

PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

April 7, 2025



PREPARED FOR THE PLAN COMMISSION

Project Address: 6802 Hammersley Road (District 20 – Alder Harrington-McKinney)

Application Type: Conditional Use

Legistar File ID # [87469](#)

Prepared By: Colin Punt, AICP, Planning Division
Report includes comments from other City agencies, as noted.

Reviewed By: Kevin Firchow, AICP, Principal Planner

Summary

Applicant: Jack Brody; City of Madison Engineering Division; 1600 Emil Street; Madison, WI 53713

Requested Action: The applicant is seeking approval of a conditional use in a CN (Conservancy) district at 6802 Hammersley Road per §28.091(1) MGO.

Proposal Summary: The applicant is seeking approval to construct a standalone electrical generator in the former Greentree Landfill (Greentree - Chapel Hill Park).

Applicable Regulations & Standards: Standards for conditional use approval are found in §28.183(6) MGO.

Review Required By: Plan Commission

Summary Recommendations: The Planning Division recommends that the Plan Commission find that the standards for conditional uses are met and **approve** a conditional use for a generator at 6802 Hammersley Road, subject to input at the public hearing and the conditions recommended by the Planning Division and other reviewing agencies beginning on page 4.

Background Information

Parcel Location: The subject site is 39.1 acres and generally located on the north side of the intersection of Hammersley Road and McKenna Boulevard. The site is within Alder District 20 (Alder Harrington McKinney) and the Madison Metropolitan School District.

Existing Conditions and Land Use: The site, zoned CN (Conservancy district), is a former landfill repurposed as the Greentree – Chapel Hill Park.

Surrounding Land Uses and Zoning:

North: Single-family residences zoned SR-C1 (Suburban Residential-Consistent 1 district) and a variety of condos and apartment buildings of varying sizes, zoned PD (Planned Development district) and SR-V2 (Suburban Residential-Varied 2 district);

South: Across Hammersley Road, small multifamily buildings zoned SR-V1 (Suburban Residential-Varied 1 district); across McKenna Boulevard, Elver Park, zoned A (Agriculture district);

West: Variety of condos and apartment buildings of varying sizes, zoned PD and SR-V2; and

East: One- and two-family residences zoned SR-C1 and SR-C3 (Suburban Residential-Consistent 3 district).

Adopted Land Use Plan: The [Comprehensive Plan](#) (2023) and the [Southwest Neighborhood Plan](#) (2008) both recommend Parks and Open Space for the site.

Zoning Summary: The subject property is zoned CC (Commercial Center District):

Requirements	Required	Proposed
Lot Area (sq. ft.)	5 acres	39.09 acres
Lot Width	300'	>300'
Front Yard Setback	30'	>30'
Side Yard Setback	80'	>80' (see Zoning comment 1)
Rear Yard Setback	100'	Adequate
Maximum Lot Coverage	5%	<5%
Maximum Building Height	2 stories/35'	N/A

Site Design	Required	Proposed
Number Parking Stalls	None, except where required for specific facilities, as determined by Zoning Administrator	None
Electric Vehicle Stalls	Not required	None
Accessible Stalls	Not required	None
Loading	Not required	None
Number Bike Parking Stalls	Not required	None
Landscaping and Screening	Yes, screening	None (see Zoning comment 2)
Lighting	Not required	None
Building Form and Design	Not required	None

Other Critical Zoning Items	Urban Design (Public Park), Adjacent to Park, Utility Easements
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Table Prepared by Jenny Kirchgatter, Assistant Zoning Administrator

Environmental Corridor Status: The property is not located within a mapped environmental corridor.

Public Utilities and Services: The site is served by a full range of urban services.

Project Description, Analysis, & Conclusion

The applicant is requesting conditional use approval to build an electrical generator at the Greentree Landfill. The former landfill is partially maintained with a gas extraction system. The proposed generator would be a permanent, onsite electrical generator to be used during electrical outages. A gas extraction blower is located in a structure located approximately 400 feet north of McKenna Boulevard. The blower house is located between a photovoltaic solar array and an existing electrical pad and enclosure. The proposed 10-foot by 8-foot (80 sq ft) concrete pad would be laid adjacent to the existing electrical equipment. The new generator, mounted on a steel stand and surrounded by a 10-foot by 4-foot, 7-foot tall painted steel cage, would be placed on the new pad. In conversations with the City Engineering Division, it is estimated the generator would run approximately an hour every other month for maintenance and for the duration of any unexpected power outage. Engineering Staff estimate it would run for no more than a total of 20 hours in most years.

This request is subject to the standards for conditional uses. This section continues with a summary of adopted plan recommendations, conditional use standards, and ends with a conclusion.

Consistency with Adopted Plans

The [Comprehensive Plan](#) (2023) recommends Parks and Open Space (P) for the site, a land use designation which includes parks, recreational facilities, conservation areas, stormwater management facilities, cemeteries, and other open space. Strategy 4-Action (a) in the Comprehensive Plan's Health and Safety chapter calls for the City to "continue to mitigate built environmental hazards through...testing, inspection..." and Strategy 8-Action (a) states the need to "Ensure high quality public maintenance services for city owned and operated facilities." The [Southwest Neighborhood Plan](#) (2008) also recommends maintaining this site for parks and open space.

Conditional Use Standards

In regard to conditional use approval standards, the Plan Commission shall not approve a conditional use without due consideration of the City's adopted plan recommendations, design guidelines, supplemental regulations, and finding that all of the conditional use standards of §28.183(6) M.G.O. are met. Staff advises the Plan Commission that in evaluating the conditional use standards, State law requires that conditional use findings must be based on "substantial evidence" that directly pertains to each standard and not based on personal preference or speculation.

The site proposed for the generator pad is approximately 140 feet from the nearest residence on Connecticut Court, which is about five feet closer than the existing blower house. While staff have considered the impact of noise from the generator on the nearby residential uses, staff believes any impacts will be minimal as the Engineering Division believes the generator will only run for approximately 20 hours during any given year. Further, staff notes that the supplemental regulations for emergency electrical generators limit the total usage of the generator as well, as seen in Zoning comment 3.

As noted above, the continued need for gas extraction of this former landfill is consistent with the actions identified in the [Comprehensive Plan's](#) Health and Safety chapter. When considering the recommendations of the plans and the recommended conditions of approval from reviewing agencies, staff believe the conditional use standards can be found met.

Staff also notes that as the request is for development in a public park, it is subject to urban design review. The proposal has been administratively approved by the UDC Secretary.

Conclusion

The applicant requests conditional use approval for a generator in a CN district. Staff believe the request is consistent with the recommendations of the applicable adopted plans and that all applicable conditional use standards can be found met. Staff notes that as a conditional use, the Plan Commission retains continuing jurisdiction to review and resolve complaints that may arise on the operation of the conditional use. At time of writing, staff is unaware of any public comments received regarding this request.

Recommendation

Planning Division Recommendations (Contact Colin Punt 243-0455)

The Planning Division recommends that the Plan Commission find that the standards for conditional uses are met and **approve** a conditional use for a generator at 6802 Hammersley Road, subject to input at the public hearing and the conditions recommended by the Planning Division and other reviewing agencies below.

Recommended Conditions of Approval: Major/Non-Standard Conditions are Shaded

Zoning Administrator (Contact Jenny Kirchgatter, 266-4429)

1. Show the side yard setback distance measured from the west side property line to the proposed generator. The side yard setback is a minimum of 80 feet.
2. Provide screening for the proposed generator. The generator shall be located and screened to reduce its visual impact when viewed from neighboring property and to be compatible with neighboring structures and the character of the community. Screening materials, landscaping, or fencing shall be similar in appearance to those used for the principal structure on the zoning lot.
3. Per Supplemental Regulations Section 28.151 Emergency Electric Generator, the electric output shall not exceed three thousand (3,000) kilowatts and the generator shall be operated a maximum of two hundred (200) hours per year.
4. Per Section 28.186(4)(b), the property owner or operator is required to bring the property into compliance with all elements of the approved site plans by the date established by the Zoning Administrator as part of the site and building plan approval. Work with Zoning staff to establish a final site compliance date.

The Planning Division, Engineering Division—Main Office, Engineering Division—Mapping Section, Traffic Engineering Division, Fire Department, Parks Division, Forestry Section, Water Utility, Metro Transit, and Parking Utility have reviewed this request and have recommended no conditions of approval.