



# CITY OF BEXLEY TREE & PUBLIC GARDENS COMMISSION APPLICATION STAFF REVIEW

Project Name: TPGC-25-2 Demo & New Build  
 Project Address: 420 N Cassady Ave  
 Reviewed by: Walter Reins  
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 Date: 03-13-25

	Project Description	Completed	Incomplete	Missing	N/A
1a	Application	X			
1b	Project Description	X			
	<b>Research</b>				
2a	Significant examples				X
	<b>Design Documentation Drawings</b>				
3a	Existing conditions photographs	X			
3b	Site plan or location plan	X			
3c	Schematic plan with north arrow and bar scale	X			
3d	Elevations, perspectives, isometrics, axonometrics or detailed model	X			
3e	Existing City trees indicated on plan	X			
3f	Proposed vegetation	X			
	<b>Recommended information</b>				
4a	Irrigation and maintenance plans			X	
4b	Hardscape layout and materials				X
4c	Lighting locations and specifications				X
4d	Fixtures, furniture and equipment				X
4e	Accessories				X
4f	Buildings	X			
4g	Other				X

## Comments

**4g** Project history: This is a proposed 3 story mixed use apartment building at the southeast of Columbus and Cassady. The first floor is anticipated to be the new Bexley Senior Center with a few apartments while the floors are all apartments. This project needed variances which have been approved by BZAP while being remanded back to the Architectural Review Board for final design details.

The existing single-story building situated at the southeast corner of the property has minimal landscaping around its foundation, with minimal tree and shrub plantings throughout the property due to the extent of hardscape/parking lot coverage. The designer states that the proposed plan is intended to enhance the development's exterior aesthetics and prioritize the restoration and expansion of the site's tree canopy, and incorporate native plant species.

The proposed tree removal and preservation plan (L2.0) description calls for the removal of (5) trees, but the corresponding drawing indicates removal of (7) trees in total. Tree #2 at the NE corner of the property, labeled as a red maple, is a Siberian elm. Stated conditions of trees to be removed are accurate. All proposed removals appear to be necessary to accommodate the site layout plan. A sugar maple located on the south side of Columbus Ave. in city easement is not indicated for removal in the plan, but is located in the same area as the proposed honeylocust plantings. Per conversation with Grant Archer, this tree is scheduled for removal by the city and is therefore not addressed on the plan.

The proposed landscape plan (L2.1) calls for (17) large deciduous trees and (2) ornamental trees, positively increasing the amount of tree canopy on the property. Proposed tree species are site-appropriate. Care should be taken to ensure that the new elm proposed for the southwest portion of the property matches the same species of existing elm as closely as possible. As stated in a previous design review, substitution of the honeylocusts along the north side of the property with a different species should be considered if poor performance of honeylocust has been historically observed in Bexley. Consider as an alternative matching the *Ulmus* sp. along N. Cassady Ave. or another site-appropriate species.

The plan also calls for a variety of evergreen and deciduous shrubs, as well as hardy and site-appropriate ground covers and grasses. **Of particular concern is the Virginia creeper proposed for the trellis structures on the east side of the building and south end of the property. Virginia creeper is a hardy and aggressive growing vine that can reach 5 to 6 stories in height when left un-maintained. With much of the proposed structure consisting of brick and fiber cement façade, Virginia creeper could likely become a problematic plant within one to two seasons if not properly and frequently maintained. Long-term damage to structure is also possible with a lack of proper maintenance.**

**RECOMMENDATION substituting with alternative options, such as climbing hydrangea or non-invasive Honeysuckle species, or presenting examples of current commercial properties utilizing Virginia creeper in a similar fashion and successfully containing it in its designated bed space(s).**

Provided documentation does not currently specify the installation of an irrigation system. In-ground irrigation for landscape installations around new commercial builds are strongly recommended for the long-term viability of the plantings. Commercial properties frequently do not get the daily or weekly attention needed for new plants to properly establish without supplemental irrigation, based on expected weather patterns that are likely to occur during the first 1-3 years of establishment. As the plan calls for

3" cal. trees, a 3-year establishment period can be expected for the larger proposed plant material, based on the generally accepted rule of 1 year for every 1" of trunk caliper with regards to establishment times for new plantings.

City Staff recommends conditional approval of the plan, pending the following:

- appropriate substitution in place of Virginia creeper on the Landscape plan.
- Landscape plan to include proper irrigation system or a detailed maintenance plan that includes supplemental watering as an annual contracted service.