmental Performance Standards), and 13 (Signs), which regulate light, noise, sign illumination, and other impacts.

5) THE USE IS NOT OF A NATURE OR SO LOCATED AS TO DRAW SUBSTANTIAL ADDITIONAL TRAFFIC THROUGH RESIDENTIAL STREETS.

A. The proposed use is not anticipated to draw substantial additional traffic into this residential area. For comparison, the estimated average daily vehicle trips for a 3,150-sq-ft small office building are 45, and for a similar-sized church, they are 21 and 99 on weekdays and Sundays, respectively.

B. The parking area will largely function in a similar capacity to the previous church that operated in this building for many years. Four bike parking spaces are proposed to accommodate nearby users.

6) THE NATURE OF DEVELOPMENT IN THE SURROUNDING AREA IS NOT SUCH AS TO POSE A POTENTIAL HAZARD TO THE PROPOSED USE OR TO CREATE AN UNDESIRABLE ENVIRONMENT FOR THE PROPOSED USE.

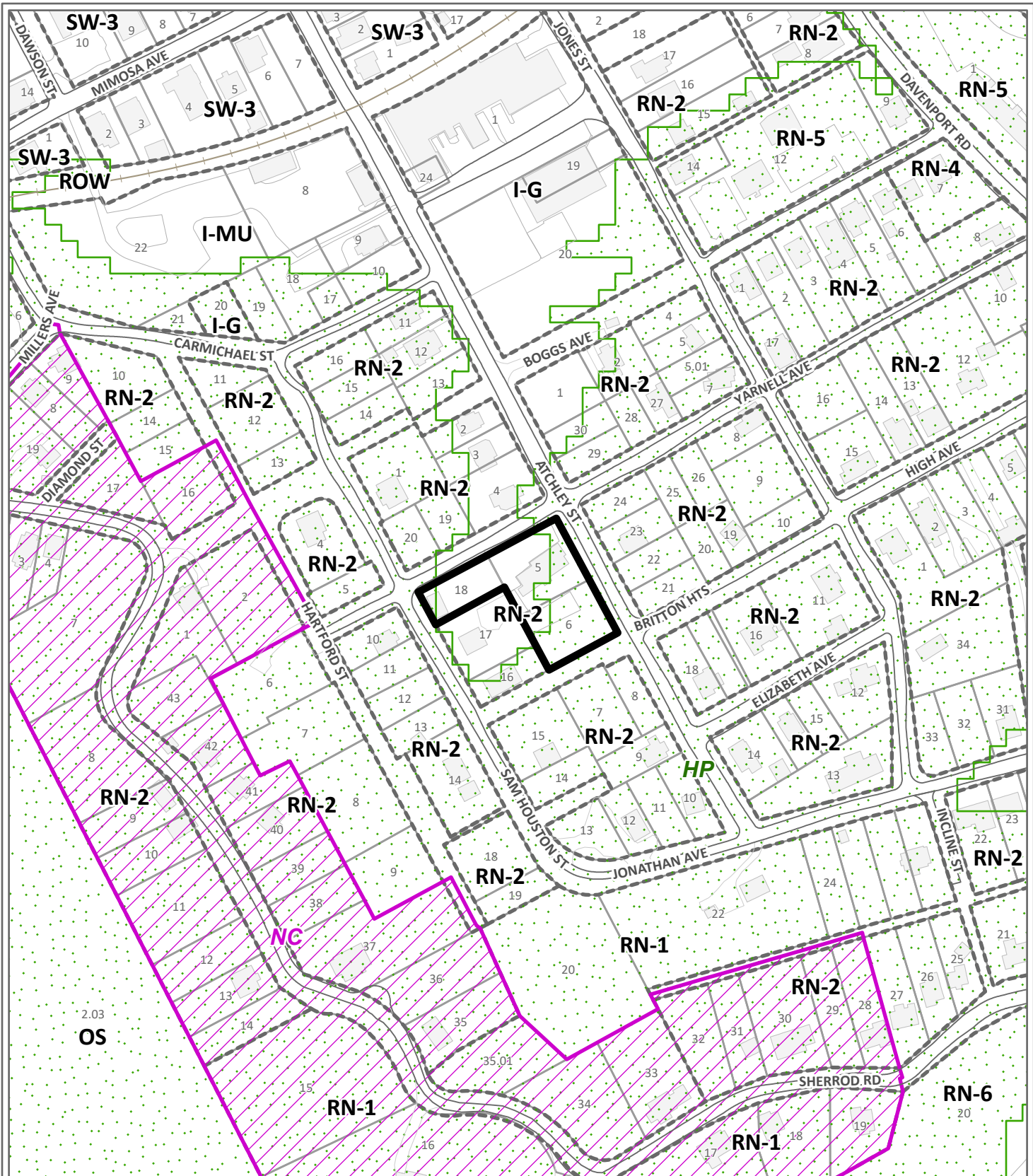
A. There are no aspects of the property or the surrounding context that pose a risk to the requested office use.

ESTIMATED TRAFFIC IMPACT: 45 (average daily vehicle trips)

Average Daily Vehicle Trips are computed using national average trip rates reported in the latest edition of "Trip Generation," published by the Institute of Transportation Engineers. Average Daily Vehicle Trips represent the total number of trips that a particular land use can be expected to generate during a 24-hour day (Monday through Friday), with a "trip" counted each time a vehicle enters or exits a proposed development.

ESTIMATED STUDENT YIELD: Not applicable.

The Planning Commission's approval or denial of this request is final, unless the action is appealed to the Knoxville City Council. The date of the Knoxville City Council hearing will depend on when the appeal application is filed.



SPECIAL USE

6-B-26-SU

Petitioner: Michael Seemer



Neighborhood Nonresidential Reuse (Office) in RN-2 (Single-Family Residential Neighborhood), HP (Hillside Protection Overlay)

Original Print Date: 5/4/2026

Knoxville - Knoxville Planning Commission * City / County Building * Knoxville, TN 37902

Map No: 109

Jurisdiction: City

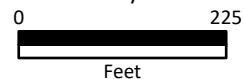


Exhibit A. Contextual Images



AERIAL MAP



Case boundary

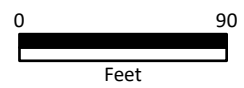
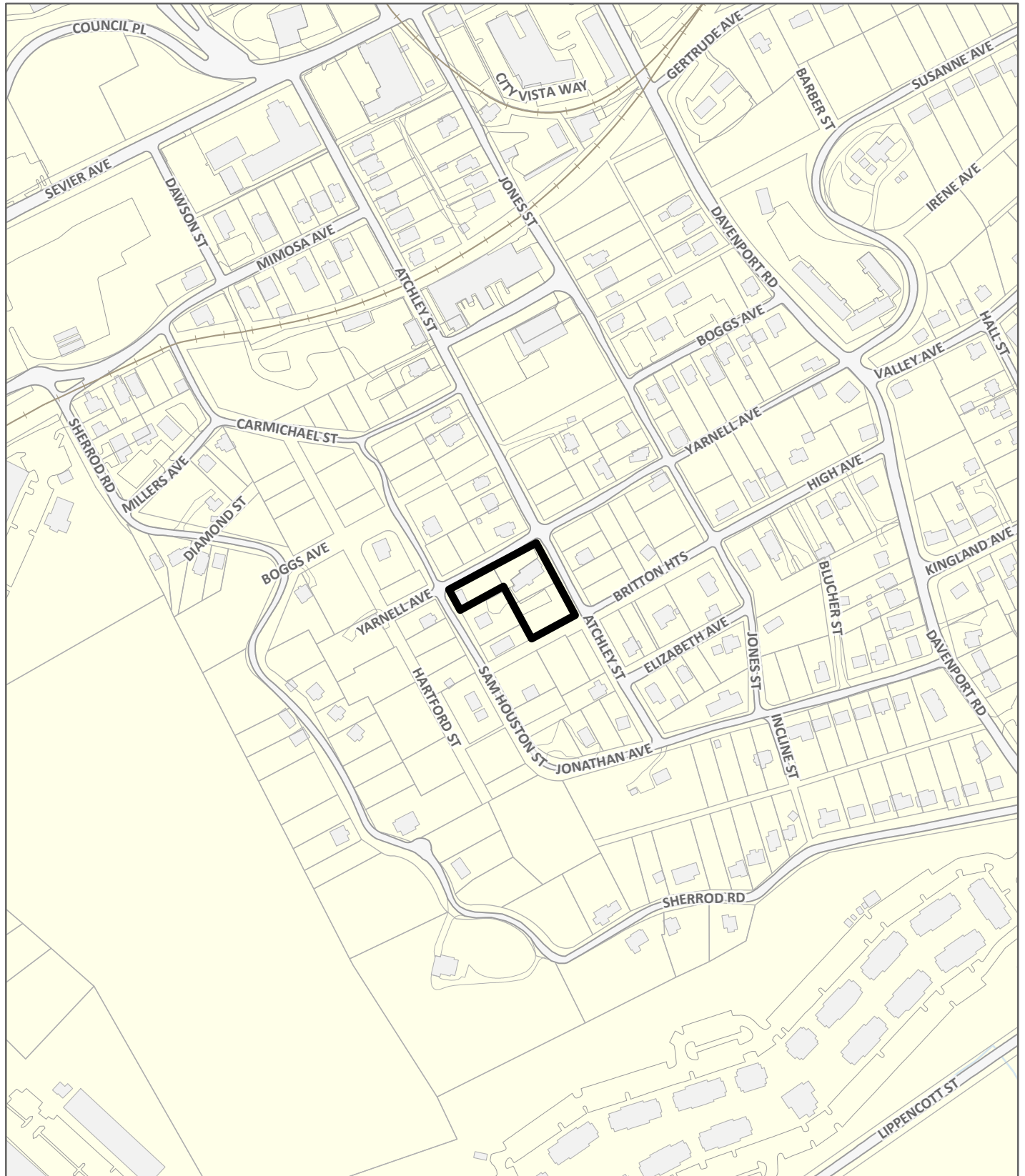


Exhibit A. Contextual Images



LOCATION MAP

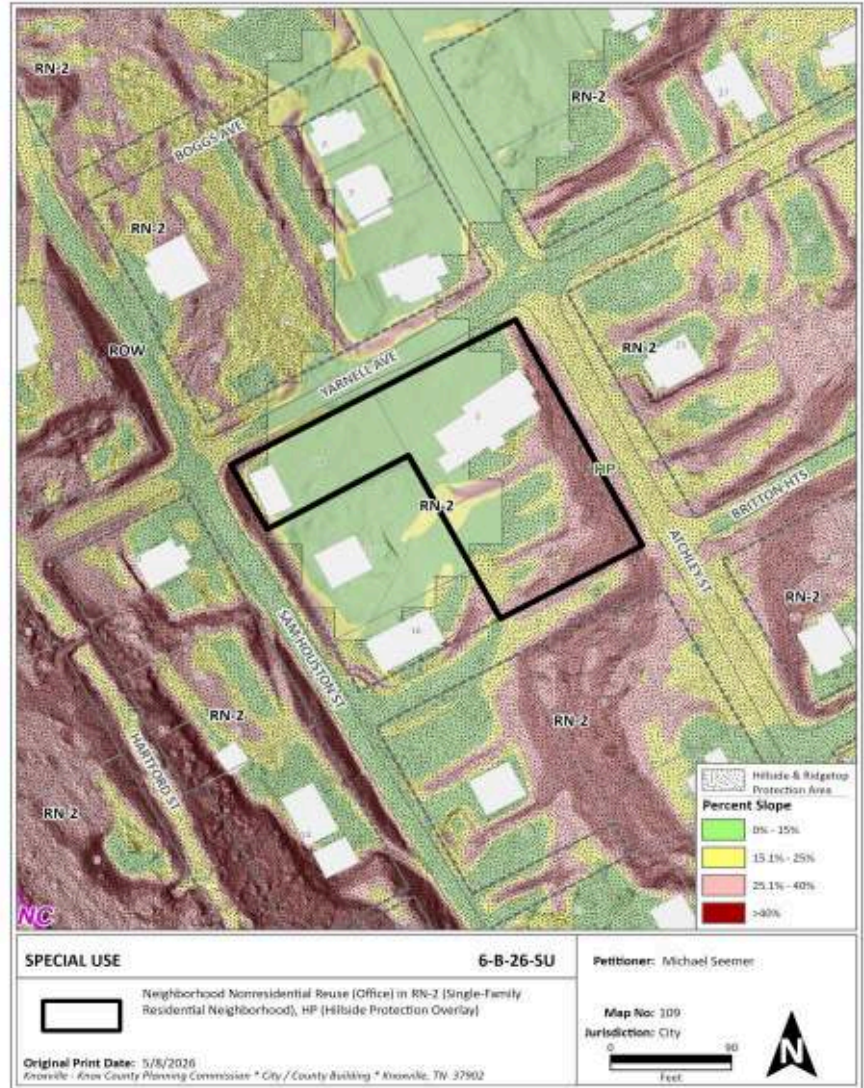
6-B-26-SU



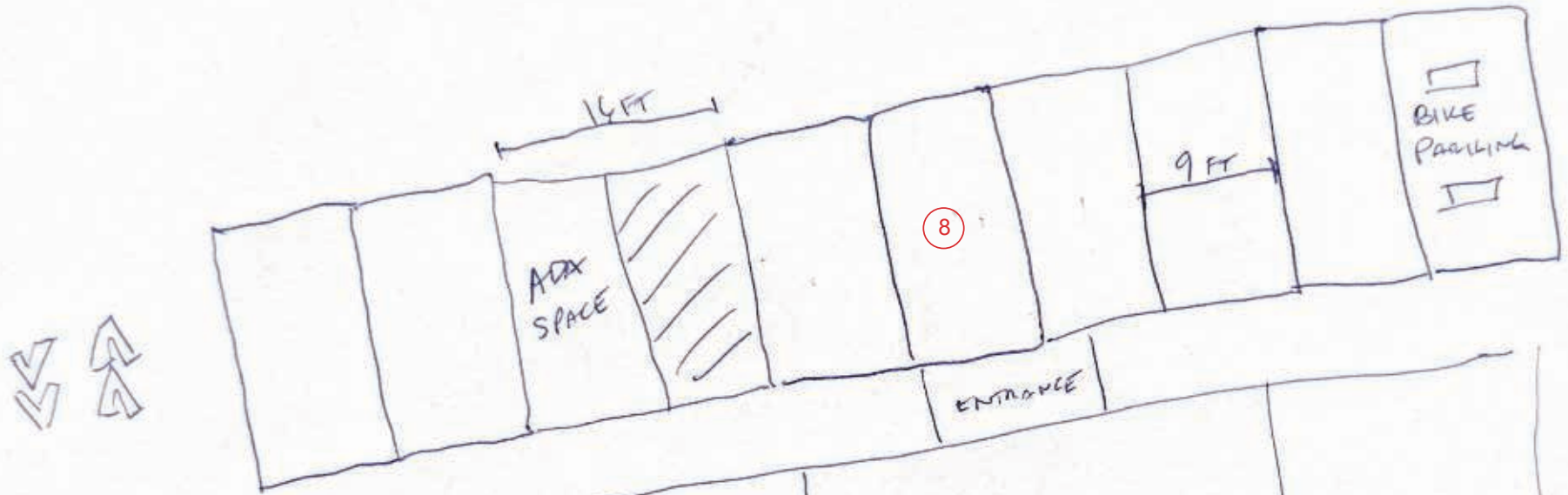
Case boundary



CATEGORY	SQFT	ACRES	RECOMMENDED DISTURBANCE BUDGET (Percent)	DISTURBANCE AREA (Sqft)	DISTURBANCE AREA (Acres)
Total Area of Site	30,746.3	0.71			
Non-Hillside	15,096.3	0.35	N/A		
0-15% Slope	4,140.8	0.10	100%	4,140.8	0.10
15-25% Slope	2,477.0	0.06	50%	1,238.5	0.03
25-40% Slope	3,653.1	0.08	20%	730.6	0.02
Greater than 40% Slope	5,379.1	0.12	10%	537.9	0.01
Ridgetops					
Hillside Protection (HP) Area	15,649.9	0.36	Recommended disturbance budget within HP Area	6,647.8	0.15
			Percent of HP Area	42.5%	



YARNELL AVE



ADA SPACE

14 FT

9 FT

8

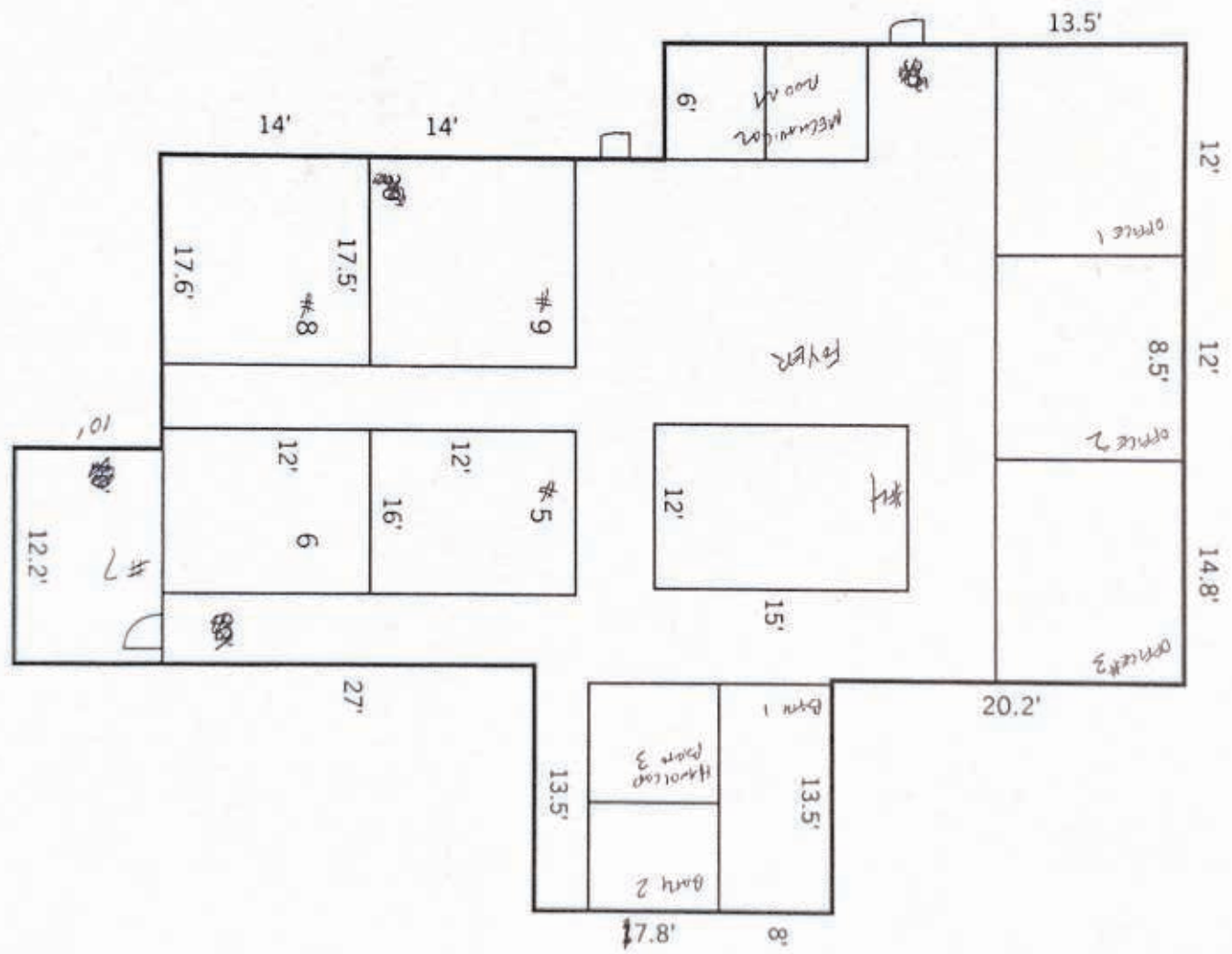
BIKE PARKING

ENTRANCE

PATIO

ACCESSIBLE ENTRANCE

Revised Parking Layout



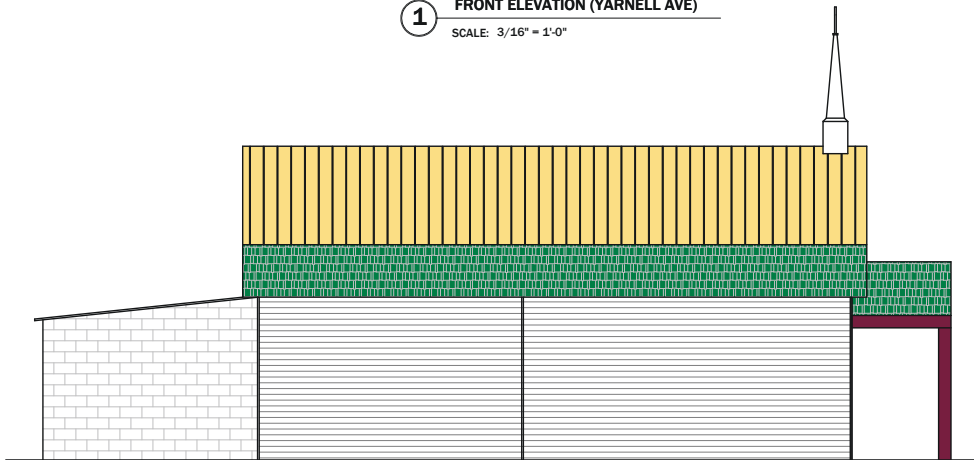
Floor plans

Michael Seaman
520 Yarnell Ave



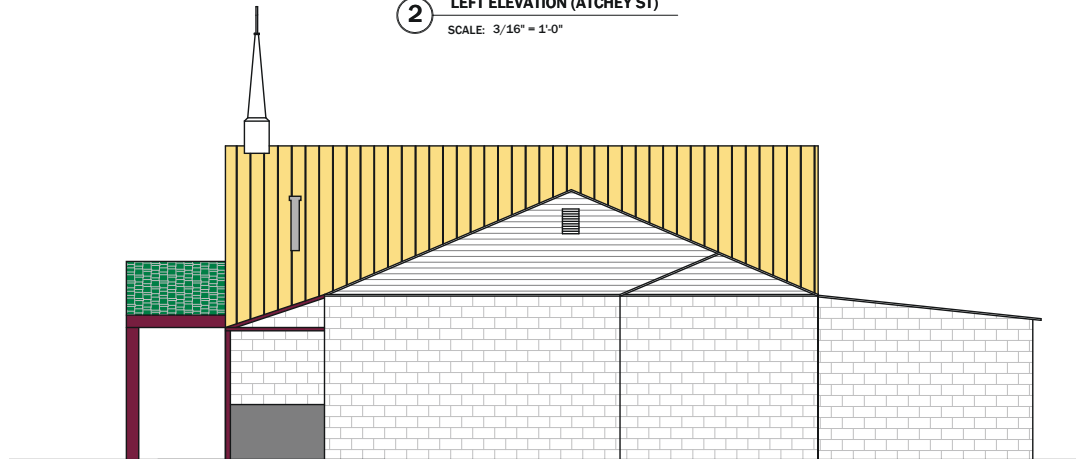
1 FRONT ELEVATION (YARNELL AVE)

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"



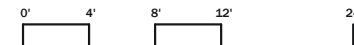
2 LEFT ELEVATION (ATCHEY ST)

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"



3 RIGHT ELEVATION

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"



REVISION DATE



PROJECT:
520 YARNELL AVE,
KNOXVILLE, TN
37920

ELEVATIONS

SCALE: 3/16" = 1'-0"

C-2

SHEET SIZE: 24" X 18"

Operations Summary 520 Yarnell Ave

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The office layout is designed as a small-scale flex office suite targeting individual professionals and small businesses. The main entrance leads into a central hallway that provides access to approximately 9-10 private offices ranging from 100 to 160 square feet. Three bathrooms are located at the rear of the building, minimizing plumbing runs and preserving usable frontage space. A small shared lobby is located near both entries, providing a space for clients and tenants to meet.

Circulation is straightforward, allowing clients to easily navigate from the entrance to individual offices without disruption to other tenants. The space is intended for low to moderate foot traffic, with tenants operating independently. Access can be controlled via keypad entry, making it suitable for flexible leasing or semi-private office use. Operating hours are intended to be from 8:00 AM to 7:00 PM, with the potential for 24/7 tenant access if permitted by applicable code and regulations.

Existing accessory shed at rear of the building to be removed. 510 Yarnell will be used for outdoor picnic tables and smoking area. 2409 Atchley will serve as additional parking for tenants and clients.

Public Notice and Community Engagement

Planning strives to provide community members with information about upcoming cases in a variety of ways. In addition to posting public notice signs, our agency encourages applicants to provide information and offer opportunities for dialogue related to their upcoming case(s). The contact information you provide in your application may be used for that purpose. We require applicants to acknowledge their role in this process.

Sign Posting and Removal

The Administrative Rules and Procedures of the Knoxville-Knox County Planning Commission require a sign to be posted on the property for each application subject to consideration by the Planning Commission.

Planning staff will post the required sign. If a replacement sign(s) is needed, the applicant is responsible for picking up the new sign(s) from Planning and will be charged \$10 for each replacement.

Location and Visibility

The sign must be posted on the nearest adjacent/frontage street and in a location clearly visible to vehicles traveling in either direction. If the property has more than one street frontage, the sign should be placed along the street that carries more traffic. Planning staff may recommend a preferred location for the sign to be posted at the time of application.

Timing

The sign(s) must be posted not less than 12 days prior to the scheduled Planning Commission public hearing and must remain in place until the day after the meeting. In the case of a postponement, the sign can either remain in place or be removed and reposted not less than 12 days prior to the next Planning Commission meeting. The applicant is responsible for removing the sign after the application has been acted upon by the Planning Commission.

Acknowledgement

By signing below, you acknowledge that public notice signs must be posted and visible on the property consistent with the guidelines above and between the dates listed below.

~~5/27/26~~ 05/30/2026

~~6/20/26~~ 06/12/2026

Date to be Posted

Date to be Removed

Have you engaged the surrounding property owners to discuss your request?

Yes No

No, but I plan to prior to the Planning Commission meeting

Applicant Signature

Michael Seemer

Applicant Name

4/14/26

Date