

1/16/2026

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
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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.
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MICC 19.15.220.C.1.c.	<p>i.The following development proposals shall require design commission review:</p> <p>(b)Any additions of gross floor area to an existing building(s);</p> <p>(c)Any alterations to an existing building that will result in a change of 50 percent, or more, of the exterior surface area;</p>	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.
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MICC 19.15.220.C.1.c.	<p>iii.Exemptions from design review. The following activities shall be exempt from either design commission or code official design review:</p> <p>(a)Any activity which does not require a building permit; or</p> <p>(b)Interior work that does not alter the exterior of the structure; or</p>	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.
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MICC 19.03.010.A.	<p>Design requirements.</p> <p>1.Any development within the MF-2L or MF-2 zones shall comply with chapter 19.12 MICC, Design standards for zones outside Town Center.</p> <p>2.Plans for any development on property located in an MF zone shall be submitted to the design commission for its approval as set out in MICC 19.15.220. This requirement does not apply to property owned by or under the control of the city or to single-family dwellings.</p>	<p>Proposal will comply with the design standards for zones outside the Town Center. Reference the rest of the criteria compliance narrative for the applicable design standards.</p>
<p>MICC 19.03.010.C.</p> <p>MICC 19.02.010.C.</p>	<p>Uses permitted in zone MF-2.</p> <p>1.Any use permitted in zones R-8.4, R-9.6, R-12, and R-15.</p> <p>Conditional uses. The following uses are permitted when authorized by the issuance of a conditional use permit when the applicable conditions set forth in this section and in MICC 19.15.040 have been met:</p> <p>3.Places of worship subject to the following conditions:</p> <p>a.All structures shall be located at least 35 feet from any abutting property.</p> <p>b.Off-street parking shall be established and maintained at a ratio of one parking space for each five seats in the chapel, nave, sanctuary, or similar worship area.</p>	<p>Proposal is applying for a Conditional Use Permit since an approved permit is not on file with the city and likely has not been issued in the history of the property. The existing structure is at least 35 feet from the abutting property, and off-street parking is provided at a ratio of parking space for each five seats in the Sanctuary.</p>
MICC 19.03.010.E.	<p>Building height limit.</p> <p>1.MF-2, MF-3: No building shall exceed 36 feet or three stories in height, whichever is less, except appurtenances may extend to a maximum of five feet above the height allowed for the main structure.</p> <p>2.Building height for buildings within the MF-2 and MF-3 zones shall be calculated using the method described in MICC 19.11.030(A)(3).</p>	<p>The Narthex expansion is less than 36 feet in height and is only one story.</p>

<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"> a.MICC 19.12.030 pertaining to building design and visual interest; 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; c.MICC 19.12.050 pertaining to vehicular and pedestrian circulation; d.MICC 19.12.060 pertaining to screening of service and mechanical areas; e.MICC 19.12.070 pertaining to lighting; f.MICC 19.12.080 pertaining to signs; 	<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.2.</p>	<p>a. Facade modulation. As set forth in subsection 2(b) below, building facade modulation shall break up the overall bulk and mass of the exterior of buildings and structures.</p> <p>b. Modulation guidelines. Building facade modulation must occur at no less than every 50 feet of wall length. Building facade modulation must occur every 25 feet of wall length along any facade visible from the public right of way. Building facade modulation must utilize at least three of the following elements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Window fenestration patterns and/or entries; ii. Use of vertical piers/columns; iii. Change in roofline; iv. Change in building material or siding style; v. Vertical elements such as a trellis with plants, green wall, art element; or vi. Vertical building modulation of at least 12 inches in depth if tied to a change in roofline modulation or a change in building material, siding style, or color. 	<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. Untreated blank walls at the ground level that may be visible from a public right of way view are prohibited. One of the following features must be provided every fifteen horizontal feet of ground-level wall visible from a public right of way:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Display windows at least 16 inches of depth to allow for changeable displays. Tack on display cases shall not qualify as a blank wall treatment. ii. A landscape planting bed at least five feet wide or a raised planter bed at least two feet high and three feet wide in front of the wall with planting materials that are sufficient to obscure or screen at least sixty (60) percent of the wall's surface within three years. iii. A vertical trellis in front of the wall with climbing vines or plant materials. The vertical trellis must be designed to cover at least sixty (60) percent of the wall within three years of planting. iv. A mural covering at least sixty (60) percent of the blank wall space. A mural that meets the definition of a sign established in Chapter 19.16 MICC is also subject to the sign regulations in MICC 19.12.080. 	<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.4.</p>	<p>a.Beveled metal siding, mirrored glass, and vinyl siding are prohibited. Concrete walls must be architecturally treated with one of the following features: textured concrete such as exposed aggregate, sand blasting, stamping, or color coating.</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. A primary entrance must be identified on the site plan submitted with any application for construction of a new building. The primary entrance must be made visually distinct from the rest of the building facade using at least one of the following architectural features: recessed entrances, roof forms that protrude from the building facade, and decorative awnings, canopies, porte-cocheres, and or covered walkways. b.Entrance connections. The primary entrance to a building must be visible from the public way or physically connected to the public right of way with walkways.</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>Roofline variation, numeric standard. Roof line variation shall occur at a minimum rate of one variation per 50 feet of roof line length on all multifamily structures, and one variation per 70 feet of roof line on all commercial, office or public structures. Roof line variation shall be achieved using one or more of the following methods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Vertical off-set ridge or cornice line; ii. Horizontal off-set ridge or cornice line; iii. Variations of roof pitch between 5:12 and 12:12; iv. Roofline features such as dormers, stepped roofs, and gables; v. vertical dimensions, such as multi-planed and intersecting rooflines; or vi. flat-roofed designs that include architectural details such as cornices and decorative facings. 	<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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Geologically hazardous areas; 2. Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas; 3. Watercourses; and 4. Wetlands. <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.B	<p>Critical area review 2.</p> <p>2.Review timing and sequence.</p> <p>b.When development and/or activity is proposed on a site containing only geologically hazardous areas, an applicant has the option of either:</p> <p>i.Applying for a critical area review 2 in advance of construction permits, using the procedures required for a Type 3 land use review; or</p> <p>ii.Requesting consolidation of the review of geologically hazardous areas together with construction permit review.</p>	<p>Proposal is applying for a critical area 2 review because it contains geologically hazardous areas, but it does not propose buffer averaging or reduction of wetland or watercourse buffers.</p>
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