



To: Plan Commission

From: Daniel Ritter, AICP, Community and Economic Development Director
Atefa Ghaznawi, AICP, LEED AP, City Planner

Date: January 8, 2026

Re: 1812 N Larkin Ave (Extra Space Self-Service Storage Facility) Preliminary and Final Plat of Subdivision; Special Use for an Existing and a New Self-Service Storage Facilities (Case # SU-26-1-1-1); and Variation Request from the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance and the Crest Hill Code of Ordinances (Case # V-26-1-1-1)

Project Details

Project:	Preliminary and Final Plat of Subdivision; Special Use for an Existing and a New Self-Service Storage Facilities; and Variation Request from the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance and the Crest Hill Code of Ordinances
Applicant:	Extra Space Storage LLC
Requests:	Special approvals from the City of Crest Hill Subdivision Regulations, Zoning Ordinance, and City Code to consolidate four (4) lots into one (1) lot, and dedicate utility and drainage easements; amended Special Use for an existing self-service storage facility and addition of a new self-service storage facility; and variation request from Section 8.7-2 Building Façade of the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance, and Section 15.04.040 Standards for Structural Appearance and Site Location Plans Sub-section (I)-(1) Building Façades of the Crest Hill Code of Ordinance.
Location:	1812 N Larkin Ave (the "Subject Property")

Site Details

Lot Size:	Approximately 7.58 acres
Existing Zoning:	B-3 Business Service District and B-1 Limited Business District (Lot 3)
Existing Improvements:	Lot 1: 5.83 acres existing self-service storage facility with 79,640 SF of existing drive-up storage buildings Lot 3: Existing stormwater detention and driveway Lot 4 and 5: vacant land

Surrounding Zoning and Land Use Summary

	Land Use	Comp Plan	Zoning
Subject Parcels	Self-Service Storage facility, stormwater detention, and vacant land	Local Commercial	B-3 and B-1
North	Retail/Commercial, Stormwater Detention, and Forest Preserve	Local Commercial, Detention, and Natural/Preserve Areas	B-1 and B-3
South	Retail/Commercial	Local Commercial	B-1 and B-2
East	Retail/Commercial, Stormwater Detention, Single-Family Attached Residence, and Multi-Family Residence	Single-Family Attached, Multi-Family Residential, Community Facilities	R-3, B-1, B-2, and B-3
West	Retail/Commercial, and Forest Preserve	Local Commercial, and Natural/Preserve Areas	B-1, B-2, and B-3

Exhibits

Application documents submitted by Applicant include:

1. Exhibit C – Application for Development 2025-10-30
2. Exhibit D – Legal Description 2025-12-12
3. Exhibit E – List of Requested Variations 2025-12-12
4. Exhibit F – Property Owner’s Letter of Authorization 2025-10-14
5. Exhibit G – Project Narrative 2025-12-12
6. Exhibit H – Subject Property Photos of Existing Condition 2025-12-12
7. Exhibit I – Response to Standards for Special Use 2025-12-12
8. Exhibit J – Response to Standards for Variations 2025-12-12
9. Exhibit K –Architectural Plans, Elevations, and 3D Renderings Prepared by Kimberly-Horn & Associates, Inc. 2025-06-09
10. Exhibit L – Plat of Subdivision and Preliminary Engineering Plans, Prepared by Kimberly-Horn & Associates, Inc. last revised 2025-12-30
11. Exhibit M - Preliminary Stormwater Memo, Prepared by Kimberly-Horn & Associates, Inc. last revised 2025-12-30

Application Background and Project Summary

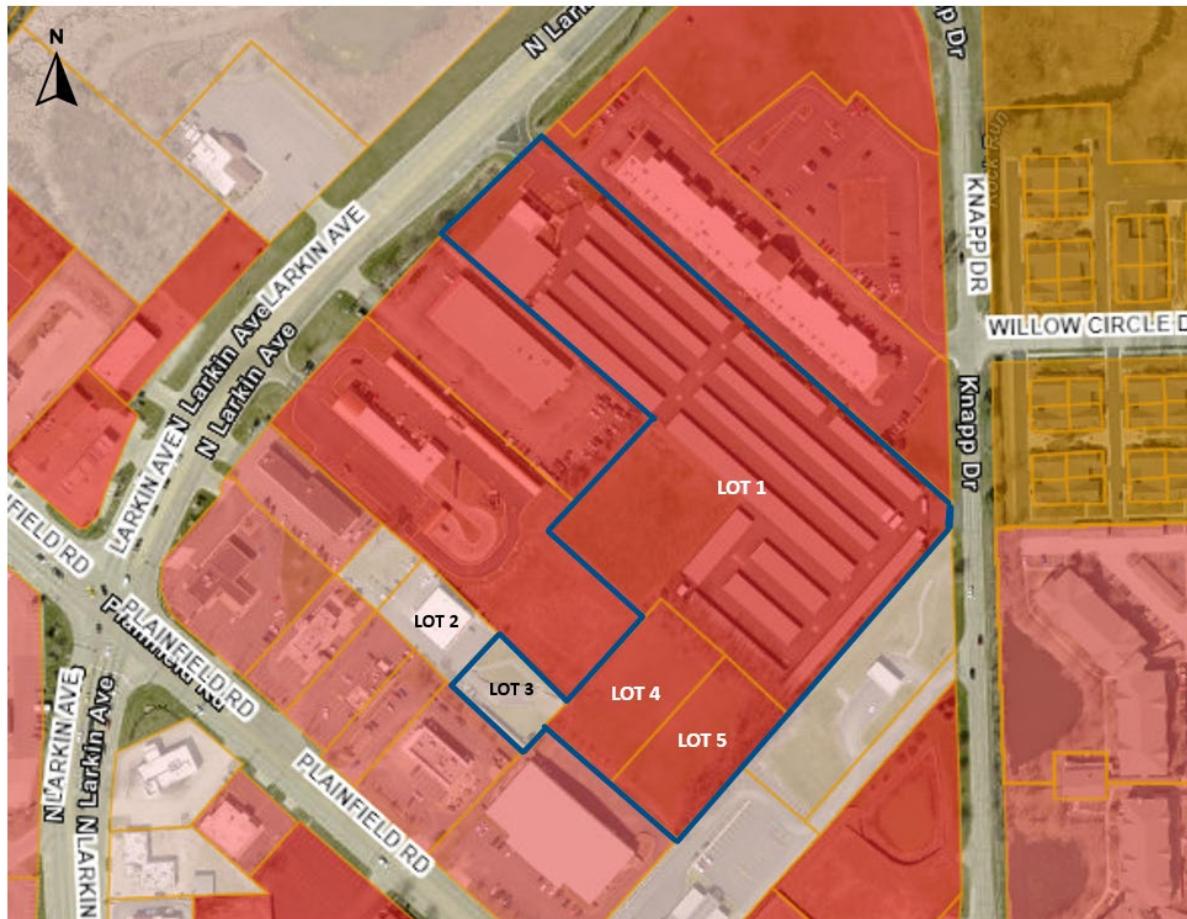
Extra Space Storage is an existing self-service storage facility located at 1812 N Larkin Avenue, which was established through a Special Use permit in 2002 (ORD #1248A). The total existing property is 5.83-acres with 79,640 SF of existing drive-up self-storage buildings.

Customers of Extra Space Storage typically store household goods in the existing drive-up self-storage buildings. The standard hours of the existing facility are 6:00 AM – 10:00 PM daily. These hours will remain the same for the proposed development. The existing access from N Larkin Avenue will remain the main entry point. There is also an existing entrance from Knapp Drive that will be accessible for customers and emergency vehicles.

Extra Space Storage is looking to purchase an additional 1.74-acre vacant property on the southwest of 1812 N Larkin Ave to expand the existing self-service storage facility. The proposed project includes the removal of 980 SF of an existing storage building on southwest end of 1812 N Larkin Ave and the construction of a 26,340 SF 1-story building, stormwater management, landscaping and utilities to service the new building on the 1.74-acre vacant property (Lots 3, 4, 5). The vacant property has no public roadway access or visibility and has remained vacant for many years. Adequate screening and landscaping are proposed along the perimeter of the Subject Property to buffer the new self-service storage facility from the adjacent properties. Stormwater drainage will be managed through on-site improvements designed in accordance with the City drainage and stormwater management regulations, preventing adverse impacts to the adjacent properties or public infrastructure.

The proposal will consolidate all four (4) lots into one lot, revise drainage and utility easements, remove the existing driveway and retaining walls on Lot 3 and use the entire Lot 3 as stormwater detention; request a special use approval for the existing self-service storage facility and addition of a new self-service storage facility; and request variation from the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance and Code of Ordinances to waive the masonry requirement for exterior façades of the new self-service storage facility. The exterior of the proposed building will be cladded with metal panels matching the existing self-service storage buildings.

Figure 1: Aerial View of 1812 N Larkin Ave (the Subject Property) and Its Surroundings



Summary of Requested Petitions

To consolidate the subject property into one lot and construct a new self-service storage facility, the Applicant is seeking approvals of the following petitions:

- (i) Preliminary and Final Plat of Subdivision to consolidate four (4) lots into one (1) lot, and dedicate utility and drainage easements.
- (ii) Amended Special Use for an existing self-service storage facility and addition of a new self-service storage facility.
- (iii) A variation from Section 8.7-2 Building Façade of the [Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance](#), and Section 15.04.040 Standards for Structural Appearance and Site Location Plans Sub-section (I)-(1) Building Façades of the [Crest Hill Code of Ordinances](#) that decrease the masonry requirement for exterior façades of the new self-service storage facility to zero percent.

Staff Analysis

Overall, the Subject Property represents a unique circumstance within the B-3 Business Service District due to unique circumstances related to the subject property and the proposed use, rather than to general conditions in the zoning district. The 1.74-acre vacant property (Lots 3, 4, 5) is landlocked and accessed solely by private access easements. The location severely limits building configuration, construction logistics, and overall site efficiency. With no visibility, access or public frontage, it is likely this land remains undeveloped if this special use is not approved. Use of the land by one of the adjacent existing uses, as proposed here, is the highest and best use for this land. In addition, the functional design requirements of a self-service storage facility –characterized by large interior floor plates, limited fenestration, and minimal on-site activity – differ from those of other commercial uses for which masonry construction standards were originally intended. These site-specific and use-specific conditions constitute unique circumstances that justify consideration of the requested variation. Considering that the existing self-service storage facility has metal exterior facades, Staff do not oppose the variation request to waive the masonry requirement for the new self-service storage facility (Refer to Exhibit H for photos of existing self-service storage facility).

Self-service storage facilities are generally low-intensity uses that do not generate continuous activity, outdoor storage, or significant truck traffic. Customer visits are typically short in duration and spread throughout the day, which limits congestion, noise, and operational impacts on nearby properties. The facility will be fully enclosed within a permanent structure and will not involve outdoor display, processing, or manufacturing activities. The proposed building placement, setbacks, and buffering/landscaping are in accordance with zoning requirements to minimize visual impacts and maintain compatibility with adjacent uses. Access to the landlocked parcels will be accommodated through the existing site entrances on Larkin Avenue and Knapp Drive, ensuring orderly and predictable circulation while avoiding disruption to surrounding properties. The proposed use is consistent with other permitted and special uses in the area and represents a less intensive alternative to many commercial or light industrial uses otherwise allowed by zoning.

Given the limited operational impacts, compliance with applicable development standards, and the nature of the use, the proposed special use is not expected to interfere with the reasonable use and enjoyment of nearby properties or adversely affect the character or orderly appearance of the neighborhood.

Staff feedback on specific aspects of the requested approvals:

- Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance (ZO) Section 8.7-2 Building Façade and Crest Hill Code of Ordinances Section 15.04.040 Standards for Structural Appearance and Site Location Plans Sub-section (I)-(1) Building Façades:
 1. A minimum of 20% of the total area exterior building wall facades for R-2, B-1, B-2, B-3, M-1, and M-2 construction shall be of masonry. For purposes of computing said 20%, the total area occupied by windows and doors is not included. *Exterior facades of the proposed self-storage facility are 100% metal panels.*
 2. ii. A minimum of one wall facade per building shall include a minimum of 80% masonry. For computing said 80%, the total area occupied by windows and doors is not included. *Exterior facades of the proposed self-storage facility are 100% metal panels.*
 3. iii. Any wall facade facing a public or private street shall be of a minimum area of 10% masonry. For purposes of computing said 10%, the total area occupied by windows and doors is not included. *Exterior facades of the proposed self-storage facility are 100% metal panels.*
 4. iv. The area of masonry may be reduced by 100% on any wall facade not facing a public or private street, provided that the total of 20% of the total area of all building wall facades, exclusive of areas for windows and doors, is provided on other walls of the same building with masonry. *Exterior facades of the proposed self-storage facility are 100% metal panels.*

Staff reviewed the proposed development with respect to the applicable City regulations. The Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance classifies self-service storage facilities as Special Use in B-3 Business Service District. To construct the new self-service storage facility, the existing 2002 Special Use for the existing self-service storage facility needs to be amended to include the proposed new self-service storage facility, the above-mentioned required variation(s), and approval of the Plat of Subdivision with revised utility, drainage, and access easements.

Variation Approval Standards and Findings

Section 12.6-2 of the Zoning Ordinance states the Plan Commission shall recommend, and the City Council shall grant a variation only when it shall have been determined, and recorded in writing, that all of the following standards are complied with. Staff has drafted the following findings of fact identified in bold italic font. These drafted findings can be modified or changed as the Plan Commission deems fit and based on the specific findings from the public hearing.

1. That the property in question cannot yield a reasonable return if permitted to be used only under the conditions allowed by the regulations in that zone.

The Subject Property cannot yield a reasonable return if permitted to be used only under the conditions allowed by the masonry requirements of the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance and Code of Ordinances. Strict application of the masonry façade requirement imposes a disproportionate construction cost relative to the low-intensity, limited-occupancy nature of a self-service storage facility, significantly increasing development costs without a corresponding increase in operational revenue. Given the site's constraints, including its landlocked condition with limited public visibility, requiring masonry material on applicable exterior building facades renders the proposed development financially impractical and discourages reinvestment in the property. The requested variation will allow the property to be developed in a functional and economically viable manner while maintaining

appropriate design quality and compatibility with surrounding development. Without the requested relief, the property will not be able to realize a reasonable return under the requirements of the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance and Code of Ordinances.

2. That the plight of the owner is due to unique circumstances.

The plight of the property owner is due to unique circumstances related to the Subject Property and the proposed use, rather than to general conditions in the zoning district. The 1.74-acre vacant property (Lots 3, 4, 5) is landlocked and accessed solely by easement, which limits building configuration, construction logistics, and overall site efficiency. In addition, the functional design requirements of a self-service storage facility –characterized by large interior floor plates, limited fenestration, and minimal on-site activity – differ from those of other commercial uses for which masonry construction standards were originally intended. Strict application of the masonry requirement, when applied to this specific site and use, results in an atypical and disproportionate economic burden not shared by similarly zoned properties with direct street frontage or greater development flexibility. These site-specific and use-specific conditions constitute unique circumstances that justify consideration of the requested variation.

3. That the variation, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality.

The requested variation, if granted, will not alter the essential character of the locality. The proposed self-storage facility will maintain a scale, massing, and use pattern consistent with the existing self-service storage facility and existing commercial properties in the surrounding area. The variation pertains only to the elimination of masonry materials and does not affect the building's height, footprint, or use intensity. The building will continue to utilize durable, compatible exterior materials and incorporate architectural detailing and landscaping consistent with the surrounding context. The elimination of masonry coverage will not be visually prominent from public streets or adjacent properties due to the site's landlocked configuration and orientation. Therefore, granting variation request preserves the intent of the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance and Code of Ordinances to ensure quality building design, while allowing reasonable flexibility for site-specific conditions, and will not compromise the character or orderly appearance of the neighborhood.

In addition, Section 12.6-2 Standards for Variations and Section 12.7-6 Standards for Special Use of the Zoning Ordinance further suggest that the Plan Commission supplement the above standards by taking into consideration the extent to which the facts listed on Exhibit A and Exhibit B have been established by the evidence presented during the public hearing process and further support the approval of the Applicant's requests. Please refer to Exhibit I and Exhibit J for the Applicant's response to Standards for Variations and Special Use.

Conditions of Approval

The plans submitted for building permits shall be in substantial compliance with the plans approved by the City Council and identified below, unless otherwise noted in the remaining conditions:

1. All required final engineering plans, stormwater report, and related supporting project information shall be submitted for final engineering review and approval in conjunction with the formal building permit application submitted with this project.
2. The development shall substantially comply with the Architectural Plans (Kimberly-Horn & Associates, Inc., dated 2025-06-09) and Plat of Subdivision and Preliminary Engineering Plans (Kimberly-Horn & Associates, Inc., last revised 2025-12-30) as presented.
3. The existing and proposed water lines are proposed to be private and not located in public easements. These shall be owned and maintained by the property owner in the future. Shut-off valves shall be installed (unless existing and in good order) at two ends of the City-owned water mains in locations approved by the City Engineer with final engineering approval.
4. The existing fire hydrant at the west corner of lot 3 shall be relocated and reinstalled within the existing utility easement on Lot 2, as approved by the City Engineer and in compliance with all Fire requirements.
5. A Photometric Plan shall be provided at the time of submitting a building permit to ensure compliance with applicable codes and regulations.
6. A copy of the recorded Plat of Subdivision shall be submitted to the City Clerk's Office as part of the record for this Special Use. This Plat of Subdivision shall be recorded prior to issuing any Certificate of Occupancy.
7. All new shade trees, ornamental trees, and evergreen trees associated with this project shall be planted with a minimum height of six (6) feet and a minimum caliber of two (2) inches at the time of planting.
8. All conditions made with this Special Use and the approved site plan shall run covenant with the land and transferred to any new property owner.

Staff Recommendation

Based on the drafted findings reflected in this staff report, Staff recommend the following motion to provide a recommendation to City Council. This motion may be amended by any Plan Commission member making the motion based upon the findings of the public hearing. Staff recommend any motion be made in the positive form to correspond with the applicant's request to avoid confusion.

The Plan Commission recommends City Council conditional approval of the Preliminary and Final Plat of Subdivision to consolidate four (4) lots into one (1) lot and dedicate utility and drainage easements; a Special Use for an existing self-service storage facility and addition of a new self-service storage facility; a variation from Section 8.7-2 Building Façade of the Crest Hill Zoning Ordinance, and Section 15.04.040 Standards for Structural Appearance and Site Location Plans Sub-section (I)-(1) Building Façades of the Crest Hill Code of Ordinance that decrease the masonry requirement for exterior façade of the new self-service storage facility to zero percent, subject to the project being implemented in substantial conformance with the conditions for approval and application documents referenced in the January 8, 2026, Plan Commission Staff Report for petitions Preliminary and Final Plat of Subdivision, Case # SU-26-1-1-1, and Case # V-26-1-1-1.

EXHIBIT A**Supplemental Variation Approval Facts to Consider Per Zoning Ordinance Section 12.6-2**

1. *That the particular physical surroundings, shape, or topographical condition of the specific property involved will result in a particular hardship upon the owner, as distinguished from a mere inconvenience, if the strict letter of the regulations were carried out.*
2. *The conditions upon which the petition for a variation is based are unique to the property owner for which the variation is sought and are not applicable, generally, to the other property within the same zoning classification.*
3. *That the alleged difficulty or hardship is caused by the Ordinance and has not been created by any person presently having an interest in the property.*
4. *That the proposed variation will not impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent property or substantially increase congestion in the public streets or increase the danger of fire, or endanger the public safety, or substantially diminish or impair property values within the adjacent neighborhood.*
5. *That the variation does not permit a use otherwise excluded from the particular zone except for uses authorized by the Plan Commission, subject to the approval of the City Council, as "similar and compatible uses."*
6. *That the variation granted is the minimum adjustment necessary for the reasonable use of the land.*
7. *That the granting of any variation is in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the Zoning Ordinance, and will not be injurious to the neighborhood, be detrimental to the public welfare, alter the essential character of the locality, or be in conflict with the Comprehensive Plan for development of the City.*
8. *That, for reasons fully set forth in the recommendations of the Plan Commission, and the report of the City Council, the aforesaid circumstances or conditions are such that the strict application of the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance deprives the applicant of any reasonable use of his land. Mere loss in value shall not justify a variation; there must be a deprivation of beneficial use of land.*

EXHIBIT B**Supplemental Special Use Approval Facts to Consider Per Zoning Ordinance Section 12.7-6**

1. *That the establishment, maintenance, or operation of the special use will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, or general welfare.*
2. *That 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.*
3. *That the establishment of the special use will not impede the normal and orderly development and improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.*
4. *That adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, and/or other necessary facilities have been or are being provided.*
5. *That adequate measures have been or will be taken to provide ingress and egress so designed as to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.*
6. *That special use shall in all other respects conform to the applicable regulations of this Ordinance and other applicable City regulations, except as such regulations may in each instance be modified by the City Council pursuant to the recommendation of the Plan Commission.*