



# PLAN COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

**To:** Members of the Plan Commission

**From:** Tom Vander Woude, Planning Director

**Meeting Date:** July 12, 2022

**Agenda Item:** PC Docket No. 22-007

**Hearing:** **CONTINUED PUBLIC HEARING**

**Application Type:** **Development Plan**

**Summary:** Paul Kats on behalf of Munster Church, Inc. requesting of a development plan to permit the construction of an addition to the Munster Church, the construction of a new multipurpose accessory building, and associated site modifications at 214 Ridge Road.

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**Applicant:** Paul Kats on behalf of Munster Church, Inc

**Property Address:** 214 Ridge Road

**Current Zoning:** CZ – Civic Zone

**Adjacent Zoning:** North: CD-4.A  
South: CD-3.R2  
East: CD-5  
West: CD-4.A

**Action Requested:** Approve development plan

**Additional Actions Required:** Findings of Fact

**Staff Recommendation:** **Approve with conditions**

**Attachments:**

- Munster Church Building Addition, 214 Ridge Road plan set dated 2022.07.08
- Landscape plan prepared by K & D Landscape Industries, Inc. dated 2022.06.04
- Munster Church photometric plan prepared by KSA Lighting & Controls dated 2022.05.26

- Munster Church addition Exterior Elevations and Floor Plan prepared by Rohn Associates dated 2022.06.03
- Munster Church accessory building Exterior Elevations and Floor Plan prepared by Rohn Associates dated 2022.06.03
- Munster Church accessory building Exterior Renderings prepared by Rohn Associates dated 2022.06.03
- Comment response letter from Ted Rohn
- Comment Response letter from Don Torrenge dated 2022.06.03
- Photos of existing church landscaping provided by applicant



Figure 1 Subject property.

## BACKGROUND

Paul Kats on behalf of Munster Church, Inc. has submitted an application for approval of a development plan to construct a 13,350 square foot addition and a new 7,140 square foot multipurpose accessory building on the property of the Munster Church at 214 Ridge Road, the southeast corner of Hohman Avenue and Ridge Road. Along with the new buildings, Munster Church proposes to modify the site by narrowing the existing Ridge Road driveway, improving the landscaping along the Ridge Road frontage,

1005 Ridge Road • Munster, IN 46321 • (219) 836-8810 • Police/Fire Emergencies 911

Police Non-Emergency (219) 836-6600 • Fire Non-Emergency (219) 836-6960

[www.munster.org](http://www.munster.org)

adding and relocating parking lot light fixtures, adding some parking lot landscaping, and installing a detention pond at the southeast corner of the property. The church proposes to demolish two existing single-family homes and two garages on the property.

The proposed addition will be constructed to the east of the existing church building along the Ridge Road Frontage. It will include a fellowship hall, offices, a conference room, classrooms, children's rooms, men's and women's bathrooms, and a large multipurpose room with a stage that can be used as a gym or as an auditorium. Detailed renderings and floor plans are included as attachments.



*Figure 2 Rendering of proposed addition*

The accessory building will be constructed along the east side of the property. It will include classrooms, space for a food pantry, offices, bathrooms, storage, and a workshop for the youth programs. Detailed renderings and floor plans are included in the attachments.



*Figure 3 Renderings of proposed accessory building*



A public hearing was held on June 14, 2022. The petition was tabled. One remonstrant requested that the parking area be screened from the residential properties to the south. Revised plans show a 6' vinyl fence proposed along the south edge of the east parking area. Additionally, a dumpster enclosure at the southeast corner of the property has been added to the plans. A revised landscaping plan has been submitted that includes an additional 5 shade trees along the Ridge Road frontage.

## DISCUSSION AND ANALYSIS

The subject property is located in a CZ- Civic Zone district and is subject to the specific development standards of that zone as well as the generally applicable standards of the zoning ordinance addressing parking, landscaping, site lighting, and stormwater. The applicants have applied to the Board of Zoning Appeals for multiple variances, which are described later in this memo. This project is located on an existing developed lot on which there are some legal nonconformities. The Munster zoning ordinance permits a *Nonconforming Building, Improvement, or Structure [to] be Substantially Modified or Altered to decrease its nonconformity if the modification or alteration is in conformity with the relevant standards of this article*. In other words, only the new buildings, additions, and lot alterations are required to comply the current zoning standards. The exception to this rule is landscaping, which is required to be installed in parking lots when certain improvements are made. In this case, it is required because of the cost of the project, the addition to the building, and the construction of a new building.

## ZONING ANALYSIS

There are fewer standards for buildings in civic districts than commercial districts, the chart below includes only the standards which are applicable noting compliance and whether a variance is being sought.

Standard	Code Requirement	Proposed
Front Setback, Principal Frontage	0 ft. min, 50% of Lot Depth max	Between 10' and 30'
Building Height	1 may be 20 ft. higher than maximum Height of any Adjacent Character District, max.; others max 30 ft. max.	30 ft.
Building Height – Accessory Building	30 ft. max	24.5 ft.
Entrances	Main Entrance must be in Facade of Principal Frontages. If shopfront Frontage at corner, Main Entrance may be at Principal Frontage or at corner. Main Entrance must be clearly distinguishable from other parts of the Building through the use of architectural design, elements, and treatment, including its detail and relief and use of architectural elements such as lintels, pediments, pilasters, columns, and other elements appropriate to the architectural style and details of the Building.	Main entrance is located in the rear of the building.  <b>SEEKING VARIANCE</b>

Location of Building at Frontage	Parallel to Frontage Lines	Offset <b>SEEKING VARIANCE</b>
Facade Position	Parallel to straight Frontage Line or to tangent of curved Frontage Line	Offset <b>SEEKING VARIANCE</b>
Façade Design Proportions	Must be based approximately either on (a) proportions that can be expressed as a fraction using whole numbers (e.g. 1:1, 2:1, 3:2, 4:3, etc) or (b) the following proportions: 1.414:1 or 1.618:1	Stated to be 1:4 on average <b>SEEKING VARIANCE IF NECESSARY</b>
Blank Walls	Not Permitted at Frontage	Windows and doors meet void area standard.
Facade Void Areas	20-60% of total Facade area	40%
Façade Openings	Windows and/or doors spaced $\leq 20$ ft. apart. Square or vertical in proportion except for transoms and sidelights. Windows in the Facade and 1st and 2nd Lot Layers shall be single- or double-sashed, casement, awning, or fixed types. In Stories above first, Facade openings must be $\leq 50\%$ of total Facade area.	Windows vertical. One story.
Window Alignment	Upper floor windows and other features must be aligned with those of first floor	N/A
Roof Type	Flat, Hip, Shed, Gable, Pitch 8:12-14:12	The building addition has an east-west oriented roof over the multipurpose room that has a 5:12 pitch. The north-south oriented roof has a 10:12 pitch and a portion of the building has a flat roof. <b>SEEKING VARIANCE</b>
Off-Street Parking Location	P in 3rd Lot Layer only. Parking must be Screened from abutting properties by Building or opaque Wall Screen, Fence Screen, or Hedge Screen. Parking Lots NP	Existing west parking area is located in first lot layer. Screening is not possible without reducing parking.

Driveway/Vehicular Entrance Maximum Width	24' max in 1st Lot and 2nd Lot Layer	24' wide
Off-Street Trash Receptacle/Dumpster	Required and must be fully enclosed on 3 sides and enclosed on the 4th side with self-closing gate. Enclosure must be constructed of a material that matches the Principal Building.	Dumpster enclosure proposed in SE corner of property.
Off-Street Loading, Storage, Utility Box & Service Meter* Locations	Permitted in 3rd Lot Layer only	Located in 3 <sup>rd</sup> lot layer
Heating and Air Conditioning Equipment, Utility, Service and Mechanical Equipment	Permitted in 3rd Lot Layer; Permitted in 2nd Lot Layer if Screened from Frontage; not Permitted in 1st Lot Layer	Located in 3 <sup>rd</sup> lot layer
Landscaping	Around Civic Buildings Required for 100% of setbacks, except for sidewalks and driveways. Civic Spaces in setbacks must comply with Civic Space standards	100% of setback is landscaped.
Screens	Parking, Loading Areas, Service Areas, Outdoor Storage, Drive-Throughs, Trash Receptacles/ Dumpsters, HVAC and other equipment Screened from Frontage, Civic Space and Adjacent Property	Parking screened from frontage by building, except existing legal non-conforming west parking area. Screening required at south edge of parking area. 6' vinyl fence proposed for south edge of east parking area.
Screens	Rooftop Antennas and HVAC, Mechanical and other Equipment Screening	<b>SEEKING VARIANCE</b> Renderings show no rooftop equipment visible from ground.

The required spaces for the building addition and the existing church are calculated together and are based on the number of seats within the church: there are 409 seats requiring 136 parking spaces. The required spaces for the accessory building are calculated based on the capacity of that building: total occupancy is 166, requiring 50 spaces. A total of 186 spaces are required for the entire parcel. The proposed modifications to the parking area reduce the capacity from 228 spaces to 211 spaces.

The requirements for parking lot landscaping have been partially met with the addition of landscaping along Ridge Road, three new landscape islands in the east parking area, and additional trees planted at





2. TABLE 26-6.405.B CIVIC ZONE STANDARDS Façade Design Proportions - Must be based approximately either on (a) proportions that can be expressed as a fraction using whole numbers (e.g. 1:1, 2:1, 3:2, 4:3, etc) or (b) the following proportions: 1.414:1 or 1.618:1.

**Required:** The proportions of the proposed building addition either in its entirety or in its individual components must be based on the proportions listed above.

**Proposed:** The proposed building addition plans include a note: "AVERAGE FAÇADE PROPORTIONS RATIO = 1:4".

Staff comment: It is unclear to staff whether this standard is met and a more detailed response will be required from the architect.

3. TABLE 26-6.405.B CIVIC ZONE STANDARDS Roof Type and Pitch - Pitch, if any 8:12 - 14:12.

**Required:** The pitch of all roofs on the building addition must either be flat or be between 8:12 and 14:12.

**Proposed:** The building addition has an east-west oriented roof over the multipurpose room that has a 5:12 pitch.



*Figure 5 Church addition viewed from the southeast showing multipurpose room with 5:12 roof pitch.*

4. TABLE 26-6.405.B CIVIC ZONE STANDARDS Main Entrance must be in Façade of Principal Frontage.

**Required:** The main entrance of the church building and addition must be on the Ridge Road side of the building and should have a pedestrian connection to the door from the street.

**Proposed:** The existing pedestrian connection from Ridge Road to the church doors is proposed to be removed. No new sidewalk connections are proposed between the Ridge Road façade and the public sidewalk.



Figure 6 Existing pedestrian connection to Ridge Road proposed to be removed.

5. TABLE 26-6.405.B CIVIC ZONE STANDARDS Screens Parking, Loading Areas, Service Areas, Outdoor Storage, Drive-Throughs, Trash Receptacles/ Dumpsters, HVAC and other equipment Screened from Frontage, Civic Space and Adjacent Property Required; except at Driveways: Parking Lots and Parking Areas shall be Screened from Frontage and Civic Space by Building or Streetscreen; Parking Structures shall be Screened from Frontages by Liner Buildings. Otherwise, Screening shall be by Building, Wall, hedge or Fence at Frontage or Building, Wall, hedge or Fence not at Frontages or Adjacent to Civic Space.

**Required:** The parking area must be screened from the residential properties to the south by a six-foot fence or hedge.

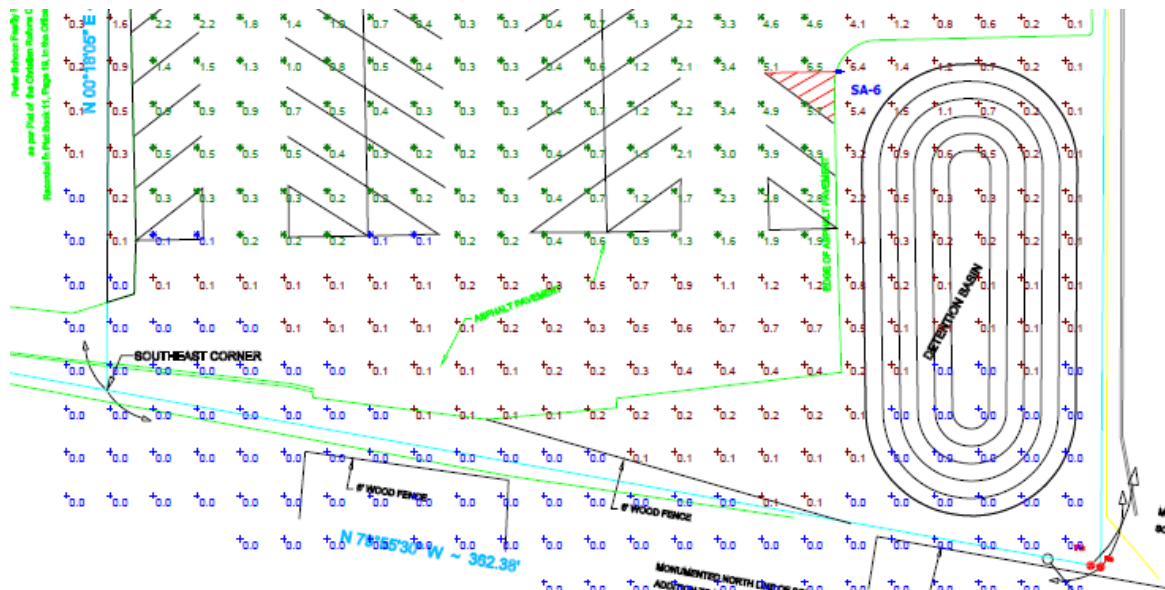
**Proposed:** Some existing residential fences and some intermittent landscaping is already present south of the parking areas. A 6' vinyl fence is proposed along the south edge of the east parking area.

## LIGHTING

1. SECTION 26-6.405.Q.3.a Illumination of Parking Areas, Parking Lots, Parking Structures, and all pedestrian ways shall be provided at an average of 1.0-2.5 footcandles and a minimum of 0.4 foot-candles.

**Required:** Described above.

**Proposed:** Areas along the south edge of the east parking lot are illuminated at a level less than 0.4 foot-candles.



2. TABLE 26-6.26-6.405.Q-1 Head/Luminaire Types. Colonial, Coach, and Acorn types permitted.

**Required:** All new or relocated parking lot light fixtures must be Colonial, Coach, or Acorn types.

**Proposed:** New and relocated parking lot lights are standard fixtures.


Image	Quantity	Manufacturer	Catalog Number	Description
	6	Lithonia Lighting	DSX1 LED P8 30K T4M MVOLT	DSX1 LED P8 30K T4M MVOLT

Figure 8 Noncompliant light fixture type

## LANDSCAPING

1. SECTION 26-6.405.O.1.h.vii.l.1) Parking Areas and Parking Lots shall contain at least one landscape island for every ten (10) parking spaces. Parking Lots with more than one landscape island shall have such islands distributed throughout the Parking Lot.

**Required:** Landscape islands are required to be installed in existing parking lots when a new building is constructed, but the requirement can be waived if they can't be installed without removing required parking spaces. In this case, there are 18 existing areas at the ends of parking rows that can be converted from asphalt to landscape islands.

**Proposed:** Only three new landscape islands are proposed south of the building addition.

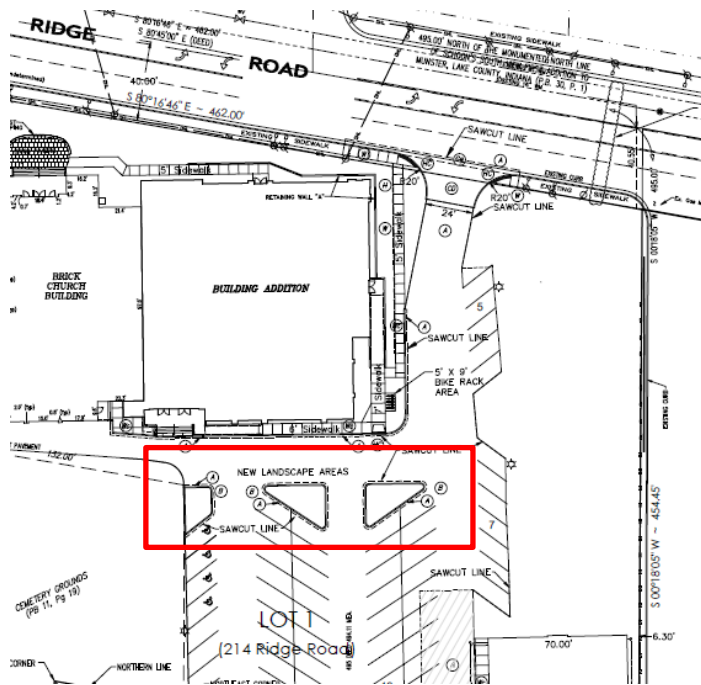


Figure 9 Location of new landscape islands.

2. SECTION 26-6.405.O.1.h.vii.l.2) Interior parking rows shall be terminated at both ends with landscape islands.

**Required:** Landscape islands are required to be installed in existing parking lots when a new building is constructed, but the requirement can be waived if they can't be installed without removing required parking spaces. In this case, there are 18 existing areas at the ends of parking rows that can be converted from asphalt to landscape islands.

**Proposed:** Three new landscape islands are proposed south of the building addition.

3. SECTION 26-6.405.O.1.h.vii.l.7) For every 2,000 square feet of Parking Area or Parking Lot, at least one Tree shall be installed or preserved within the Parking Area or Parking Lot except to the extent that Trees outside of the Lot containing the Parking Area or Parking Lot are allowed to satisfy this requirement as set forth below. ) Trees outside of the Parking Area or Parking Lot located within twenty feet (20') of the closest portion of such Parking Area or Parking Lot, including but not limited to Trees within Thoroughfare Rights-of-Way and Civic Spaces, may be counted toward satisfying the requirements.

**Required:** Trees are required to be installed in and along existing parking areas when a new building is constructed, but the requirement can be waived if they can't be installed without removing required parking spaces. The total number of trees within the parking area or within 20 feet of the parking area must be no less than 1 for every 2,000 square feet of parking area.

**Proposed:** Staff counts 20 trees for the east parking area and 11 for the west parking area, but no calculation of the area of the parking lot is included to determine compliance.

4. SECTION 26-6.405.O.1.h.vii.l.8) 8) No parking space shall be more than seventy-two feet (72') from a Tree within the Lot, as measured from the center of the Tree to the nearest line demarcating the space.

**Required:** Trees are required to be installed in and along existing parking area when a new building is constructed, but the requirement can be waived if they can't be installed without removing required parking spaces.

**Proposed:** 9 new trees are proposed in the east parking area, but there appear to be parking spaces in both the east and west parking areas that are farther than 72 feet from a tree.

5. SECTION 26-6.405.S.2 2. Streetscape Repairs, Replacements & Improvements. Prior to the issuance of any Certificate of Occupancy for a Building or Improvement, the following Streetscape improvements, repairs, or replacements shall be provided by the Lot Owner with respect to each Building or Improvement and the Streetscape that Enfronts the applicable Lot:

...

- i. If there is no planter strip or plant well, planting accommodations shall be constructed along the entire Front Lot Line which planting accommodations shall match any existing planter strip or plant well Enfronting an Adjacent Lot, or if there is none, shall conform to Thoroughfare standards for the applicable District or Civic Zone, as set forth in Section 26-6.502 as if such Thoroughfare standards were applicable.
- iii. If there is no Thoroughfare Tree within the Frontage Adjacent to the Lot, one or more Thoroughfare Trees shall be installed along the Front Lot Line, which Trees shall meet the tree shape, spacing, and size standards for the applicable District or Civic Zone as set forth in Section 26-6.502, as if such standards were applicable.
- c. If there is not sufficient public right-of-way area for all or any of the required Streetscape repairs, replacements, or improvements as set forth in this Section 26-6.405.S, such element or elements shall be provided within the Lot Adjacent to the public right-of-way and the property owner shall grant a perpetual non-exclusive easement for public use of such elements.

**Required:** The planting strip adjacent to the sidewalk should include shade trees planted 30 feet on center. Depending on the spacing, this would require approximately 14 shade trees.

**Proposed:** 7 additional shade trees are proposed.

## RECOMMENDATION

The Plan Commission may wish to consider the following motion:



*Motion to approve PC Docket No. 22-007 approving a development plan to permit the construction of an addition to the Munster Church, the construction of a new multipurpose accessory building, and associated site modifications at 214 Ridge Road, with the following conditions:*

- 1. Final review and approval of engineering plans by the Munster Town Engineer*
- 2. Approval of the variances submitted to the Munster Board of Zoning Appeals under BZA Docket No. 22-006.*