

**CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS  
PLANNING COMMISSION  
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

A public hearing will be held during the regularly scheduled meeting of the East Grand Rapids Planning Commission, listed below, on the application of Calvin College for a special land use designation for the area of the campus that is in the City of East Grand Rapids. No new development is proposed at this time, but the college is proposing to use the existing "Ravenswood" house at 3222 Lake Drive SE for theme-centered student group housing for eight students and a live-in mentor. This use and the other existing campus uses, including athletic fields, are technically nonconforming with the existing R-1 Single Family zoning designation, and they are uses that are not specifically listed in the zoning ordinance. A special land use designation will better align the existing situation with the zoning ordinance and will provide a process for any future requests. As is permitted in the zoning ordinance, the Director of Public Works has determined that the existing uses are in the "Public and Institutional" category and that they are similar to the "Private and Parochial Schools" use, which may be permitted in all residential zones as special land uses. Following the hearing, the Planning Commission shall make a recommendation to the City Commission to approve, approve with conditions, or deny the special land use designation. This hearing is held pursuant to the requirements of Article 11 of the East Grand Rapids Zoning Ordinance.

The application and plans may be viewed on the following pages, or at the Public Works Administration and Engineering office.

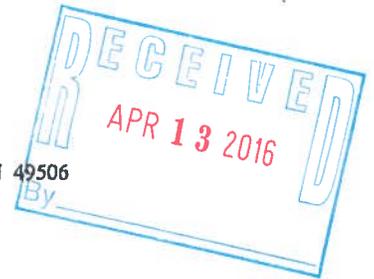
The Planning Commission welcomes your views in this matter. You may comment at the scheduled meeting or write to the Planning Commission, 750 Lakeside Drive, SE, East Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506, or send an email to the recording secretary, Lynda Taylor, at [ltaylor@eastgr.org](mailto:ltaylor@eastgr.org). To be included in the hearing, written communications must contain the sender's name and address. Questions regarding this application may be directed to the Zoning Administrator at (616)940-4817, or by email to [tfaasse@eastgr.org](mailto:tfaasse@eastgr.org).

DATE: Tuesday, June 14, 2016  
TIME: 5:30 p.m.  
PLACE: East Grand Rapids Community Center, Commission Chambers  
750 Lakeside Drive, SE, East Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506

Thomas A. Faasse  
Zoning Administrator



**CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS**  
750 LAKESIDE DRIVE SE • EAST GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN 49506



**Zoning Review Application**

Project Name Calvin College - Ravenswood  
 Property Address 3222 Lake Drive and 3120 Lake Drive,  
East Grand Rapids, Michigan  
 Project Description Please see attachment

Type of Request (check)	Fee
<input type="checkbox"/> Site Plan Review (Administrative)	\$200*
<input type="checkbox"/> Site Plan Review (Intermediate)	\$300*
<input type="checkbox"/> Site Plan Review (Complete)	<del>\$500*</del>
<input type="checkbox"/> Rezoning Application	\$800
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Special Use Permit	\$500
<input type="checkbox"/> Planned Unit Development	\$1,000*

(attach separate sheet if necessary)

\*Escrow fees may also be required.

Permanent Parcel Number 41-18-02-115-003 (Ravenswood 3.6 acres)  
41-18-03-276-016 (24 acres)  
 Zoning District R.1  
 Current Property Use Institutional/Private School

Contact Information (Please provide email addresses.)

	Company	Address	Contact Person	Daytime Phone
Applicant	Varnum, LLP	Bridgewater Place, P.O. Box 352, (mdzimmerman@varnumlaw.com)	Matthew D. Zimmerman	338-6536
Owner	Calvin College	3201 Burton, S.E. Grand Rapids, MI 49546-4388	Sally VanderPloeg (svploeg@calvin.edu)	526-7112
Developer				
Designer				

See the back of this form for items that must be attached to this application at the time of submission.

Sally VanderPloeg  
 Property Owner Signature  
 Vice President for Administration & Finance, CFO  
4/11/16 Calvin College  
 Date

Matthew D. Zimmerman  
 Applicant Signature (if different)  
4/11/16 Varnum LLP  
 Date

## Attachments Required For Preliminary Review

	Site Plan Review			Rezoning Application	Special Use Permit	Planned Unit Development
	Administrative	Intermediate	Complete			
A narrative describing the overall objective of the proposed project	X	X	X	X	X	X
Site Plan Drawings showing:						
A. Name of Applicant	X	X	X	X	X	X
B. North arrow	X	X	X	X	X	X
C. Legend	X	X	X	X	X	X
D. Scale of drawing	X	X	X	X	X	X
E. A location map w/exact location of project and surrounding area	X	X	X	X	X	X
F. Location, size, appearance of any existing or proposed signs	X	X	X	X	X	X
G. Location and type of exterior lighting	X	X	X	X	X	X
H. Screening and buffering with reference to dimensions and character	X	X	X	X	X	X
I. Dimensions of setbacks, locations, heights and size of buildings and structures	X	X	X	X	X	X
J. Proposed parking areas with lines showing individual spaces – include all barrier-free parking.	X	X	X	X	X	X
K. Highlights of changes made from existing building(s), parking or site plans.	X					
L. Locations of fire hydrants, curbs, gutters, utility lines, easements.	X	X	X	X	X	X
M. Topography of site			X	X	X	X
N. Proposed grading			X	X	X	X
O. Drainage, storm and sanitary sewers			X	X	X	X
Environmental Impact			X		*	*
Fiscal Impact Analysis			X		*	*
Traffic Impact Analysis			X		*	*

\* Depending on the scope of the development, these items may be required.

This list is provided as a summary of ordinance requirements, and additional information may be required in some cases. Please see the appropriate section of the City's zoning ordinance for complete details of all the above.

**ATTACHMENT TO ZONING REVIEW APPLICATION  
FOR CALVIN COLLEGE**

**Project Description:** The northeast portion of Calvin College's ("Calvin's") main campus is located in the City of East Rapids (see Attachment A). It contains the following improvements: a baseball field; two practice fields used for soccer, lacrosse and field hockey; and a house. The house is named "Ravenswood" and is located on the west side of the north access entrance to the campus off of Lake Drive. Ravenswood historically housed the school president and in more recent times was used for out of town visitors having business with Calvin. It has approximately 3,095 sq. ft., with five bedrooms and five and one-half bathrooms on one and a half stories. There is a full kitchen, a dining room, a living room and a completed basement. Calvin plans to renovate the interior of the structure (no external modifications) to configure the bedrooms to allow housing for a total of eight students and one adult mentor. The remainder of the house will be communal space for all students. Ravenswood has a three-stall detached garage and sufficient parking areas to accommodate additional vehicles. There also is a small accessory structure between the house and garage used for storage. After the renovation, Calvin plans to allow eight students to live in the house along with one adult mentor. The number of vehicles will be limited to four. The students would be in their junior or senior years and would be specially selected by the College.

**Compliance with Zoning Ordinance Standards.**

Calvin's current and proposed uses of its property (student on-campus group housing, outdoor sports facilities and accessory storage building) in East Grand Rapids would best be described as institutional or college/residential campus uses. These uses are not specifically listed in the East Grand Rapids zoning ordinance. Article 8, Section 5.75A allows "similar uses" as determined by the Director of Public Works. It is Calvin's understanding that the Director of Public Works has determined Calvin's current and proposed uses of its property in East Grand Rapids to most closely resemble "Public and Institutional Uses," and more specifically "Private or Parochial School" uses. These uses are permitted in the R-1 District only as Special Uses.

While the proposed change in the use of Ravenswood is what prompted Calvin to pursue this special use, following discussions with the City's Zoning Administrator, Calvin agreed to include all of its property in East Grand Rapids within this application. The other current uses (athletic activities on the three existing fields-see Attachments A and C) would continue as has been the case for the past many years. Those fields are quite isolated from the surrounding area in East Grand Rapids. The closest field is approximately 250 feet from Lake Drive and approximately 100 feet from the nearest homes on the east side of Woodcliff Avenue. These fields are screened by heavy tree cover and are substantially lower in grade than the elevation at Lake Drive and at Woodcliff Avenue. The continuation of these activities meets the standards discussed below for much the same reason as the proposed use of Ravenswood.

Attachments A and B will serve as the required site plan. Please let us know if additional detail is required.

I. **Article 11 Special Land Use, Section 5.94, Review Standards**

A. **The proposed use will comply with the general objectives and land use policies of the City of East Grand Rapids Master Plan.**

Both the proposed renovation of Ravenswood and the continued use of the athletic fields on the Calvin property located in East Grand Rapids comply with the general objectives and land use policies of the City's Master Plan. This property is designated in the future land use map as public/quasi-public use. These college activities are quasi-public. The proposed uses are open to the members of the public who applied for and were granted admission to the College.

B. **The proposed use will be designed, constructed, operated, and maintained so it is appropriate and harmonious with the intended character and appearance of the surrounding area; will be compatible with the intent of the zone district; and will not change the essential character of the surrounding area.**

Ravenswood is harmonious with the character of adjacent property in the surrounding area. It is of the same type and size of the closest houses in East Grand Rapids. The closest house located in East Grand Rapids is on the north side of Lake Drive and is approximately 325 feet away (approximately 250 feet to the lot line) (see Attachment C).<sup>1</sup> The entire area in between is comprised of thick tree cover and a portion of a pond. The closest house on the south side of Lake Drive within the City of East Grand Rapids is approximately 575 feet away, and the area in between is also thick tree cover and a pond (see Attachments A and C). Ravenswood is screened from Lake Drive by this heavy tree cover as well. It has never had an adverse effect on the character of the property in East Grand Rapids and after its renovation it will continue to be harmonious with adjacent property in East Grand Rapids. Neither the current athletic uses, nor the proposed renovations to Ravenswood will change the essential character of the surrounding area within East Grand Rapids.

C. **The establishment, maintenance, location or operation of the use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in that zone district.**

All of the surrounding property adjacent to Calvin's property in East Grand Rapids is already developed. If Calvin ever proposes additional development within the City, it will seek to modify the proposed special use approval.

D. **The establishment, maintenance, location, or operation of the proposed use will not be detrimental to or endanger the health, safety, or general welfare of any persons; will not be injurious to or conflict with the use or enjoyment of neighboring property for the purposes permitted; and will not result in any significant adverse impact on the natural environment.**

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<sup>1</sup> The houses directly across Lake Drive from Ravenswood are located in the City of Grand Rapids.

The existing athletic uses and the proposed student residential use of Ravenswood will not be detrimental to the health, safety or general welfare of any current uses of property in East Grand Rapids. On the contrary, the expansive open green space is a benefit to surrounding properties. It enhances the natural environment with its tree cover and other landscaping. The ponds and pervious surfaces provide the best natural storm water management system possible. The facilities have all been developed. They are well maintained and are screened from adjacent properties in East Grand Rapids.

**E. The proposed use will not involve activities, processes, materials, and equipment or conditions of operation that will be detrimental to any persons, property, or the general welfare by reason of excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare, or odors.**

There would be no hazardous substance use in Ravenswood, nor would the residential activity there create hazardous or potentially hazardous situations. Neither the existing athletic uses nor the proposed use in the revised Ravenswood either currently involve or will involve the excessive production of traffic, noise, smoke, fumes, glare, or odors. The athletic facilities may currently create some low level of noise, but that it screened by the surrounding wooded area. In addition, these activities only take place during daylight hours.

Any traffic generated by the athletic fields currently exists. While the number of vehicles using Ravenswood might be slightly in excess of the residential properties in the surrounding area of East Grand Rapids, the number of trips generated would probably not be any different, or even less. The students living at Ravenswood would walk to classes and other campus activities. Moreover, even if Ravenswood generated the same number of external trips as a typical residential structure in East Grand Rapids, and even if all of those trips utilized the north access drive from campus (and not the other four campus exit drives<sup>2</sup>), it would add an insignificant number of trips compared to the current use of that access road and Lake Drive. There is ample on-campus parking on Calvin property located within the City of Grand Rapids. The four access roads from the campus are on major roads (E. Beltline, Burton and Lake).

**F. Adequate utilities, highways, streets, access, drainage structures, police and fire protection, refuse disposal, schools, and other necessary services or facilities have been or will be provided to serve the proposed use; the proposed use will not place undue demands on public services or facilities that result in exceeding their capacity.**

The use of Ravenswood for student housing will not increase demands on public services provided by East Grand Rapids. Campus security would handle most of the police functions there. The increased use of public water and sewer would not impact the City

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<sup>2</sup> There are two exits to southbound E. Beltline, one exit to northbound E. Beltline, and one exit to Burton Street. In addition, there is an exit to E. Paris, but a gate on that route is usually closed unless athletic events are taking place.

in any way. The students would not utilize the public school system in East Grand Rapids.

The current athletic activities and proposed residential use for the renovated Ravenswood generally do not involve the utilization of highways, fire protection, refuse disposal, or other necessary services. The athletic fields are nearly 100% pervious surfaces and thus will handle any stormwater through infiltration. In addition, the property has a large pond system that will handle stormwater from the Ravenswood area.

**G. The proposed use will, in all other respects, conform to the applicable regulations of the zone district in which it is located, specific requirements of Article 8, all conditions of approval, and all other applicable provisions of law, ordinance, or statute.**

The existing athletic facilities and the proposed residential use of a revised Ravenswood meet the requirements of Article 8. (See Section II. below.)

II. **Article 8 Additional Use Requirements, Section 5.73 Public and Institutional Uses, Private or Parochial School.**

**1. The minimum lot area shall be one acre.**

The area between Lake Drive, the northern access road to the campus, Knollcrest Circle and the pond is well in excess of one acre (3.6 acres-see Attachment B). The Calvin property within East Grand Rapids totals approximately 27.6 acres.

**2. The minimum lot width shall be 150 feet.**

The portion of the Calvin property that Ravenswood occupies (bounded by Lake Drive to the north, the northern access road to the campus to the west, Knollcrest Circle to the south and the East Grand Rapids boundary north of Lake Drive extended south into the pond to the west-see Attachment B) is over 200 feet wide. The entire parcel in East Grand Rapids is approximately 775 feet wide on the north side and approximately 350 feet wide on the south side.

**3. At least one property line shall abut and have direct access to an arterial or collector street.**

The property abuts Lake Drive on its north boundary. Ravenswood fronts on the College's north access drive which connects to Lake Drive.

**4. All buildings, parking areas and outdoor activity areas (ball fields, playgrounds, bleachers, etc.) shall be set back a minimum of 40 feet from any side or rear property line abutting a residential district.**

The area of campus within East Grand Rapids occupied by Ravenswood has a setback of approximately 150 feet from Lake Drive to the north. The other three directions are campus property and have even greater setbacks from closest

properties in East Grand Rapids. The athletic fields are approximately 100 feet from the closest houses on Woodcliff Avenue, and are screened with heavy tree cover.

**5. A six-foot high fence shall be constructed along any side or rear property line abutting a residential district.**

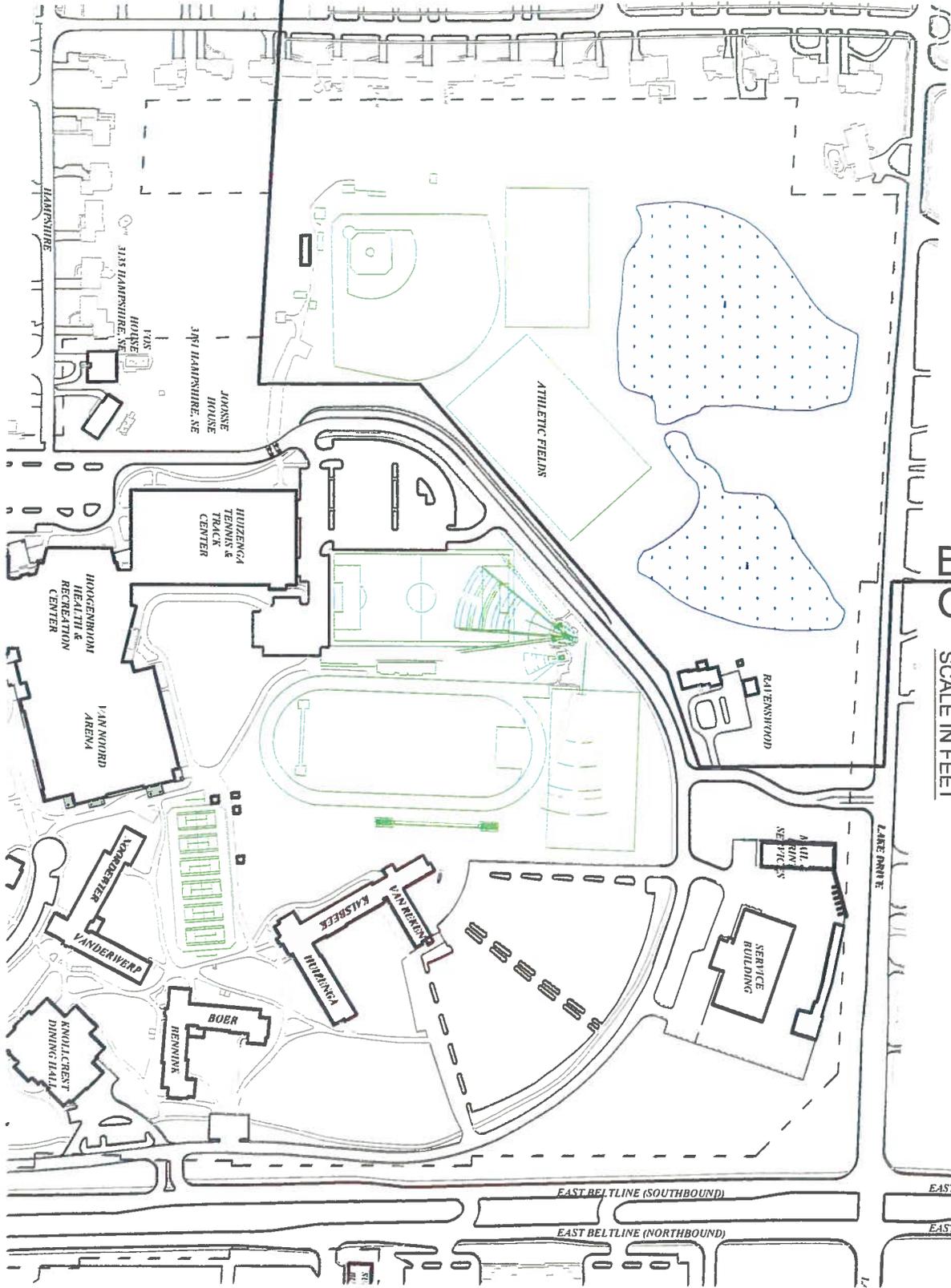
Calvin owns two of the seven houses located on Hampshire Blvd. adjacent to the south boundary of the athletic fields (these are in the City of Grand Rapids). The houses are more than 200 feet away from the baseball field, and are separated by heavy tree cover. The houses on Woodcliff Avenue are approximately 100 feet from the athletic fields. They are separated by heavy tree cover. The grade of the athletic fields is substantially lower than the grade of the houses on both streets. Thus the fencing requirement is unnecessary.

**6. Lighting for night time activity areas shall be directed and shielded so the light sources is not visible from any residential use within 150 feet of the light fixture. All lighting, including building and security lighting, shall be located to prevent glare on adjacent properties and streets.**

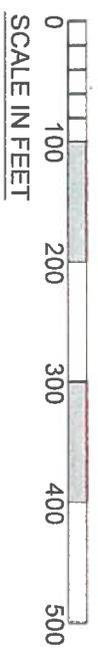
The athletic facilities do not utilize lighting for night time activity. Ravenswood is more than 150 feet from any residential use within East Grand Rapids. Any lighting there is adequately shielded by thick tree cover.

ATTACHMENT A

EGR  
GR



EGR  
GR



EAST BELTLINE (SOUTHBOUND)

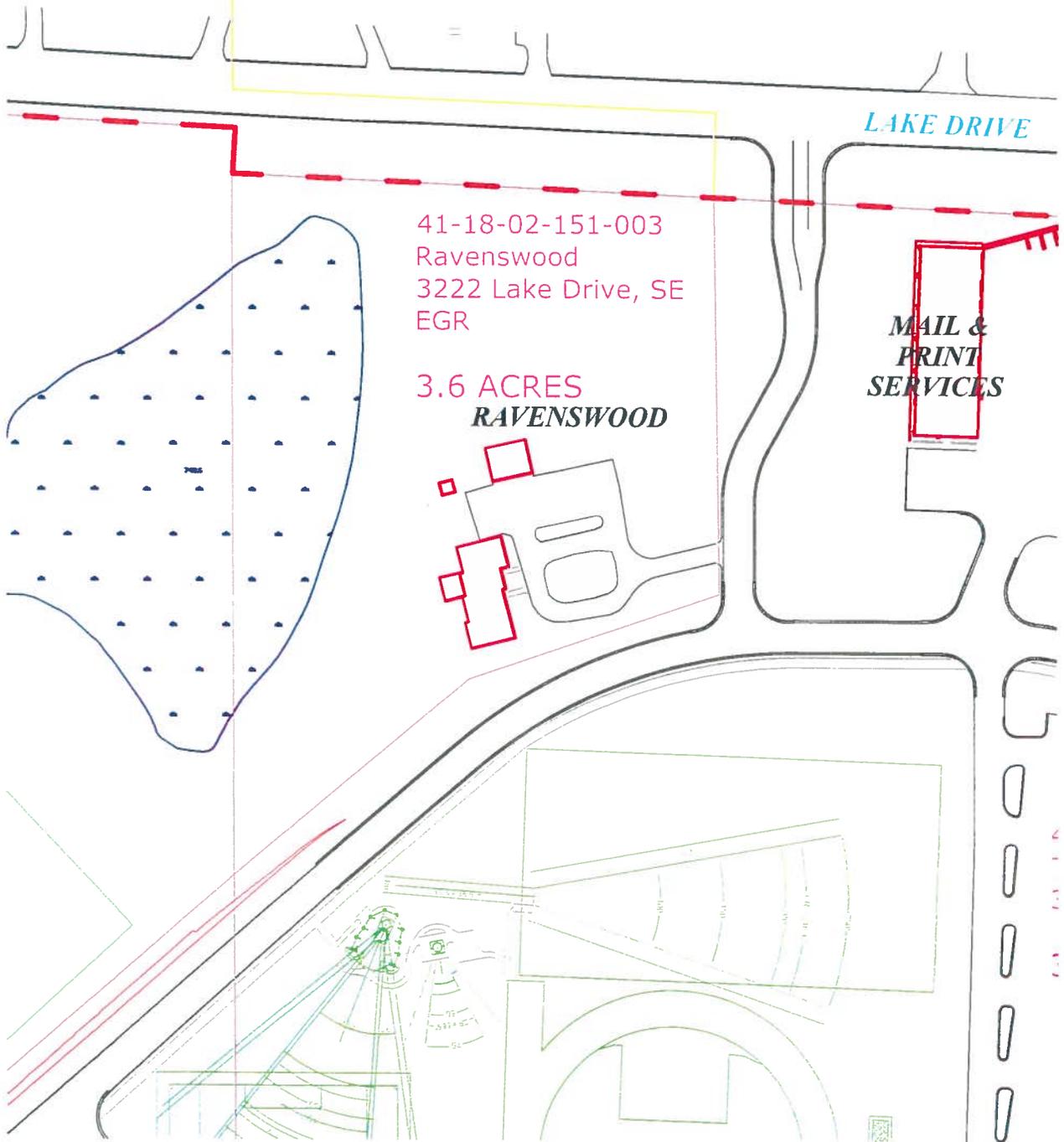
EAST BELTLINE (NORTHBOUND)

EAST BELTLINE (S)

EAST BELTLINE (N)

ATTACHMENT B

EGR  
GR



41-18-02-151-003  
Ravenswood  
3222 Lake Drive, SE  
EGR

3.6 ACRES  
**RAVENSWOOD**

LAKE DRIVE

**MAIL &  
PRINT  
SERVICES**

41-18-02-151-003

ATTACHMENT C



**CITY OF EAST GRAND RAPIDS  
ZONING ORDINANCE**

**SUMMARY OF PROCESS  
TO ADD AN UNLISTED LAND USE TO THE ORDINANCE**

- Applicant requests a certain land use
- Director determines that the use is not listed in the zoning ordinance for any zoning district, either as a permitted use or as a special land use
- Director interprets that the use is similar to a listed use, but that the proposed similar use is a special land use, not a use permitted by right
  - Options:
    - Apply to amend zoning ordinance – lengthy process and special land use application required after that
    - Apply for a Use Variance – not legally likely to succeed and not flexible in the future
    - Use “similar use” procedure in zoning ordinance, Section 5.75A
- Applicant applies for Special Land Use, which includes Site Plan Review
- Planning Commission holds a public hearing
- City Commission holds a public hearing
- If Special Use approved by Planning Commission and then by City Commission, staff initiates zoning ordinance amendment to include new land use