



# The City of Grove City, Ohio

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Planning Commission Staff Report  
Council Chambers  
December 4, 2018 1:30pm

**5. APPLICATION: AutoZone | Development Plan**

Project Number: 201810310050

Location: Located at the northeast corner of the London-Groveport Road and Summit Way intersection (PID 040-008048 and 040-008049)

Zoning: PUD-C (Planned Unit Development- Commercial)

GroveCity2050 Future Land Use Designation: Commercial Center

Proposal: A development plan for a 7,381 square foot auto parts retail store on a 1.356-acre site

Applicant: Jason Hall, Prism Engineering, 2309 Watterson Trail, Ste 200, Louisville, Kentucky 40299

**Relevant Plans, Policies, and Code Section(s):**

- 1135.14, Zoning Districts and Regulations – Planned Unit Development District
- C-14-13 – Grove City Ranch Zoning Text
- GroveCity2050 Community Plan – Future Land Use and Character Map
- GroveCity2050 Community Plan – Development and Conservation Strategy

**Project Summary**

The applicant is requesting approval of a development plan for an AutoZone auto parts retail store at the northeast corner of London-Groveport Road and Summit Way (Parcels 040-008048 and 040-008049). The building is proposed to be approximately 7,400 square feet in size and will be finished primarily in brick. The site was previously approved in 2015 for a Rite Rug, which was not developed, and the site is currently vacant.

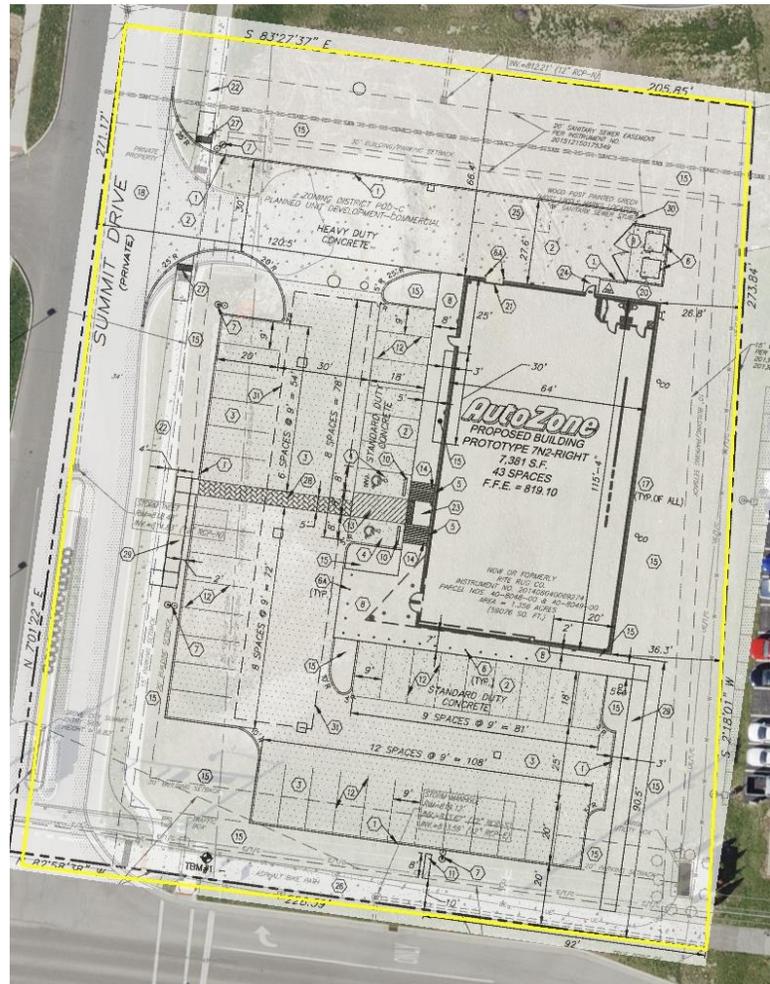
The GroveCity2050 Community Plan Future Land Use and Character Map recommends this site be used as “Commercial Center”, which lists commercial uses as a primary use.



## Site Plan

The 1.356-acre site is proposed to be accessed from a single 30-foot curb cut off of Summit Way, across from the access drive to the London Place multi-tenant retail center. The curb cut was installed at the time Summit Way was constructed and is currently 24-feet-wide to match the width of the cut across the street; however, the applicant is requesting to widen the cut to 30 feet. The north and west drive aisles through the parking lot are proposed to be 30-foot-wide and the southern drive is proposed to be 25-foot-wide. Staff is not supportive of the proposed curb cut widening or 30-foot drive aisles as drive aisles for recent commercial developments are typically approved at 24 or 26 feet wide to allow for more green space and landscaping.

Curbing on the site is proposed to be 12-inch tilt out. Sidewalks between five to eight feet in width are proposed along the west and south sides of the building. A crosswalk, utilizing a stamped brick design, is proposed through the parking lot to connect with the existing sidewalk along Summit Way.



The site to be developed currently spans two parcels – 040-008049 and 040-008048. These parcels will need to be combined to eliminate conflicts with setbacks from the internal parcel line through the site.

## Landscaping

A landscape plan was provided showing landscaping throughout the site including the site and building's perimeter, parking islands, and around the proposed monument sign. The site's frontages along London Groveport Road and Summit Way will have a continuous evergreen hedge with both Green Velvet Boxwood and Saybrook Gold Juniper shrubs. The northern property line adjacent to the Summit Apartments will have some enhanced landscaping to provide additional screening including a row of White Spruce trees with some additional Red Maple and Apollo Sugar Maple trees, and eight Burning Bush shrubs. A row of Autumn Brilliance Serviceberry trees is proposed along the east side of the building to break-up the mass of the structure given its visibility from London Groveport Road. Each parking island is proposed to have one tree either an Apollo Sugar Maple or Red Maple. The ground sign is proposed to be landscaped with eight Green Velvet Boxwood shrubs.

The dumpster enclosure is proposed to be landscaped on two of its sides with Arborvitae shrubs. The southern wall is not proposed to have landscaping as it is adjacent to the sidewalk adjacent to the rear service door on the structure. Staff is supportive of granting a deviation to the screening of service

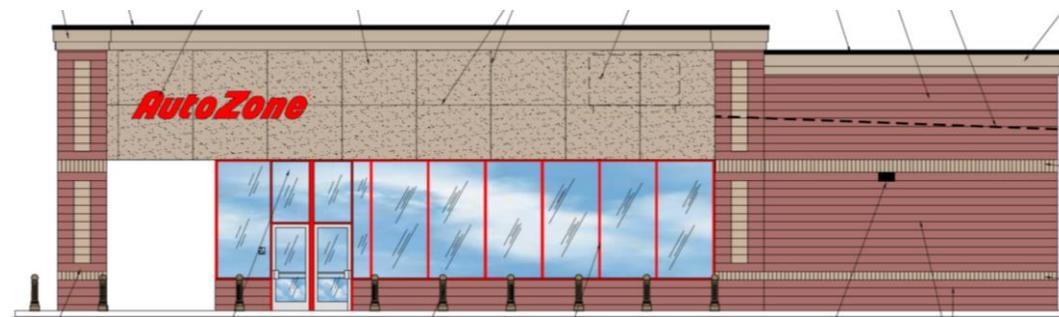
structures requirement to permit no landscaping on the southern wall, as it will be screened from view by the building from London-Groveport Road and cannot be easily seen from Summit Way or from the east.

### Buildings

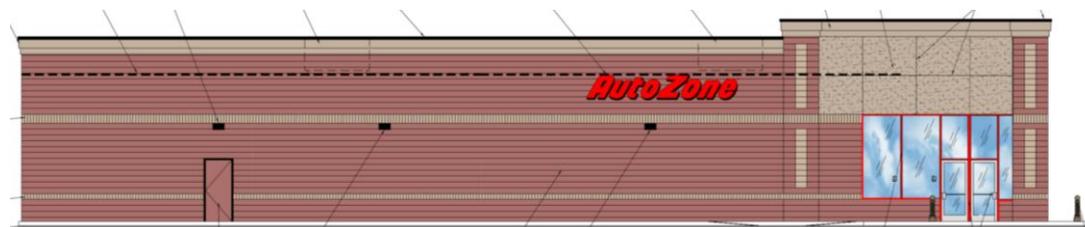
The proposed building will be 7,381 square feet in size (115' x 64') with a covered entrance feature at the southwest corner of the building. The building will be one-story in height with a proposed height of 21 feet, within the permitted height of 35 feet in the Grove City Ranch PUD Zoning Text. The building will be finished primarily in brick (Carolina Ceramic "Cherry Velour") with accents in a tan brick (Carolina Ceramic "Pebble Beach Velour") on all sides of the building. A soffit is proposed around the roofline of the building and will be tan in color (Sherwin Williams "Sand Dune") very similar to the proposed brick accents. The entrance area will be finished primarily in a tan EIFS (Sherwin Williams "Sand Dune") with a brick column from grade to the roofline finished in the same brick as the rest of the building. A metal overhang delivery door is proposed on the rear/north wall of the building.

While staff is generally supportive of the building's design, the two adjacent structures, Jackson Township Fire Department Station 203 and the London Place multi-tenant retail structure, are finished entirely in brick with no EIFS. Staff believes the proposed EIFS ("Sand Dune") should be replaced with the tan brick utilized elsewhere on the structure to be more compatible with adjacent structures.

A dumpster enclosure is proposed to the rear/north of the building and will have brick walls that will match that used on the building and have 100 percent opaque stained pine gates.



*South/Front Elevation*



*West/Side Elevation*

### Parking

A total of 44 parking spaces are proposed on the site, including two (2) ADA parking spaces, meeting the required minimum of 37 spaces (1 space per 200 square feet of building) per the zoning text for the site, which reverts to section 1135.12 of Code. The spaces directly adjacent to the building are proposed at 162 square feet (9' by 18'), below the square footage minimum for parking spaces per Code, and the other spaces are proposed at 180 square feet in size (9' by 20') meeting the square footage minimum.

Staff is supportive of the spaces being at least 162 square feet in size as it will require less impervious surface on the site. All pavement striping is proposed to be white.

### Lighting

A photometric plan has been provided meeting the minimum 0.5 footcandle requirement for all pedestrian and vehicular areas. Lighting on the site is proposed to be reduced on the north side of the site, adjacent to the Summit Apartments, to zero footcandles to prevent light spillover. Proposed lighting fixtures will be white, downcast LED lights matching the style of the lighting fixtures on the neighboring London Place commercial center.

### Signage

A ground and wall signage are proposed on the site that meet the size and placement requirements outlined in the Grove City Ranch Zoning Text. The proposed ground sign will be eight feet in height with a brick base in a brown brick ("Nuthatch"), similar to the brick proposed on the building. The sign's face is proposed at 40 square feet in size with the AutoZone logo in red ("Poppy Red") and orange on a white background.

Two wall signs are proposed, with one sign on the south/front of the building facing London-Groveport Road and the second on the west elevation facing Summit Way. Each sign will have the AutoZone logo with red ("Poppy Red") channel lettering. The sign on the south elevation is proposed at 24 square feet in size and the sign on the west elevation is proposed at 38 square feet in size for a total of 62 square feet of wall signage, within the permitted amount per the approved zoning text (1 square foot of signage per linear foot of building frontage).

### GroveCity2050 Guiding Principles Analysis

The City of Grove City adopted the GroveCity2050 Community Plan in January 2018 which contains specific goals, objectives and actions to guide growth in the community. Five (5) guiding principles are identified that articulate Grove City's community values and direct the recommendations in the Plan. Applications submitted to Planning Commission are reviewed based on these 5 Guiding Principles:

**(1) The City's small town character is preserved while continuing to bring additional employment opportunities, residents and amenities to the community.**

**Finding Not Met:** Staff believes the proposed development is generally in character with the surrounding commercial area and will provide adequate screening to the adjacent residential site to the north. However, while the proposed development will bring additional employment opportunities to the area, the outparcel was planned as part of the Grove City Ranch PUD to be in character with and an amenity for the residences to the north and staff does not believe the requested deviations including the widened 30-foot curb cut and 30-foot-wide drive aisles for truck deliveries are in line with the intended character of the site. Additionally, while staff is mostly supportive of the building, staff is not supportive of the proposed EIFS and would instead recommend that the entire building be finished in brick to match that of the adjacent sites for the Jackson Township Fire Department and London Place.

**(2) Quality design is emphasized for all uses to create an attractive and distinctive public and private realm.**

**Finding Not Met:** Because the site falls within an area identified as "Corridor Enhancement" in the GroveCity2050 Development and Conservation Strategy and is along a primary corridor for development in the community, all new development in the area is held to high standards in terms

of layout and design of sites and buildings. Staff believes that the entire building should be finished in brick to be more compatible with the adjacent Jackson Township Fire Department Station and London Place multi-tenant retail development.

- (3) Places will be connected to improve the function of the street network and create safe opportunities to walk, bike and access public transportation throughout the community.**

**Finding Can Be Met:** The site is proposed to have a single point of access onto Summit Way with no curb cuts proposed on London-Groveport Road; however, the proposed 30-foot-wide curb cut onto Summit widens the existing cut by approximately six (6) feet, making it more difficult for pedestrians to traverse. In order to be part of a more pedestrian-oriented framework, the curb cut should remain 24 feet wide.

- (4) Future development will preserve, protect and enhance the City's natural and built character through sustainable practices, prioritizing parks and open space and emphasizing historic preservation.**

**Finding Can Be Met:** Staff does not believe that the proposed structure enhances the City's built character and believes it should be finished entirely in brick similar to adjacent developments.

- (5) Development provides the City with a net fiscal benefit.**

**Finding is Met:** The proposed development will provide additional employment opportunities in the community, generating income tax for the City. Additionally, the development of the site will increase the property's value, benefiting Jackson Township.

### Analysis

Per Section 1135.14 of the Codified Ordinances of Grove City, Planning Commission is charged with reviewing and evaluating Preliminary and Final Development Plan applications for Planned Unit Development districts by applying the eight (8) findings.

- (1) The uses proposed will not be detrimental to present and potential surrounding uses, but will have a beneficial effect which could not be achieved under any other district.**

**Finding Can Be Met:** The proposed use is in conformance with the uses permitted for the subarea in the Grove City Ranch Zoning Text and it meets the GroveCity2050 Future Land Use and Character Map which recommends commercial uses for the site (under the "Commercial Center" classification). However, staff is not supportive of the proposed 30-foot curb cut and drive aisle and would instead be supportive of maintaining the existing 24-foot cut and utilizing 24 or 26-foot-wide aisles to be more compatible with other commercial sites and slow down traffic on the site for safer pedestrian access.

- (2) Any exception from Zoning Code (Ordinance C79-74, passed January 20, 1975) requirements is warranted by the design and amenities incorporated in the Development Plan.**

**Finding Met:** The proposed plans meet the requirements of the Grove City Ranch Zoning Text. However, staff is not supportive of the proposed 30-foot curb cut and drive aisle on the site as it does not match other recently approved commercial sites which utilize 24-foot cuts and aisles to slow down traffic circulation on the sites for safer pedestrian crossings.

- (3) Land surrounding the proposed development can be planned in coordination with the proposed development and that it is compatible in use.**

**Finding Can Be Met:** The site of the proposed development is within subarea 2 (PUD-C, Outparcels) of the Grove City Ranch PUD and development on the site was intended to be in coordination and compatible with the larger PUD development. While the proposed use is in conformance with uses permitted in the PUD, staff does not believe the widened curb cut and drive aisles for truck deliveries create the character intended with the PUD. Additionally, this site is within an area identified in the GroveCity2050 Community Plan's Development and Conservation Strategy as "Corridor Enhancement" and in order to closer align with this intended character, staff believes any EIFS on the structure should be replaced with brick to match the adjacent Jackson Township Fire Station and multi-tenant retail structure.

**(4) The proposed change to a Planned Unit Development District is in conformance with the general use intent of the area.**

**Finding is Met:** The proposed site meets the permitted uses outlined in the Grove City Ranch Zoning Text. Furthermore, the GroveCity2050 Community Plan recommends that the site be used as "Commercial Center" which includes retail uses, keeping this site in accordance with the plan.

**(5) Existing and proposed streets are suitable and adequate to carry anticipated traffic within the proposed district and in the vicinity of the proposed district.**

**Finding is Met:** Staff believes the proposed single access point onto Summit Way with access to London Groveport Road through the existing signalized intersection will be adequate to safely and adequately carry traffic generated by the proposed development.

**(6) Existing and proposed utility services are adequate for the proposed development.**

**Finding is Met:** The existing and proposed utility services are adequate for the proposed development. Further examination of proposed utilities will occur with the site improvement plan (final engineering plans).

**(7) Each phase of the proposed development, as it is proposed to be completed contains the required parking spaces, landscape and utility areas necessary for creating and sustaining a desirable and stable environment.**

**Finding is Met:** The proposed development will provide the needed parking spaces, landscaping, and utilities necessary to meet code requirements. Additionally, the applicant has provided additional screening and no light spillover onto the adjacent residential site, Summit Apartments, to provide less impact onto that site.

**(8) The proposed Planned Unit Development District and all proposed buildings, parking spaces and landscape and utility areas can be completely developed within seven years of the establishment of the district, unless otherwise provided for by Council.**

**Finding is Met:** The proposed project, including building, parking spaces, landscaping and utilities can be completely developed within seven years.

**Recommendation**

The Development Department recommends Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the Development Plan with the following deviations and stipulations:

1. A deviation shall be granted from Section 1136.08 to permit no landscaping along the southern wall of the dumpster enclosure.
2. A deviation shall be granted to permit parking spaces sized at 162 square feet (9' by 18'), below the 180 square foot minimum.
3. The curb cut from Summit Drive shall remain its current, installed width of approximately 24 feet.
4. Drive aisles on site shall be narrowed to be either 24 or 26 feet in width.
5. The proposed EIFS shall be replaced with brick, so that the entire building is finished in brick.
6. The two parcels creating the site (040-008049 and 040-008408) shall be combined.