

September 8, 2025

Community Planning & Development Department

City of Mercer Island

9611 SE 36th Street, Mercer Island, WA 98040

Design Commission Design Review Narrative – Encounter Church Improvements

The Encounter Church Improvements project consists of various interior and exterior demolition and renovation work in addition to the expansion of the Narthex, or lobby space, adjacent to the Sanctuary. In general, the interior renovation work includes replacement of interior finishes, addition of new restrooms, reconfiguration of existing restrooms, reconfiguration of interior walls and rooms, structural modifications as required, replacement of lighting fixtures, and reconfiguration of the main stage. The mechanical and electrical systems will be upgraded and consolidated as required. In general, the exterior renovation work includes refinishing of existing brick veneer and wood siding, infill of existing window openings, building envelope updates as required, and replacement of the northern patio. The expansion of the Narthex will increase the gross building area by approximately 1,200 square feet. In general, the new construction work for the Narthex expansion will include a roof with the associated structural support system, structural foundations and slabs, exterior curtain walls with entrance doors, installation of interior finishes, and associated mechanical, plumbing, and electrical work.

Based on the scope of the project, some of the submittal documents listed on the design review design commission checklist are not provided with this application. Please see below for an outline of the documents that are not provided along with a response for each.

1. Concurrent Review Form

Response: We are requesting a consolidated review for two or more land use applications, but the form could not be located online.

2. Transportation Concurrency Application or Certificate

Response: The proposed project will not result in the creation of 1 or more net new vehicle trips during peak hours because the existing parking will not be altered. In addition, only the Narthex is expanded in building area which acts as a vestibule for the Sanctuary. The capacity for the services provided by the church will not increase from the project.

3. Traffic Study

Response: See explanation provided above for the same response.

4. Arborist Report

Response: The proposed project does not remove any existing trees.

5. Parking Plan

Response: The proposed project does not alter the existing parking.

6. Lighting and Sign Master Plans

Response: The proposed project does not alter the existing exterior lighting or signage.

7. Tree Plan

Response: The proposed project requires Design Review Minor which does not require a Tree Plan as noted in the submittal requirements table within the Land Use Application Plan Set Guide.

8. Critical Areas (Wetland/Watercourse) Mitigation Plans

Response: The proposed project is not within a designated wetland or watercourse or a buffer for either designation.

9. Landscape Plans

Response: The proposed project only removes a small area of landscaping near the existing Narthex entrance, facing the parking lot, for the Narthex expansion. Otherwise, the project scope does not include altering the existing landscaping.

10. Conceptual Grading & Utility / Street Profile

Response: The proposed project requires Design Review Minor which does not require Conceptual Grading & Utility / Street Profile drawings as noted in the submittal requirements table within the Land Use Application Plan Set Guide.

Please reach out to me directly if you have any questions or additional comments about the project. Thank you for your time.

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