

9/8/2025

Criteria Compliance Narrative		
Proposal	Encounter Church Improvements	
Parcel Numbers	5459000460 & 54590000456	
Site Address	3200 78th Ave SE, Mercer Island, WA 98040	
Project Zone	MF-2 (Multi-Family)	
Lot Area	1.80 acres (78,476 sf)	
Zoning Code	Mercer Island City Code (MICC)	
Code Standard	Code Description	Proposed /Compliance
MICC 19.15.220.B.1.	No building permit or other required permit shall be issued by the city for any major new construction or minor exterior modification of any regulated improvement without prior approval of the design commission or code official as authorized pursuant to MICC 19.15.010(C)(4)(a). Certain development and activities that do not require a permit are subject to design review as provided in subsection (C)(1)(c) of this section.	Proposal requires a building permit so approval from the design commission is also required.
MICC 19.15.220.C.1.c.	i.The following development proposals shall require design commission review:  (b)Any additions of gross floor area to an existing building(s); (c)Any alterations to an existing building that will result in a change of 50 percent, or more, of the exterior surface area;	Proposal is applying for design commission review and approval because it proposes to increase the gross floor area of the existing building, and because it will alter more than 50% of the exterior surface area of the existing building.
MICC 19.15.220.C.1.c.	iii.Exemptions from design review. The following activities shall be exempt from either design commission or code official design review:  (a)Any activity which does not require a building permit; or (b)Interior work that does not alter the exterior of the structure; or	Proposal does contain interior renovation work that does not require a building permit and which does not alter the exterior of the building, so the proposal is not applying for design commission review and approval for this work.

<p>MICC 19.12.010.A.</p>	<p>Applicability. This chapter establishes design standards for regulated improvements in all zones established by MICC 19.01.040, except Town Center. Design standards for Town Center are set forth in chapter 19.11 MICC. These standards are in addition to any other standards that may be applicable to development in the zone in which the development occurs. In the PBZ, the terms of the PBZ site plan as set forth in MICC 19.04.010 shall control; provided, to the extent not inconsistent with MICC 19.04.010, the provisions of MICC 19.12.010 [excluding (D)(2)(b) and (c)], 19.12.030, 19.12.060, 19.12.070 and 19.12.080 shall apply. These design standards are not intended to slow or restrict development, but to add consistency and predictability to the permit review process.</p>	<p>Proposal is located outside of the Towne Center and adheres to the design standards specified in chapter 19.12.</p>
<p>MICC 19.12.010.D.2.</p>	<p>Partial application of design requirements: minor exterior modification. The following design requirements shall apply when there is a minor exterior modification, as defined in MICC 19.16.010:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a.MICC 19.12.030 pertaining to building design and visual interest;</li> <li>b.MICC 19.12.040(B)(5), (6), (7), (8), (9) and (11) pertaining to landscape design and outdoor spaces: entrance landscaping; planting types; screen types and widths by use and location; perimeter landscape screens; surface parking lot planting; and general planting, irrigation and maintenance standards;</li> <li>c.MICC 19.12.050 pertaining to vehicular and pedestrian circulation;</li> <li>d.MICC 19.12.060 pertaining to screening of service and mechanical areas;</li> <li>e.MICC 19.12.070 pertaining to lighting;</li> <li>f.MICC 19.12.080 pertaining to signs;</li> </ul>	<p>Proposal is considered a minor exterior modification because the intentional exterior alterations and enlargement of the building will not incur construction costs over a three year period in excess of 50 percent of the existing structure's current King County assessed value at the time of this application for design commission review.</p>

<p>MICC 19.12.030.B.1.</p>	<p>Scale, form, massing, building proportions, spacing of windows and doorways, roof silhouette, facade orientations, and style of architecture shall have a unified character and, as to commercial, regulated residential and regulated public facilities, recognize pedestrian needs.</p> <p>a.Scale. Building scale should be proportional to other adjacent buildings, the street edge and, as to commercial, regulated residential and regulated public facilities, to the pedestrian environment.</p> <p>b.Form and mass. Building forms should not present visual mass or bulk impacts that are out of proportion to adjacent structures, or that appear from the public way or surrounding properties as having unmodulated visual bulk.</p>	<p>The Narthex expansion is proportional to the adjacent buildings because the visual mass of the expansion appears cohesive with the existing Church structures on site. The height of the expansion does not surpass the adjacent Sanctuary and the footprint of the expansion roof is aligned with the Sanctuary. The expansion does not encroach onto the street edge so it does not appear as having unmodulated visual bulk from the public way or surrounding properties.</p>
<p>MICC 19.12.030.B.2.</p>	<p>a.Facade modulation. Building facade modulation shall break up the overall bulk and mass of the exterior of buildings and structures. Such modulation should always be addressed on the horizontal plane and the vertical plane. Large or massive buildings should integrate features along their facades that are visible from the public right-of-way, pedestrian routes and nearby structures to reduce the apparent building mass and achieve an architectural scale consonant with other nearby structures.</p> <p>b.Modulation guidelines.</p> <p>i.Horizontal building facade modulation should occur at no less than every 50 feet of wall length. Forms of both vertical and horizontal building modulation may include, but are not limited to: facade indentations and extrusions; actual building separation; connecting atriums, courtyards and plazas; variable roof forms and overhangs; and decks and balconies.</p> <p>ii.Building facades visible from public ways and public spaces should be stepped back or projected forward at intervals to provide a minimum of 40 percent overall facade modulation.</p>	<p>The facade of the Narthex expansion that faces the public way is less than 50 feet in width so modulation is not required on the expansion itself.</p>

<p>MICC 19.12.030.B.2. (continued)</p>	<p>c.Ground level facades. Blank walls at the ground level that may be visible from a public view should be avoided. Ground level facades should create visual interest by utilizing features such as windows, wall articulation, arcades, trellises or other plant features.</p> <p>d.Fenestration. Fenestration should be integrated in the overall building design and should provide variety in facade treatment.</p> <p>e.Horizontal variation and emphasis. Building facades should be made more visually interesting through the use of reveals, medallions, belt courses, decorative tile work, clerestory windows, or other design features. The scale of the detail should reflect the scale of the building.</p> <p>f.Signs. Building design should allow space for a wall sign, consistent with the provisions of MICC 19.12.080, Signs, if it is anticipated that a wall sign will be used.</p>	<p>The ground level facade of the Narthex expansion that faces the public way is almost entirely a glass curtain wall which provides visual interest for the nearby public and those entering the Church. The transparency of the glass curtain wall also provides a contrast from the Sanctuary which has little fenestration along each facade which faces the street front.</p>
<p>MICC 19.12.030.B.3.</p>	<p>Building articulation. Design shall articulate building facades by use of variations of color, materials or patterns, or arrangement of facade elements that are proportional to the scale of the building. Architectural details that are used to articulate the structure may include reveals, battens, and other three dimensional details that create shadow lines and break up the flat surfaces of the facade.</p> <p>a.Tripartite articulation. Tripartite building articulation (building top, middle, and base) should be used to create human scale and architectural interest.</p> <p>b.Fenestration. Fenestration should be used in facades visible from public ways and public spaces visible from public ways for architectural interest and human scale. Windows should be articulated with treatments such as mullions or recesses and complementary articulation around doorways and balconies should be used.</p> <p>c.Architectural elements. The mass of long or large scale buildings should be made more visually interesting by incorporating architectural elements, such as arcades, balconies, bay windows, dormers, and/or columns.</p> <p>d.Upper story setback. Upper stories should be set back to reduce the apparent bulk of a building and promote human scale. When buildings are adjacent to single-family residential dwellings, upper story setbacks shall be provided from property lines.</p>	<p>Building articulation for the Narthex expansion is provided with the roofline and protruding roof structure since the facade of the expansion is primarily glass curtain walls. The roof of the expansion is a low-slope roof and has considerable overhangs of approximately 7 feet. Mass timber beams to support the overhangs and wood soffits underneath provide a variation of color and material compared to the glass curtain walls.</p>

<p>MICC 19.12.030.B.4.</p>	<p>a.Durable building exteriors. Building exteriors should be constructed from high quality and durable materials that will weather well and need minimal maintenance.</p> <p>b.Consistency and continuity of design. Materials and colors generally should be used with consistency on all sides of a building.</p> <p>c.Material and color variation. Color and materials should highlight architectural elements such as doors, windows, fascias, cornices, lintels, sills and changes in building planes. Variations in materials and colors should generally be limited to what is required for contrast or to accentuate architectural features.</p> <p>d.Concrete walls. Concrete walls should be architecturally treated. The enhancement may include textured concrete such as exposed aggregate, sand blasting, stamping or color coating.</p> <p>e.Bright colors. Bright colors should be used only for trim and accents. Bright colors may be approved if the use is consistent with the building design and other design requirements. Fluorescent colors are prohibited.</p>	<p>High quality building materials are proposed for the Narthex expansion that are durable and require minimal maintenance. The materials and colors are chosen to be cohesive with the existing Church structures that are proposed to be refinished as part of the renovation work. The existing brick and siding are proposed to be painted in a natural and neutral color scheme that provides some contrast while also updating the look and feel of the Church facades.</p>
<p>MICC 19.12.030.B.5.</p>	<p>a.Architectural features and design. Special design attention should be given to the primary building entrance(s). A primary entrance should be consistent with overall building design, but made visually distinct from the rest of the building facade through architectural features. Examples include recessed entrances, entrances which roof forms that protrude from the building facade, and decorative awnings, canopies, porte-cocheres, and covered walkways.</p> <p>b.Entrance connections. The primary entrance to a building should be easy to recognize and should be visible from the public way and/or physically connected to the public way with walkways. Landscaping should reinforce the importance of the entrance as a gathering place and create visual and physical connections to other portions of the site and to vehicular and pedestrian access points.</p>	<p>The Narthex is the primary building entrance and the expansion is proposed as part of the renovation work to make the entrance visually distinctive for current and new Church members. Special attention is given to the primary entrance by creating a modern architectural feature, with glass curtain walls and large roof overhangs, that provides an updated look and feel to the Church. The simple form of the expansion is cohesive with the existing structures by not visually overpowering them.</p>

<p>MICC 19.12.030.B.6.</p>	<p>a.Roofline variation, interest, and detail. Roofline variation, interest, and detail shall be used to reduce perceived building height and mass and increase compatibility with smaller scale and/or residential development. Roofline variation, interest and detail may be achieved through use of roofline features such as dormers, stepped roofs, and gables that reinforce a modulation or articulation interval, incorporation of a variety of vertical dimensions, such as multiplaned and intersecting rooflines, or flat-roofed designs that include architectural details such as cornices and decorative facings.</p> <p>b.Roofline variation, numeric standard. Roof line variation shall occur on all multifamily structures with roof lines which exceed 50 feet in length, and on all commercial, office or public structures which exceed 70 feet in length. Roof line variation shall be achieved using one or more of the following methods:</p> <p>i.Vertical off-set ridge or cornice line;</p> <p>ii.Horizontal off-set ridge or cornice line;</p> <p>iii.Variations of roof pitch between 5:12 and 12:12; or</p> <p>iv.Any other approved technique which achieves the intent of this section.</p>	<p>The Narthex expansion is less than 70 feet in length so roofline modulation is not required, but it does provide visual interest and variation compared to the existing Church structures. The low-slope roof has an overhang of approximately 7 feet to reduce the perceived building height and mass.</p>
<p>MICC 19.07.020</p>	<p>A.Except as specifically exempted by section 19.07.120, exemptions, these regulations apply to land uses, development activity, and all structures and facilities within the city of Mercer Island that contain any of the following critical areas and/or their buffers, as defined in chapter 19.16:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Geologically hazardous areas;</li> <li>2.Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas;</li> <li>3.Watercourses; and</li> <li>4.Wetlands.</li> </ol> <p>B.The city shall not approve any development proposal or otherwise issue any authorization to alter the condition of any land, water or vegetation or to construct or alter any structure or improvement without first assuring compliance with the requirements of this chapter or determining that this chapter is not applicable to the development.</p> <p>C.Approval of a development proposal pursuant to the provisions of this chapter does not discharge the applicant of the obligation to comply with the provisions of this chapter.</p>	<p>Proposal is located within a geologically hazardous area so it must comply with the requirements of this chapter and a critical area review is required.</p>

MICC 19.07.090.A	<p>Critical area review 1.</p> <p>1.The purpose of a critical area review 1 is to review:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a.Activities listed as modifications in section 19.07.130, modifications;</li><li>b.Verification of the presence or absence of a critical area; or</li><li>c.Verification of the delineation and/or type of wetland or watercourse.</li></ul>	<p>Proposal is applying for a critical area 1 review because it does not propose buffer averaging or reduction of wetland or watercourse buffers, which is the purpose of a critical area 2 review.</p>
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