

**Plan Commission Meeting – April , 2022  
Agenda Item 3**

**Sophia Steak – New Restaurant  
Special Use Permit – Restaurant Partially within 150' of Residential Zoning**

Staff Report  
Vicinity Map  
Air Photos  
Zoning Map

*Materials Submitted by the Petitioners*

Application  
Statement of Intent  
Site Plan  
Floor Plan



## STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION

TO:	Acting Chairman Pasquesi and members of the Plan Commission
DATE:	April 13, 2022
FROM:	Catherine J. Czerniak, Director of Community Development
SUBJECT:	<i>Special Use Permit for Sophia Steak at 181 E. Laurel Avenue</i>

### Petitioner

Sophia Steak Lake  
Ryan O'Donnell, Glenn Keefer,  
Jon Farrer (restaurant owners)

### Property Location

181 E. Laurel Avenue

### Zoning District

B-2 Community Commercial

### Property Owner

Gershman Properties,  
12300 Wilshire Boulevard Suite 310  
Los Angeles, CA 90025

Representatives: Ryan O'Donnell, Glenn Keefer, Jon Farrer, Sophia Steak owners  
Christopher Canning, attorney

### Description of Request

This is a request for a Special Use Permit to allow a new restaurant to be located in space previously occupied by other restaurants. The property is located on the southwest corner of Western and Laurel Avenues and is a tenant space in a larger, multi-tenant commercial building.

In 2002 and 2003, the former Knauz car dealership building was modified to allow adaptive reuse as the multi-tenant commercial building that exists today. The Grille on Laurel restaurant was approved by the City Council through a Special Use Permit and was the first restaurant located in the space.

### Review Process

Restaurants and bars are permitted outright in the B-2 zoning district except when located within 150 feet of property zoned for residential use. Restaurants proposed within 150 feet of a residential zoning district may only be authorized through a Special Use Permit. The proposed restaurant is located within 150 feet of residential zoning districts. A residential zoning district is located approximately 130 feet to the west, along Laurel Avenue, and a residential zoning district is located on the east side of Western Avenue extending across the railroad tracks and across McKinley Road. Therefore, this petition is presented to the Commission for consideration of a Special Use Permit consistent with the Code requirement. The property directly across Laurel Avenue is not a residential zoning district although the uses located there are part of a residential planned development.

The Special Use Permit process provides for a public hearing before the Plan Commission. The Commission is required to evaluate special use requests for restaurants based on the standard Special Use Permit criteria and on the performance standards that apply specifically to

restaurants. The criteria and standards are reviewed later in this staff report. As part of the special use process, the Plan Commission can recommend conditions to the City Council if the Commission determines that approval of the request, with some limitations and requirements, is appropriate. Conditions of approval as part of a Special Use Permit can impose a higher bar for restaurants located within 150 feet of residentially zoned properties than for restaurants located more centrally within the business district.

Conditions of approval were established for The Grille on Laurel, the restaurant that originally occupied the space. The conditions of that approval are attached to this staff report for information. It is important to note that because the request for a Special Use Permit for The Grille on Laurel was considered at the time that the building was being converted from a car dealership to a multi-tenant commercial building, many of the conditions related to the overall improvements that were required of the developer included work in the City right-of-way to enhance the on street parking in the area. That work was all completed many years ago.

### **Background**

The corner of Laurel and Western Avenues has long been a commercial site. City records indicate that as early as the 1920's, commercial activity was taking place in this location. At the peak of commercial activity in this area, a large car dealership, a vehicle service garage including a paint spray area, a building materials yard and the City's Municipal Services Facility and maintenance yard were all located in this area.

In 2001, the City reconsidered whether the commercial zoning designation for the area that is the subject of this petition was appropriate. After much study and discussion, and after several public hearings on the matter, the Plan Commission reaffirmed that the commercial zoning in the area of Laurel and Western Avenues was not only appropriate, but important as a component of the City's business district. The matter of commercial zoning on the property is not before the Commission for discussion as part of this petition. The commercial zoning is in place, and the information above is offered as background only.

### **Description of the Site and Surrounding Area**

The commercial building on the southwest corner of Western and Laurel Avenue is in the northern portion of the City's Central Business District and has been home to a variety of retail uses, service businesses, restaurants and office tenants for nearly 20 years. This building is located across the street from Kelmscott Park, a new residential development which includes apartments, condominiums and single family homes. Several condominium buildings are located to the west of the site of the proposed restaurant, on the south side of Laurel Avenue, and Regent's Row, the City's only rowhouse development, is located just to the south of the site of the proposed restaurant. Crystal Point Condominiums and other multi-family buildings are located further north on Western Avenue. Single family neighborhoods are located to the east, across the railroad tracks and to the west toward Green Bay Road. The location has proven in the past to be an optimal location for a restaurant.

Many commercial developments and businesses in the City's linear Central Business District abut residential uses. This juxtaposition can create conflicts while at the same time, provide a unique amenity to residents who are able to walk to restaurants, stores and service businesses. Together, the residential neighborhoods and the Central Business District create a character that is uniquely Lake Forest. The Special Use Permit process provides the opportunity to establish conditions that help to manage potential conflicts between adjacent uses.

## **KEY ISSUES**

### ***Restaurant***

As noted above, Sophia Steak proposes to occupy the space previously occupied by restaurants. The size and overall configuration of the space will not change although there will be interior upgrades and alterations to better accommodate the established character of Sophia Steak. As proposed, the new restaurant will have a dining room with large booths and tables, a bar with both bar and table seating options, a room for private parties, and seasonal outdoor seating on the existing patio located in front of the restaurant, along Western Avenue.

The restaurant's planned hours are 4 p.m. to 10:30 p.m. Sundays through Thursdays, and 4 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday evenings. No lunch time service is planned. Operating hours may be modified depending on customer patterns. The required City Liquor License allows the service of alcohol until midnight.

The existing hood and exhaust system will remain, it will be cleaned and inspected prior to the opening of the restaurant. As necessary systems will be repaired and replaced over time. The Code requires regular maintenance of the systems. Mechanical noise and odor concerns will be addressed through the best technology available.

### ***Parking***

Limited on site parking is available in the garage located at the west end of the building. Use of the garage is determined by the building owner in coordination with the tenants of the building. Most of the tenants of the building are daytime uses which frees up the garage space for use by the restaurant in the evening. There is considerable street parking in the immediate area of the restaurant, some on Laurel Avenue immediate adjacent to the building and more on both the east and west sides of Western Avenue. Since the previous restaurants operated in this space, additional diagonal parking spaces have been constructed on the east side of Western Avenue. The prior parallel spaces on the east side of Western Avenue, north of Laurel Avenue, were replaced with diagonal parking spaces as part of the Kelmscott Park development specifically to provide customer parking spaces for businesses in the area.

Valet parking for customers on busy evenings and for special events will need to be offered by the restaurant if demand warrants. Parking for valet service is available on the east side of the railroad tracks, just south of Woodland Road.

Employee parking is not permitted on public streets in the Central Business District. The restaurant owners and manager will be responsible for assuring that employees do not park on City streets. The parking lots on the east side of the railroad tracks can easily accommodate employee parking during the later afternoon and evening hours.

Since this is an existing building, with no expansion of the building footprint, compliance with current parking standards is not required. Importantly, the location of the restaurant is walkable from many of the nearby residential units as well as from many of the single family neighborhoods located in the general vicinity.

## **Staff Evaluation**

Provided below is an evaluation of the **Performance Standards** for restaurants. The Performance Standards, like the special use criteria, are part of the City Code.

*Performance Standard - Availability of parking*

Unlike restaurants located in the core of the Central Business District, Sophia Steak will benefit from on site parking in the garage as well as ample on street parking. The site is located close enough to the public parking lots on the east side of the railroad tracks to facilitate valet parking is needed. As part of the Kelmscott Park development, additional on street parking spaces were added specifically to provide customer parking for businesses in this area.

Importantly, given the convenient location, it is expected that many customers from the surrounding residential areas will walk to the restaurant.

The restaurant owners and manager will be responsible for advising all restaurant employees that on street employee parking is not permitted. Community Development staff will work with the property and business owners and the City's Police Department to address any on street parking by employees.

*Performance Standard – Building Review Board Approval*

Only minor exterior alterations are proposed including modifications to the front entrance. If the proposed signage for the restaurant does not conform to previous approvals for the building, Building Review Board review will be required. Existing landscaping will be updated and enhanced in the patio area.

*Performance Standard – Issuance of a Liquor License*

The City Council has jurisdiction over the issuance of liquor licenses and determining whether businesses should or should not be permitted to serve or sell alcohol. An application for a liquor license will be considered by the City Council concurrent with the Special Use Permit. The issuance of a liquor license is not under the purview of the Plan Commission.

Liquor licenses granted by the City Council establish hours during which liquor can be sold. Most liquor licenses allow the sale of alcohol between the hours of 11 a.m. and midnight although some licenses permit the sale of alcohol earlier in the morning.

*Performance Standard – Ventilation Systems*

The City Code requires high quality air filtration and ventilation systems for restaurants. The existing systems will be clean and inspected and, if determined to be necessary, repaired or replaced.

The Code requires regular, ongoing maintenance and cleaning of the ventilation systems and documentation of that work must be submitted to the City on an annual basis.

*Performance Standard – Amplified Sound*

No amplified outdoor sound or outdoor speakers are permitted by the Code.

*Performance Standard – Schedules for deliveries and trash pickup*

Hours for deliveries to restaurants and trash pickup are limited by the Code and may not occur earlier than 7 a.m. Trash and recycling containers are located inside the garage on the site. Deliveries will be scheduled to minimize congestion on the adjacent streets.

*Performance Standard – Minimizing impacts on single family homes: light, noise, traffic*

The proposed restaurant is in an existing commercial building. Delivery trucks will be limited to Western Avenue and the portion of Laurel Avenue immediately adjacent to the commercial building. City staff will work with the restaurant manager to schedule deliveries to minimize disruption to residential neighbors and traffic circulation in the area.

Provided below is an evaluation of the **Criteria for Special Use Permits** in the City Code.

*Special Use Permit Criteria #1: The establishment, maintenance or operation of the special use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, morals, comfort or general welfare.*

The proposed restaurant is consistent with other uses in the Central Business District and is not unlike other uses that are in proximity to the residential neighborhoods that border the full length of the City's business. In general, the business and residential uses have been able to co-exist for many years. Issues do come up from time to time and efforts are made to resolve them by working with all parties to assure that both the residential neighborhoods and the businesses thrive.

The continued operation of this space as a restaurant will not be detrimental to or endanger public health, safety, morals, comfort or general welfare and will offer an amenity often requested by Lake Forest residents.

*Special Use Permit Criteria #2: The special use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted and will not substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood.*

The proposed new restaurant is consistent with the long established use of the property. The proposed use, if operated consistent with the recommended conditions of approval, will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment or value of properties in the immediate area. Importantly, the restaurant operators are experienced and known for operating a first class restaurant. The proposed restaurant will be an amenity to the neighboring residential area and will add vitality to the City's business district.

Consistently, resident surveys indicate an interest in bringing new restaurants into the City's business district. In addition, the City's Strategic Plan places a high priority on encouraging new businesses to bring increased activity into the City's core and support property values throughout the community.

*Special Use Permit Criteria #3: The establishment of the special use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the district. In business districts, the special use will not negatively affect the overall character of the area or detract from the primary retail nature of the district.*

The surrounding area is already developed. The proposed restaurant may attract other tenants to this commercial building to provide increased options and to meet the needs and interests of the growing residential population located within walking distance.

The proposed restaurant will add to the vitality of the Central Business District and offer an additional dining option in the City's core area. The proposed restaurant, if operated consistent

with the proposed conditions of approval, will not negatively affect the overall character of the area and will support and enhance the business district.

*Special Use Permit Criteria #4: The exterior architectural appearance and functional plan of any proposed structure will not be incompatible with existing buildings, sites, the larger neighborhood or district so as to cause a substantial depreciation in the property values.*

No new buildings are proposed. Minor exterior upgrades are proposed to enhance the entrance to the restaurant.

*Special Use Permit Criteria #5: Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage and or necessary facilities have been or are being provided.*

Adequate utilities and other infrastructure are in place to serve the new restaurant which will be in an existing commercial development.

*Special Use Permit Criteria #6: Adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress.*

This is an existing commercial site. No changes are planned to the location or configuration of the curb cuts.

*Special Use Permit Criteria #7: The special use shall conform to the applicable regulations of the district in which it is located except as such regulations may in each instance be modified by the City Council as part of the Special Use Permit.*

As recommended, the Special Use Permit for the proposed restaurant will allow operation of the restaurant in a manner consistent with the regulations of the B-2, Community Commercial Business District. No variances from the regulations of the district are requested and the recommended conditions of approval will put operating parameters in place for the new restaurant.

#### **Correspondence and Public Testimony**

Notice of this petition was provided in accordance with the Code requirements. A legal ad was published in a newspaper with local circulation. Notices of the public hearing were mailed to residents in the surrounding area by the petitioner and by the City. The agenda for this meeting was posted at public locations and on the City's website. As of the date of this writing, no correspondence has been received on this petition.

#### **Staff Recommendation**

Based on the findings presented above, recommend approval of a Special Use Permit to authorize **Sophia Steak Lake Forest** to locate and operate in the existing commercial development, in the space previously occupied by a restaurant, at 181 E. Laurel Avenue. The following conditions are recommended recognizing the location of the restaurant partially within 150 feet of properties zoned for residential use.

1. No amplified music or speakers of any kind are permitted outside the building.
2. No employee parking is permitted on public streets.

3. No customer parking is permitted on Laurel Avenue, west of the commercial building.
4. Use of the patio, in any form, is not permitted after 10:30 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and after 11:30 p.m. on Friday and Saturday evenings. Clean up activity on the patio after the permitted hours may only occur if it can be accomplished in a manner that does not result in any off site noise impacts.
5. If determined to be necessary, at the sole discretion of the City, Sophia Steak Lake Forest shall offer valet parking. City owned remote parking lots located on the east side of the railroad tracks, south of Woodland Road, are available for use for valet parking.
6. Exterior lighting, signage and awnings proposed for the site shall be subject to City review and if not in full compliance with Code requirements and City guidelines, will be referred to the Building Review Board. The light source for all exterior lighting shall be shielded from view from off the property and only essential security lighting is permitted to remain on after operating hours.
7. A high quality air filter/hood system is required and must be maintained on a regular basis. A maintenance schedule for the exhaust and filter system of the restaurant must be submitted and approved by the City prior to the issuance of an Occupancy Permit for the restaurant.



THE GRILLE ON LAUREL CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL  
CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL – 1044 N. WESTERN AVENUE

1. Final plans for sidewalks, parking, curbing, and any other improvements proposed within the City right-of-way shall be subject to the review and approval of the City Engineer.
2. As proposed by the property owner and in order to address one of the impacts of the proposed development, the property owner shall pay for and construct public parking along the north side of the building and eliminate the parking on private property that requires vehicles to cross the public sidewalk.
3. The property owner shall pay for and re-construct the sidewalk along the north side of the building as reflected on the final plans approved by the City Engineer in order to accommodate the parking to be installed pursuant to Condition #2. The sidewalk shall be unobstructed and shall be a minimum of 5 feet wide. Because the sidewalk will be relocated on to private property, an easement for public pedestrian access shall be recorded for the sidewalk prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the renovated building.
4. Existing parallel parking shall remain undisturbed along the west side of Western Avenue except as may be authorized by the Director of Community Development during permitted construction activities.
5. The property owner shall submit a detailed landscape plan for review and approval by the Development Coordinator to ensure enhancement of the streetscapes, creation of a pedestrian friendly public sidewalk, softening of the building along the Laurel Avenue frontage, and landscaping of the courtyard.
6. Exterior lighting, signage, and awnings proposed for the site shall be subject to review and approval by the Building Review Board. The lighting should be focused away from the residential area and shall be on timers to automatically turn off immediately after business hours. Only essential security lighting, with the light source shielded from direct view, is permitted to remain on after operating hours.
7. A high quality air filter system shall be installed which system, shall be detailed in the building application materials submitted for build out of the restaurant and shall be subject to the review and approval of the City's Director of Community Development and shall be screened in a manner approved by the Building Review Board. An operation and maintenance schedule for the exhaust and filter system of the restaurant must be submitted and approved by the City prior to the issuance of a building permit for the restaurant and implementation of such operation and maintenance schedule shall be a condition of this Special Use Permit.
8. The Director of Community Development may require the restaurant to provide valet services during certain times based on an ongoing evaluation of activity levels and based on the timing of phased parking improvements that will occur as the Laurel and Western Avenue area revitalization continues.

9. The hours of operation of the restaurant kitchen shall be as follows:

Monday – Thursday 11am – 10pm

Friday, Saturday 11am – 10 pm

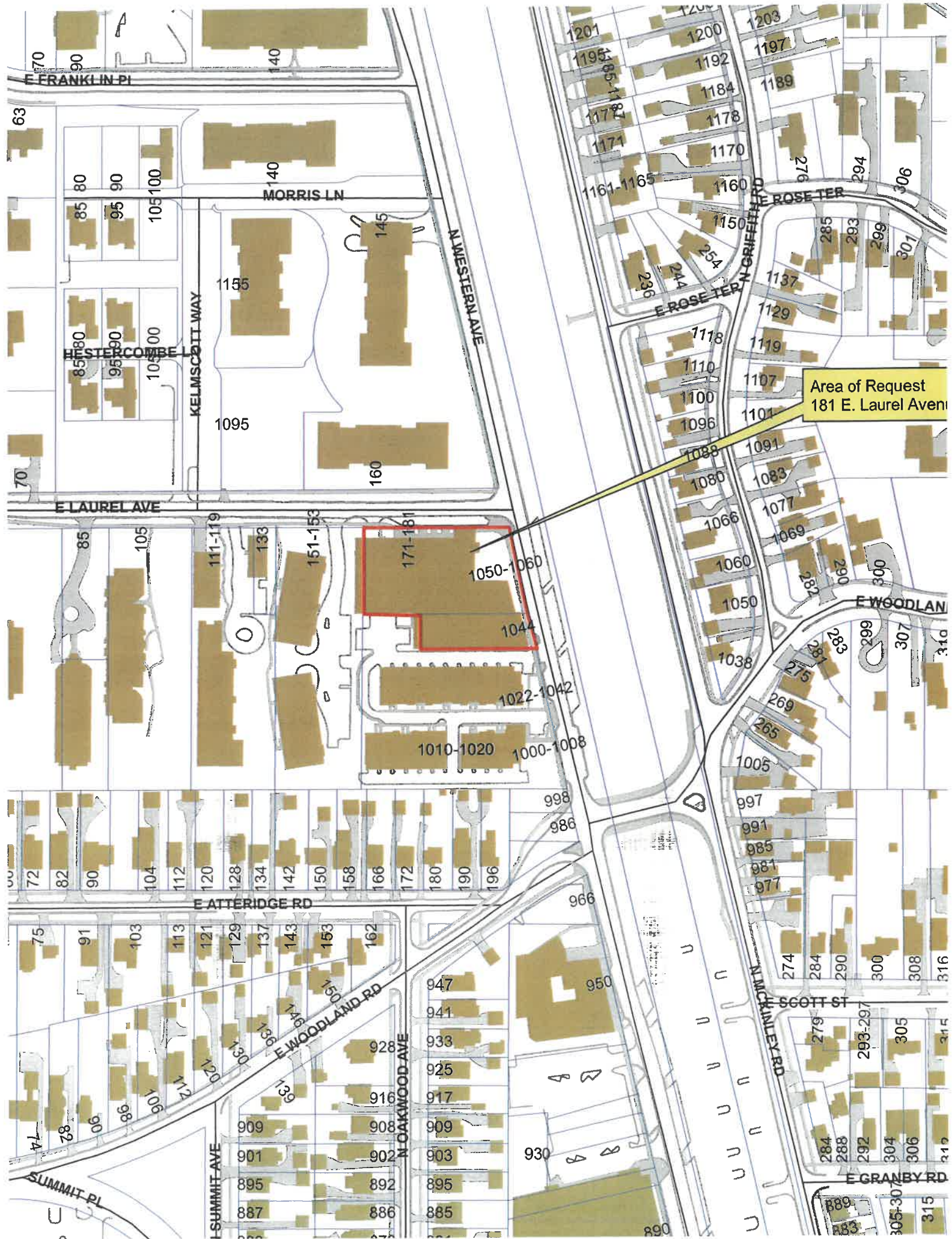
Sunday 10am – 10pm

The courtyard shall close at 10pm everyday of the week.

10. Deliveries and trash collection for the restaurant shall occur between the hours of 8am and 11am.

11. No loud speakers or sound amplification are permitted outside the building.

12. Diagonal parking shall be constructed at the expense of the property owner along the east side of Western Avenue, along the railroad tracks, from Laurel Avenue south across from the Knauz building with the configuration and extent of the parking subject to the approval of the City Engineer.







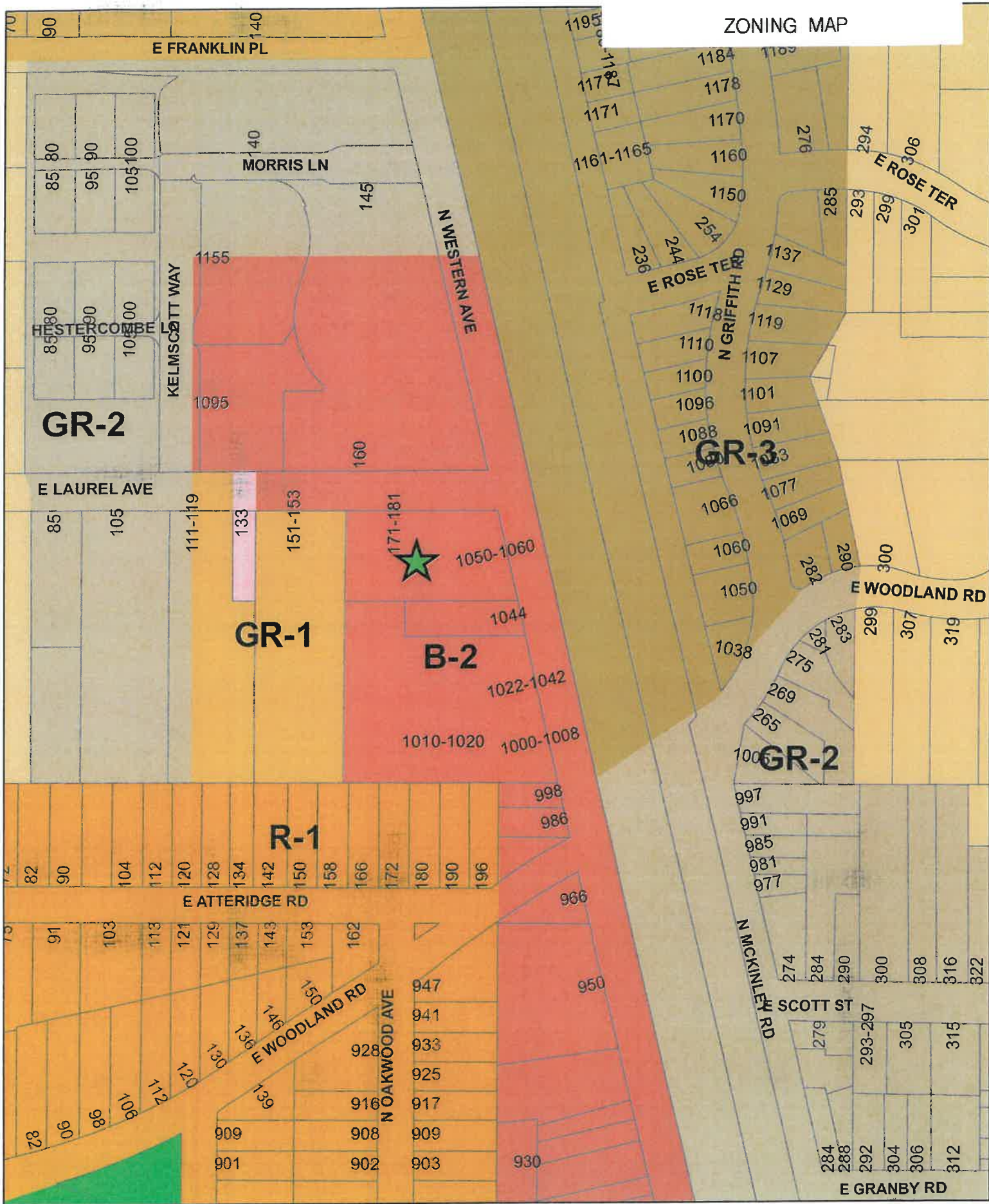
Area of Request  
181 E. Laurel Avenue





Area of Request  
181 E. Laurel Avenue





ZONING MAP

Zoning Map



**Application for Plan Commission Review  
Special Use Permit - Central Business District -- New Use**

APPLICANT'S REPRESENTATIVES

ARCHITECT \_\_\_\_\_  
FIRM WITMER & ASSOC.  
ADDRESS 1000 N. WESTERN  
LAKE FOREST, IL 60045  
PHONE 847 234. 5240

ENGINEER \_\_\_\_\_  
FIRM \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

SURVEYOR \_\_\_\_\_  
FIRM \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ARBORIST \_\_\_\_\_  
FIRM \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

ATTORNEY CHRIS CANNING  
FIRM CANNING & CANNING  
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WILMETTE, IL 60091  
PHONE 847. 853. 7040

BUILDER IVAN KATTAN  
FIRM KATTARA CONST.  
ADDRESS 4614 W. LAURENCE  
CHICAGO, IL 60630  
PHONE 312. 819. 4655

LANDSCAPE ARCH. STEFHEN PRASSAS  
FIRM PRASSAS LANDSCAPE STUDIO  
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CHICAGO, IL 60614  
PHONE 773. 879. 9048

OTHER \_\_\_\_\_  
FIRM \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
PHONE \_\_\_\_\_



**EXHIBIT "B"**

**PARTNERSHIP OWNERSHIP**

Please list all partners, general and/or limited, with an individual or beneficial interest of 5% or greater.

NAME RYAN O'DONNELL  
ADDRESS 1034 ELMWOOD  
WILMETTE, IL 60091  
OWNERSHIP PERCENTAGE 40 %

NAME GLENN KEEFER  
ADDRESS 651 HARP RD.  
NORTHBROOK, IL 60063  
OWNERSHIP PERCENTAGE 40 %

NAME JON FARRER  
ADDRESS 2341 N. DRAKE AVE  
CHICAGO, IL 60647  
OWNERSHIP PERCENTAGE 20 %

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
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**CANNING & CANNING LLC  
1000 SKOKIE BOULEVARD, SUITE 355  
WILMETTE, ILLINOIS 60091  
(847) 853-7042 - FAX**

CHRISTOPHER S. CANNING  
DIRECT DIAL NUMBER  
(847) 853-7040  
canningchris@comcast.net

March 1, 2022

**VIA HAND DELIVERY**

John Dixon, Chairman  
Plan Commission  
City of Lake Forest  
c/o Catherine Czerniak  
Director of Community Development  
City of Lake Forest  
220 East Deerpath  
Lake Forest, IL 60045

**Re: Special Use Application by Sophia Steak Lake Forest for 181 E. Laurel.**

Dear Chairman Dixon and Members of the Plan Commission:

I am writing on behalf of Sophia Lake Forest LLC (hereinafter "Sophia's") regarding their Special Use Application in order to open and operate a restaurant at 181 E. Laurel in Lake Forest ("Subject Property"). As set forth more fully below, Sophia's believes that Lake Forest is a perfect location on the North Shore to expand their restaurant group to serve customers who have enjoyed dining at Sophia's sister properties in Wilmette and Winnetka. Due to the B2 Commercial District zoning of the Subject Property, Sophia must file this Special Use Application. For the reasons set forth below, Sophia's respectfully requests that the City of Lake Forest grant its requested Special Use.

**I. About Sophia's.**

Sophia was co-founded in 2020 by former colleagues and close friends Ryan O'Donnell and Glenn Keefer. The story of Keefer and O'Donnell's partnership is years in the making. It was in the early 1980s when Keefer began his Chicago restaurant career at The Palm. His 12

years at the popular Gold Coast restaurant helped set the stage for Keefer's eternal love for steakhouses. At The Palm, Keefer met Bill O'Donnell, whose son, Ryan, would some 20 years later work for Keefer at his River North steakhouse, Keefer's Restaurant. Keefer quickly became a mentor to the aspiring restaurateur, who went on to be the driving force behind Ballyhoo Hospitality, which includes four Chicago restaurants— Gemini, Coda di Volpe, Walton Street Kitchen + Lounge and Old Pueblo Cantina — in its portfolio.

As for the Sophia's menu, Keefer and O'Donnell's extensive background in steak is invaluable to sourcing quality meats, whether they're petite filets, hangars, New York strips or Delmonico ribeyes. Each steak will be finished with a compound butter after it comes out of the restaurant's special 1800-degree infra-red steakhouse broiler according to the release. Fish and seafood will also be featured at Sophia, which speaks to Keefer's early days as a commercial fisherman on the East Coast. A Chilled section on the menu takes the traditional shrimp cocktail up a few notches with additional seafood options in addition to shrimp. Local fish will be represented too, such as trout from Wisconsin.

As with any great neighborhood restaurant, there's a terrific cheeseburger on the menu as well as a curated selection of intriguing salads and sandwiches. A robust starters section will provide plenty of delicious options for those looking for a snack or two while gathering with friends at the spacious bar or in the adjoining lounge. Befitting its steakhouse leanings, there are decadent sides too, including a number of vegetable-focused ones.

The interior of Sophia's will have some renovations from the existing vacant space. With an abundance of cozy tan leather booths, subdued lighting and chateau wood floors, Sophia is warm and welcoming. The energy and buzz of the restaurant starts from the moment you enter the bar area. Enjoy the full dinner menu in the bar area or head to the main dining room where the extra-spacious booths are designed for relaxed, leisurely gatherings. A major focus of Sophia will be private parties. Perfect for intimate soirees and lovely North Shore celebrations, the restaurant is equipped with a private room with the same energy and style of the main dining room. Once warmer weather arrives, the sidewalk patio and the prime people watching opportunity it provides will undoubtedly be a popular spot. Sophia's expects to be open for dinner Sunday-Thursday 4:30 pm-10:30 pm and on Friday-Saturday from 4:30 pm-11:30 pm.

## **II. The Subject Property.**

The Subject Property is located within the B2 Commercial District. The Subject Property is located at the east side of East Laurel Avenue, west of Western Avenue. The Subject Property has approximately 80 feet of frontage on Laurel Avenue and is improved with a commercial building that has held restaurants uses in the past, containing a total of approximately 5,603 square feet of first floor commercial space for the restaurant.

Sophia's intends to lease space within the Subject Property, ("Leased Space"). The Leased Space has been vacant since December 2019. Previously, the Leased Space was home to MLG, the restaurant owned by Marcus Lemonis and before that, the Grille on Laurel. The Subject Property is surrounded by properties zoned B2 Commercial.

### III. Standards of Review.

Pursuant to the City of Lake Forest Zoning Ordinance, any application to establish a Special Use in the B2 Zoning District must establish how the proposed occupancy and its operation will be in compliance with the following standards.

1. *The establishment, maintenance, or operation of the special use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, morals, comfort, or general welfare;*

Restaurants are permitted in the District pursuant to a Special Use Permit. The establishment of Sophia's at the Leased Space will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, comfort, morals, or general welfare. In fact, restaurants have been located at the Subject Property in the past. In addition, the establishment of Sophia's in this location will return vibrancy to this location by removing a vacant retail space.

2. *The special use will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity for the purposes already permitted, nor substantially diminish and impair property values within the neighborhood;*

The granting of a Special Use permit to Sophia's to establish a restaurant in the Leased Space will not be substantially injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the immediate vicinity, which are permitted by right in the district, nor will the establishment substantially diminish or impair property values in the immediate vicinity. To the contrary, the establishment of Sophia's will restore vibrancy to the neighborhood by turning a vacant space into a vibrant one with an extensive renovation including code compliant upgrades.

3. *The establishment of the special use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of the surrounding property for uses permitted in the district or districts;*

The establishment of Sophia's will not impede the normal and orderly development or improvement of other property in the immediate vicinity for use permitted by right in the district. The area is fully developed and Sophia's is simply replacing a prior restaurant use in the same location.

4. *The exterior architectural appearance and functional plan of any proposed structures will not be incompatible with either the exterior architectural appearance or functional plan of already constructed or in the course of construction in the immediate neighborhood or the character of the applicable district so as to cause a substantial depreciation in the property values within the neighborhood;*

Sophia' planned interior renovations will not be incompatible with the neighborhood or cause a substantial depreciation in the property values of the neighborhood. To the contrary, based on Sophia's success in Wilmette and her sister restaurant Pomeroy in Winnetka, it is likely that vibrancy will return to the neighborhood.

5. *That adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, and/or other necessary facilities have been or are being provided;*

Adequate parking, utilities, access roads, drainage, and other facilities necessary to the operation of the Sophia's exist and no additional facilities are necessary.

6. *Adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress so designed as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.*

The Subject Property has been home to prior restaurant uses and Sophia's will utilize the existing methods of ingress and egress to minimize traffic congregation in the public streets.

7. *The Special Use shall conform to the applicable regulations of the district in which it is located, except as such regulations may, in each instance, be modified by the City Council.*

Sophia's Special Use shall conform to the applicable regulations of the B2 Commercial District. Sophia's will also be seeking a liquor license and it will comply with the Village Code in all respects pertaining to the liquor licensing ordinance.

Sophia's looks forward to joining the Lake Forest business community and making the same contributions to the community as it has in the Wilmette and Winnetka communities. We look forward to the opportunity to appear at the Public Hearing on the application and answer any questions you may have.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Very truly yours,

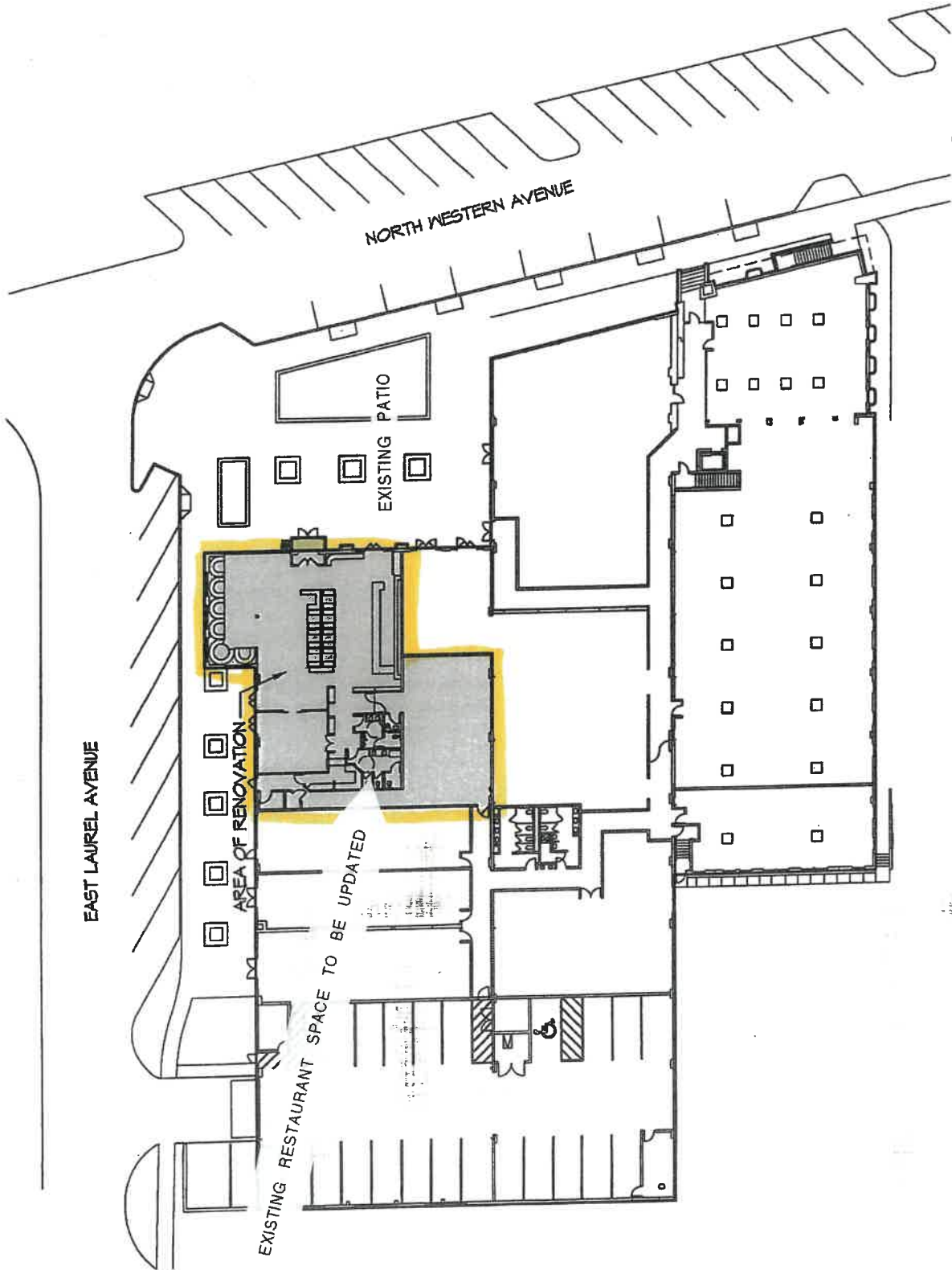


Christopher S. Canning

SOPHIA STEAK LAKE FOREST  
SITE PLAN



181 E LAUREL AVENUE  
SITE PLAN  
February 25, 2022  
SCALE 1" = 30.0'



Wilmer & Associates  
Architecture and Interior Design  
wilmerandassoc.com



[illegible]

**INTERIOR RENOVATION  
SOPHIA STEAK**  
1871 E LAUREL AVE  
LAKE FOREST, ILLINOIS 60045

**Werner & Associates**  
Architecture and Interior Design  
werneranderson.com

1000 N. W. 57TH AVE., LAKE FOREST, IL 60045

### CONSULTANTS

LAUREL AVENUE

235  
OCT 21 1960

**AREA OF AUTOMATIC FIRE  
EXTINGUISHING SYSTEM:**

↓ 02 OCCUPANT LOAD AT COMPONENT

↓ 000 DOOR COORDINATOR, STAIR E.C.

↓ 000 BREAKE COMPONENT

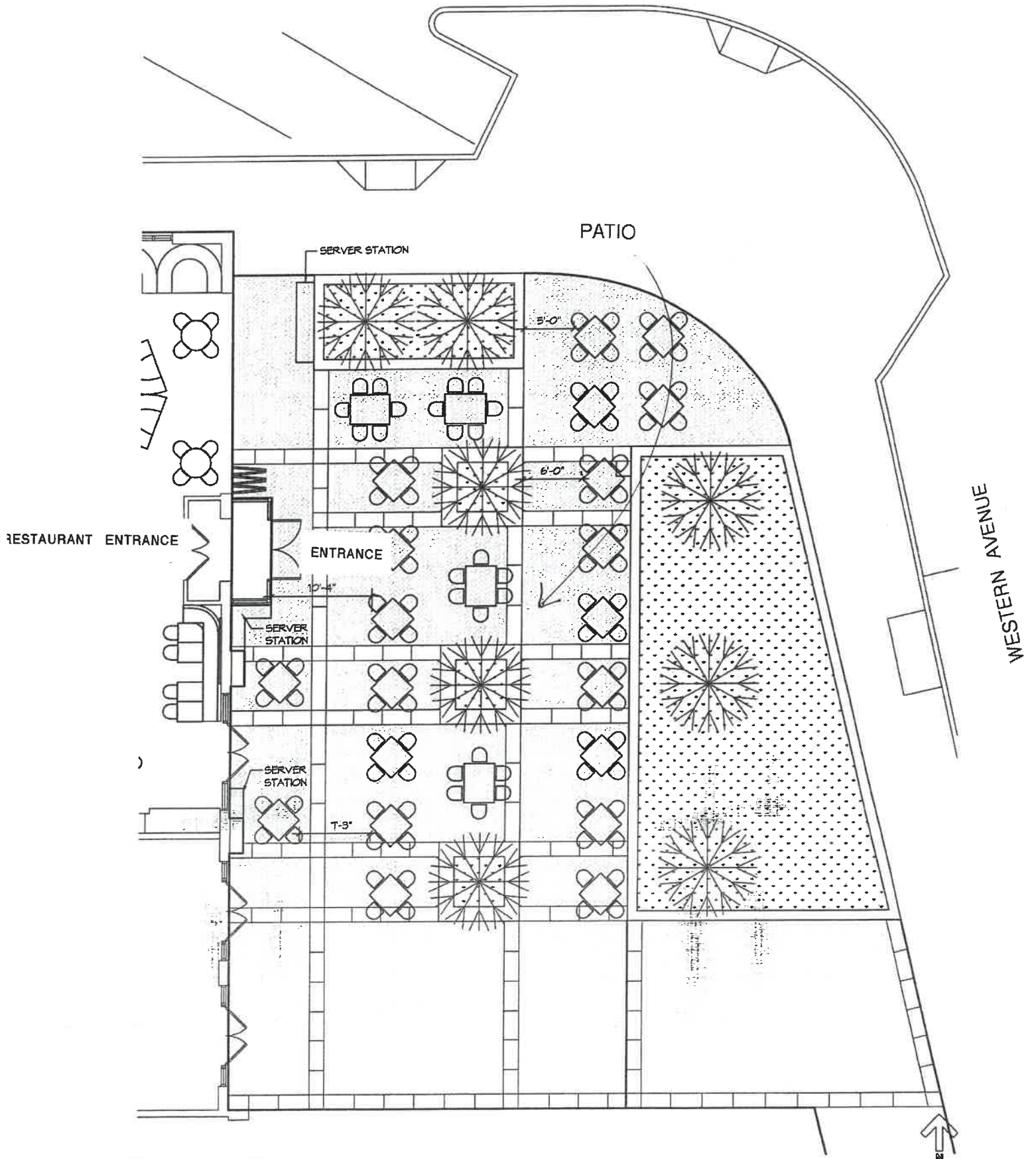
↓ 000 OCCUPANT CAPACITY

0 2 4'  
SCALE: 1/4" = 1'-0"

**PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN**



LAUREL AVENUE



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witmerandassoc.com

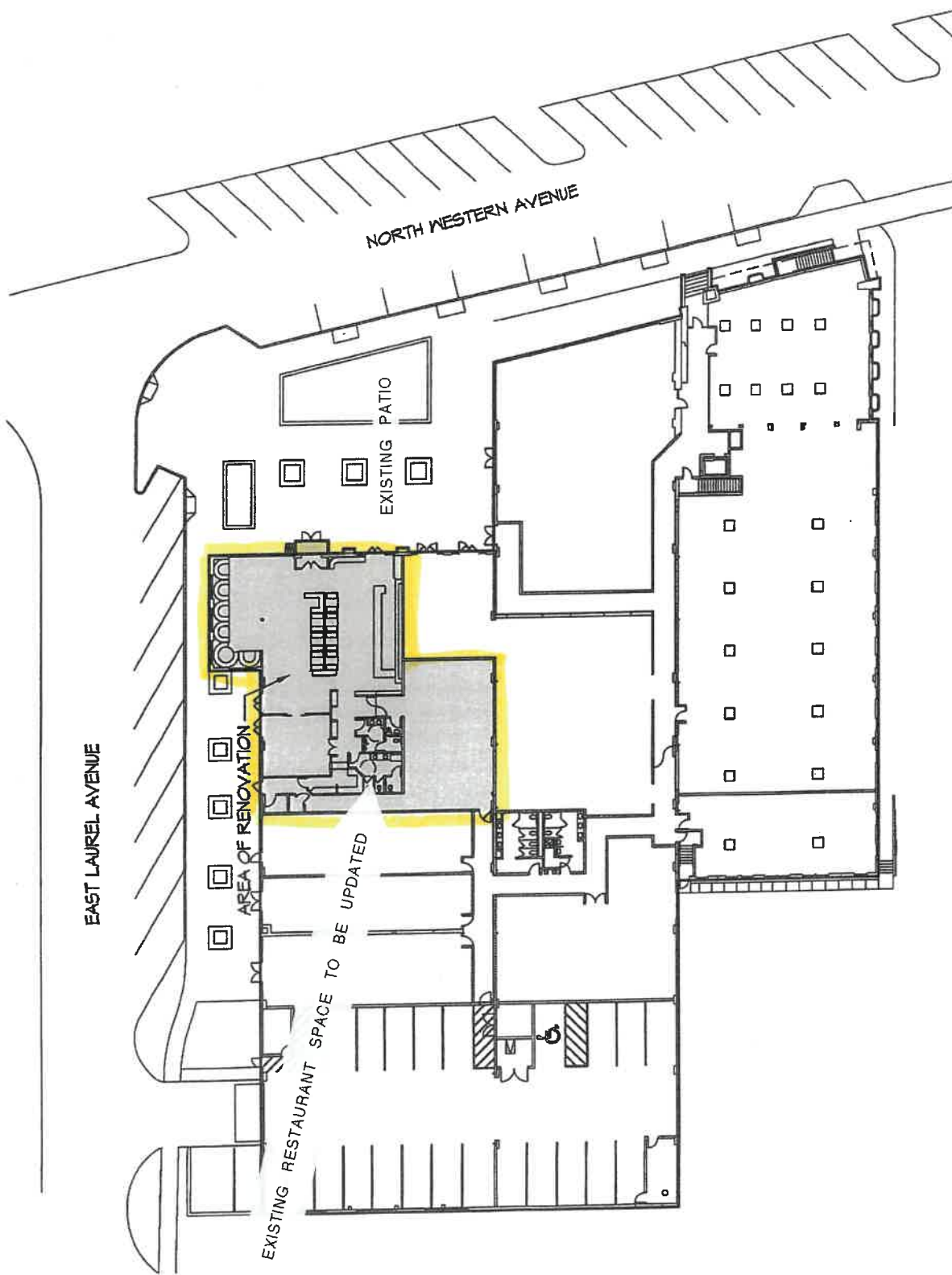
181 E LAUREL AVENUE  
FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
February 23, 2022 SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"



SOPHIA STEAK LAKE FOREST  
SITE PLAN



181 E LAUREL AVENUE  
SITE PLAN  
February 25, 2022  
SCALE 1" = 30.0'

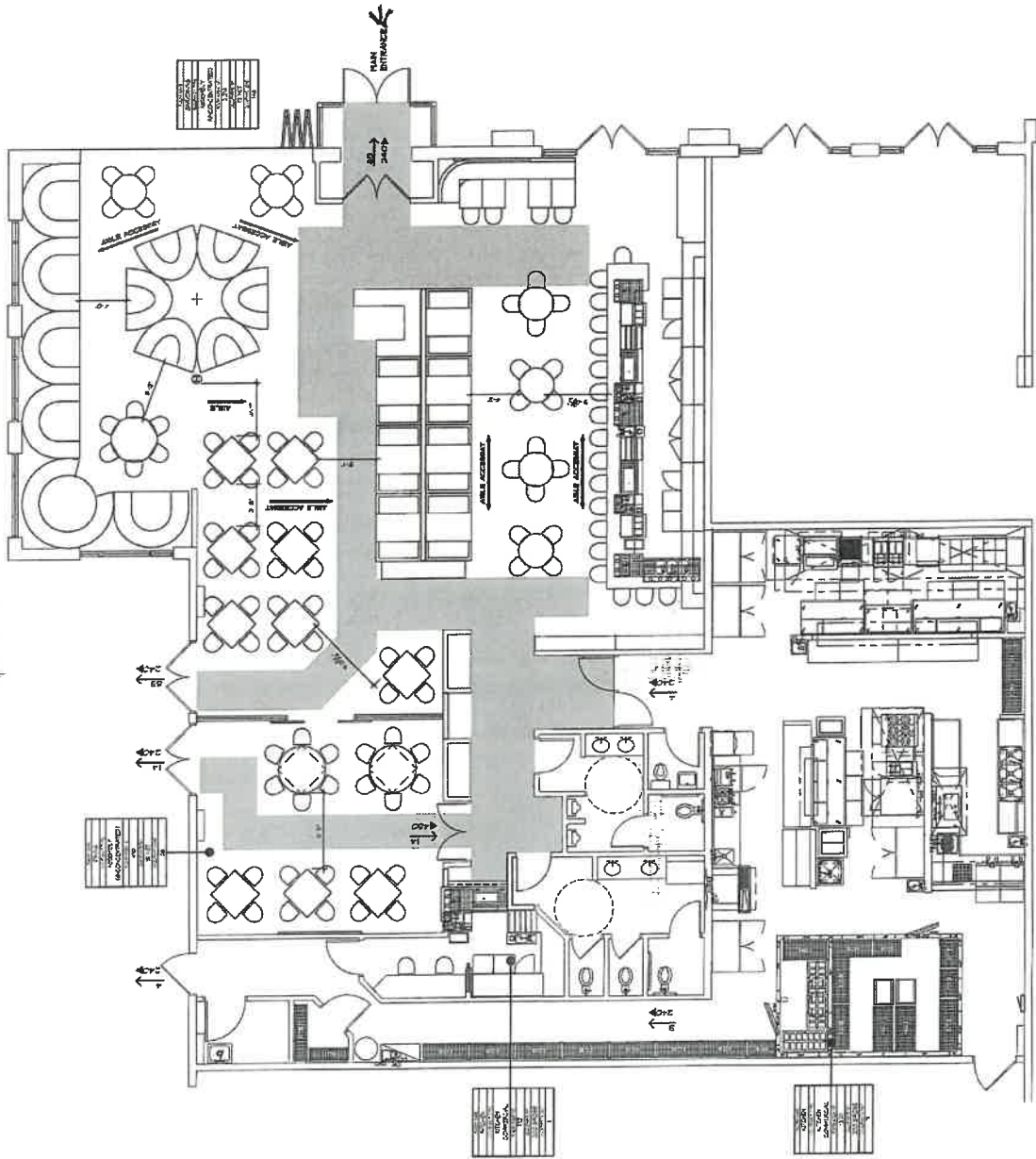


LAUREL AVENUE

WESTERN AVENUE

PATIO

RESTAURANT ENTRANCE



A3 PROPOSED FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

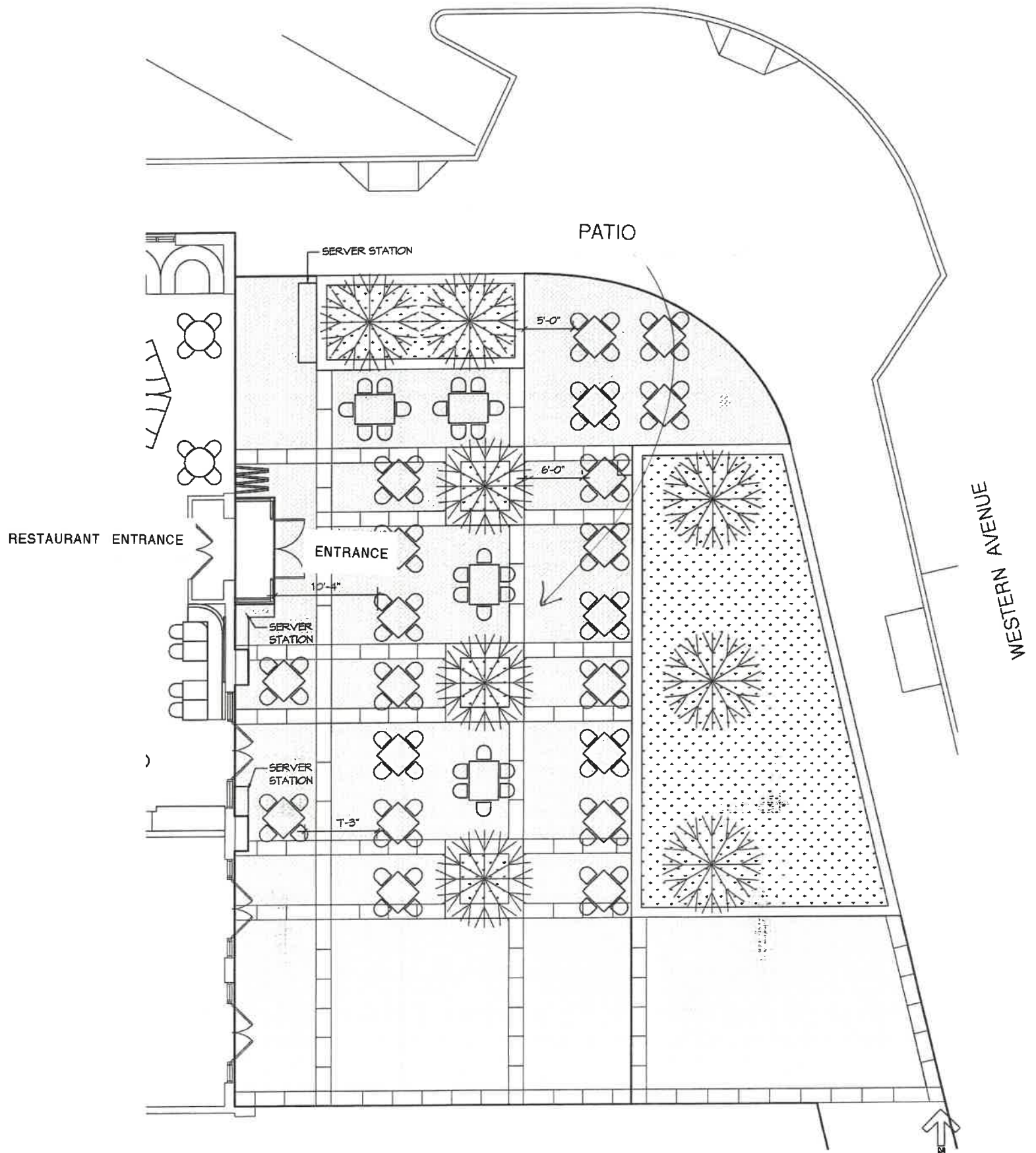
LEGEND  
WALL  
DOOR  
WINDOW  
FURNITURE  
ELECTRICAL  
PLUMBING  
MECHANICAL  
ELEVATOR  
STAIRS  
RAMP  
PATIO  
PARKING  
LANDSCAPE  
SITE  
SCALE: 1/8" = 1'-0"

RESTAURANT FLOOR PLAN  
PERMIT ISS1  
2022.02.10  
OCCUPANCY  
& EXITING PLAN  
G-101

W A  
Wagner & Associates  
Architecture and Interior Design  
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CONTRACT NO.

INTERIOR RENOVATION  
SOPHIA STEAK  
181 E. LAUREL AVE  
LAKE FOREST, ILLINOIS 60045

LAUREL AVENUE



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181 E LAUREL AVENUE  
FIRST FLOOR PLAN  
February 23, 2022 SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"