

Town of Charlotte Staff Report

PLANNING COMMISSION meeting scheduled for Sept. 3, 2020

General Information

Applicant:	Lori Bruce (owner) & Evergreen Family Health (applicant)
Application No.: PC-20-116-SK	Parcel ID: 00061-0251
Status of Applicant:	Potential buyer; property under purchase & sale contract
Location:	215 Ferry Rd. (would also some land from 213 Ferry Rd.)
Requested Action:	Sketch Plan review for Site Plan with Boundary Adjustment
Existing Zoning:	Village Commercial (VCM) District
Purpose:	This application is to modify the existing boundaries and construct a new medical office facility to house the relocated Charlotte Family Health Center in the heart of the village on Ferry Road, adjacent to the Post Office. Application details can be found at: http://bit.do/Bruce-CHC-apply
Size:	Subject parcel is ±55 acres in 2 parcels. If Boundary Adjustment is approved, project would be built on a 2-acre parcel carved out from both lots, with the remainder retained by the current owner.
Existing Land Use:	Vacant residences
Surrounding Land Use and Zoning:	Village center with public facilities, nonprofit services (Childrens' Center and Senior Center) and single family residences
Permitting / Subdivision History:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lot was subdivided by Richard LeBoeuf in 1992 to create 1 new lot for US Post Office.• In the late 1990's, LeBoeuf proposed a large mixed-use project for this property involving many units of elder housing, supermarket, bank other stores and shopping, known as Charlotte Community Living. This project was not approved, or built.• In 2010, LeBoeuf applied for a Boundary Adjustment to clarify and consolidate the lot lines of their adjacent properties. There is no record of their completing that process, or of Planning Commission approval.• The Town issued a zoning Notice of Violation to LeBoeuf in 2005 for mowing grass within the wetlands buffer zone.• In 2013, the now-vacant residence was determined to be uninhabitable due to a failed septic system identified in 2005, which was never replaced. (This residence to be removed if site plan is approved.)

5.5 Site Plan Review

A. Site Features & Zoning Standards:

The existing site includes two single family dwellings, and various accessory structures. Natural features on the 55 acres south of the dwellings on Ferry Road include substantial open meadow, forest, and wetlands, with considerable prime forest and aquatic habitat in undeveloped areas.

Required setbacks for the VCM district are 15' from the road, side lot lines and rear lot lines. Minimum road frontage is 75 ft. Maximum building coverage is 25% of the total lot, or 10,000 sq. ft., whichever is less. Maximum lot coverage (including impervious surfaces such as pavement) is 40%. Current development on this site meet these dimensional standards.

Health Clinics are a permitted use in the VCM district; however, only if the building is ≤ 3,500 sq. ft. The proposed facility is 4,750 sq. ft., per their submitted site plan (although the application states it is approximately 3,500 sq. ft.) Thus, this project will be reviewed as a "Health Care Facility up to 10,000 sq. ft.", which is listed as a conditional use in this district, subject to

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Conditional Use Review per Sec. 5.4 and Site Plan Review per Sec. 5.5 standards in the LURs. Also, per Sec. 6.1.C, boundary adjustments require Final Plan approval per the Subdivision Standards in Chapter VII of the LURS (though the applicant may request waivers for subdivision standards which are not germane to this project).

B. Site Layout and Design:

The applicant has presented 3 options for site layout and design; in this Sketch Plan Review, they are seeking feedback on the best approach to develop a detailed application for Site Plan review.

All 3 options include several common features:

- A single driveway/curb cut on Ferry Rd., re-using the existing curb cut for 215 Ferry Rd.
- 7 spaces of parallel parking along the Ferry Rd. right-of-way; configuration varies.
- Bike racks near the main entrance.
- A sidewalk along the greenbelt adjacent to parking spaces along Ferry Rd. frontage.
- An existing easement from the main entrance to the rear of the currently developed part of the site along Ferry Rd. to allow the owners continued access to a small 'Outback Building' which would become part of the project site if approved. The Town Office and Library has use of this right-of-way, but that would terminate if the boundary adjustment were approved. (ROW would become part of the adjacent property, at 213 Ferry Rd.)
- There are recently surveyed wetlands to the south of the area proposed for development which is crossed by the driveway in all 3 versions. All wetlands are to remain undeveloped.

Option A and Option B share a north-south orientation of the building with the narrow end facing Ferry Road, with parking to the side and/or rear. Option B also divides the parking lot into two sections. Option C aligns the broad length of the building along Ferry Rd., with parking to the rear.

C. Access: The site will use the existing curb-cut off of Ferry Road. Unless obstructed by landscape plantings, there would likely be good sight lines to oncoming traffic on Ferry Rd. for vehicles entering & exiting the site from this curb cut. The Commission may wish to require the applicant to document projected traffic impacts from development of this site as proposed, especially during higher volume periods when the Ferry is in operation.

By providing a sidewalk along the Ferry Rd. frontage, this project would contribute to the long-term goal of a more pedestrian-friendly Village Center. A bike rack also accommodates non-motorized customers. The Charlotte Town Trails committee has also proposed a connection to the Town Link Trail from the Burns property through this site, to be presented at the 9/3 mtg.

D. Parking, Loading, and Service Areas: The site plan shows 22 off-street parking spaces, including two accessible parking spaces for customers with mobility impairments sited near the building entrance. An additional seven parking spaces are included in the Ferry Rd. right-of-way, which would additionally be subject to VTrans review and approval. The parking plan conforms to **Section 3.11** of the Regulations. Applicant should be asked to verify the number of primary care providers working in the building at one time, which drives the # of spaces required for this use:

Table 3.1 for Minimum Off-Street Parking Requirements relevant to this site plan: "Health Clinic," which has a minimum requirement of at least 5 spaces per physician, dentist or other primary caregiver (at times of highest staffing levels).

Applicant should also be asked to verify that all designated parking spaces have a minimum width of nine (9) feet, a minimum length of 18 feet, and unobstructed access and maneuvering room. Also, applicant should verify total impervious surface area, and whether parking and driveways are to be paved, gravel, or some combination thereof.

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E. Landscaping and Screening: All 3 versions of the site plan include several trees scattered across the Ferry Rd. frontage. Options A and C also show some trees planted along the perimeter of the parking lot, and driveway. Tree species and maturity at planting are not yet identified.

If the project moves forward as designed, the Commission may wish to discuss the need for and extent of desired screening and shade for the driveway with the applicant in later iterations. Some consideration should be given to planting salt-tolerant species along the Ferry Rd. frontage, and to the selection of species that are compatible with trees planted along the road frontage in front of existing public facilities, such as the Post Office, Senior Center, etc.

F. Stormwater Management and Erosion Control: Not detailed on this sketch plan. Future iterations of the Site Plan should identify and detail planned stormwater management and erosion control methods and infrastructure that that effectively manages runoff from the building and impervious surfaces in the plan. This plan must meet standards outlined in **Section 5.5(E)(6)** and **Section 7.8** of the Regulations. These should be prepared by a licensed professional, as per **Section 7.8(A)(2)** of the Regulations.

G. Outdoor Lighting: Not detailed on this sketch plan. Future iterations of the Site Plan should identify and detail locations of all outdoor fixtures (including building-mounted fixtures) used to illuminate the site. This design should be in conformance with the standards outlined in **Section 3.9** of the Regulations. All fixtures should direct light down & be shielded from the side.

Sec. 5.4: Conditional Use Review: Not yet addressed by the applicant. If project moves forward, applicant should complete and submit Conditional Use Review Questionnaire with a \$500 application fee. Will require a public hearing before the Zoning Board of Adjustment, which may be coordinated with a future Planning Commission hearing.

Chapter 7: Subdivision Standards: These are minimally addressed in the current application. If project moves forward, applicant should provide additional details, particularly regarding:

- Project impact on areas of high public value on this site and nearby, such as wetlands, aquatic habitat, contiguous tracts of open land to remain undeveloped, and historic building styles and setback patterns of existing public buildings in the village center.
- Project impacts on municipal facilities and services, including emergency vehicle access and circulation to the site, underground utility lines, and potential connection to Town Link Trail.
- Details about drilled wells, should the project not be connected to the town office well.
- Details about wastewater disposal, should the project not be connected to the town office septic system.
- Details about likely traffic impacts, including a traffic study and attention to creating safe pedestrian access from nearby public facilities on both sides of Ferry Rd.
- Details about any land proposed to be permanently conserved by the Applicant.

Staff Observations / Recommendations:

Relocating the Charlotte Family Health Center to the village center, directly adjacent to important municipal services such as the Post Office, Senior Center, Library and Town Office, is consistent with the town plan's objectives to co-locate key public services and amenities in the village center. Although an increase in vehicle trips to the site will increase Ferry Rd. traffic, in the long run, it will likely reduce vehicle emissions over time, by allowing residents to concentrate multiple errands within a compact area. Offering primary health care services in a modern location in the town center will reduce reliance on trips into Burlington for health care, and improve access. I believe with further details provided, this project could meet the town's standards, and be an asset to the community.