

Memorandum

To: City of Dacula Planning Commission/
City of Dacula Mayor and City Council

From: Hayes Taylor, City Planner

Date: December 30, 2024 (*Updated December 31, 2024*)

Subject: 2024-CD-SUP-03

Proposed Zoning: Special Use Permit for automotive sales lot

Existing Zoning: C-2 General Business District

Size: 5.26 acres

Proposed Use: Automotive sales

Applicant: SK Automotive Sales, LLC
450 Pike Park Drive
Lawrenceville, Georgia 30046

Owner: SK Automotive Sales, LLC
450 Pike Park Drive
Lawrenceville, Georgia 30046

Location: LL 271 - 5th District, Parcel 052

Existing Land Use and Zoning:

The subject property totals 5.26 acres and is located at 2103 Winder Highway, which is east of the Circle Rd / Winder Hwy intersection, and roughly 700 ft from the entrance of the Lindenwood subdivision. The applicant owns and operates an existing automotive repair and storage facility on the subject parcel with no sales component. The site contains one (1) primary structure on-site. Said structure is approximately 6,800 sf and contains four (4) automobile bays and office space. Asphalt areas are located in the front and rear yards. The rear yard contains approximately 121,000 sf of vehicle storage space. The submitted site plan shows an existing 80 ft powerline easement along the parcel's eastern border. The adjacent convenience store located at 2105 Winder Hwy and existing landscaping obscure the current automotive uses from view from the right-of-way.

The parcel is currently zoned C-2 General Business District and abuts properties zoned C-2 to the west and north, an M-1 (Light Manufacturing District) zoned property adjacent to the east, and a vacant PMUD (Planned Mixed-Use District) parcel adjacent to the south.

The Proposed Development:

The applicant requests a special use permit to allow for up to ten (10) vehicles for sale on site. Application materials emphasize that the request is for supplemental sale of used vehicles that are already on-site in relation to the automotive repair use. Automotive sales would be considered an accessory use to the existing business, and the site would not be redeveloped as a used car sales lot.

The business plan provided in the application materials does not include additional signage advertising outside noting that vehicles are for sale. No infrastructure additions/modifications to the site are proposed. As such, the current visibility of the vehicles would not be increased. In fact, the applicant has committed to providing additional landscaping to further shield the site from Winder Hwy and the Lindenwood subdivision.

Summary:

The requested special use permit for accessory used automotive sales would not change the primary use of the subject property. Considering the proposed expansion of the SK Automotive business model does not include a used sales lot or site development, it is unlikely the request will negatively impact nearby residences, or modify the visibility of the vehicles. As such, the Department recommends that the requested special use permit for used automotive sales is approved with conditions at this location.

Comprehensive Plan:

The City of Dacula's 2050 Comprehensive Plan labels the subject property as Dacula Job Center (pg. 68). The Dacula Job Center character area calls for light industrial, industrial office, and distribution warehouse uses, with an emphasis on employment of Dacula residents and low impact industry.

The analysis of the application should be made based upon the "Standards Governing Exercise of the Zoning Power" as stated in Section 1702 of The 2000 Zoning Resolution of the City of Dacula.

1. Whether the proposed special use permit will permit a use that is suitable in view of the use and development of an adjacent and nearby property?

The requested special use permit for used automotive sales is compatible with the surrounding commercial and industrial uses along Winder Hwy. Therefore, the proposed automotive sales use could be considered suitable as proposed.

2. Whether the proposed special use permit will adversely affect the existing use or usability of adjacent or nearby properties?

If approved, the recommended conditions would help mitigate any negative impacts onto the surrounding properties from the proposed use.

3. *Whether the property to be affected by the proposed special use permit has a reasonable economic use as currently zoned?*

Yes, the property has reasonable economic use as currently zoned.

4. *Whether the proposed use permit will result in a use which will or could cause an excessive or burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, utilities, or schools?*

With the proposed conditions, excessive and burdensome use of existing streets, transportation facilities, or utilities would be minimized. No additional impacts are anticipated for area schools.

5. *Whether the proposed use permit request is in conformity with the policy and intent of the Land Use Plan?*

The property is located within the Dacula Job Center character area. Although the character area is principally an industrial center, the SUP would support the existing automotive service facility and would not materially change the nature and primary use of the property.

6. *Whether there are other existing or changing conditions affecting the use and development of the property which give supporting grounds for either approval or disapproval of the proposed special use permit?*

No site modifications or increases of intensity in use are proposed. With the proper conditions, the proposed SUP would not increase the visibility or visual impact of the existing or proposed automotive use and would likely decrease the number of vehicles being shipped to other locations for sale. The requested special use permit could further contribute to the economic base of Dacula.

Recommendation:

Based upon the application, the special use permit for automotive sales lot facilities is recommended for approval with the following conditions.

The Department notes the Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval with the following conditions for the requested special use permit at the Public Hearing on December 30, 2024. Said conditions are below.

Conditions Set #1: 2024-CD-SUP-03

1. Any modifications to the existing property improvements (ex: redevelopment, paint, repairs, additions, concrete, asphalt, etc.) shall be reviewed and approved by the Planning & Development Department.

2. The Special Use Permit shall be deemed abandoned by the Property Owner if automotive sales are ceased for more than ninety (90) days, per Article 17, Section 1706.
3. Should the Property Owner be found in a violation of any of these conditions or other regulations relevant to the automotive sales use at any time, the City Administrator may review the appropriateness of the use and recommend revocation to the City Council, per Article XVII, Section 1708 of the Zoning Resolution
4. The Special Use Permit shall expire upon the change in ownership of the facility and/or property.
5. Automotive sales shall be limited to no more than ten (10) vehicles at any given time. Vehicles for sale shall be limited to the existing paved parking lot between the main commercial building and the stormwater detention facility.
6. Vehicles for sale may be advertised solely online. No signs / advertisements shall be placed on the vehicles or on-site other than displayed on the existing monument sign as an auxiliary use to the vehicle repair establishment.
7. No outside loudspeakers shall be allowed.
8. Outdoor display of parts, new or used tires, junked vehicles or other materials is prohibited.
9. Where possible by existing topography, power-line easements, and other encumbrances, the Property Owner shall supplement existing landscaping with native, evergreen shrubs or trees to screen visibility of the property from Winder Highway. The landscape plan shall be subject to the review and approval of the City of Dacula's Planning and Development Department.
10. No tents, canopies, temporary banners, streamers or roping decorated with flags, tinsel, or other similar material shall be displayed, hung, or strung on the site without appropriate permit(s). No decorative balloons or hot-air balloons shall be displayed on the site.
11. Oversized signs or billboards shall not be permitted.
12. Ground signage shall be limited to one monument-type sign and shall not be located within the right-of-way. The monument sign shall not exceed a maximum of 8-foot in height and shall be constructed with a brick base (minimum two feet in height) matching the materials of the buildings. Neon signs shall be prohibited. The monument sign shall not impede site distance along Winder Hwy. Sign location and design are subject to review and approval by the City of Dacula.
13. Live human advertisement shall be prohibited within the subject area. This includes, but is not limited to, sign spinners, twirlers, dancers, clowns, and / or other similar temporary advertising methods commonly provided by costumed or animated humans.
14. Blinking, exposed neon, portable, inflatable and temporary signage shall be prohibited.

15. Utilities shall be placed on the developer's property whenever possible, appropriate access and maintenance easements shall be filed at the time of final plat approval for any one parcel or section of the subject development.
16. All vehicular access must meet the City of Dacula's project access improvement standards of a public road. All improvements shall be provided by the developer/owner.

Conditions Set #2: 2014-CD-RZ-01

Should the property be redeveloped or is no longer considered a lawful non-conforming building or use, the parcel is subject to the following conditions from zoning case 2024-CD-RZ-01.

1. Transportation/Infrastructure

- 1.A. Provide interparcel vehicle access points between all contiguous commercial, office, industrial or attached residential tracts. This requirement may be waived by the City only if it is demonstrated that an interparcel connection is not feasible due to traffic safety or topographic concerns.
- 1.B. All new utility lines shall be located underground.
- 1.C. Sidewalks shall be required adjacent to all public rights-of-way. The location of sidewalks shall be reviewed and approved by the City of Dacula, Gwinnett County D.O.T or Georgia Department of Transportation depending on who owns the subject right-of-way. It is required that a minimum five-foot wide sidewalk connection be provided from public rights-of-way to the entrance(s) of buildings.
- 1.D. Sidewalks shall be constructed with an additional 2-foot by 8-foot pad approximately every 300 linear feet to accommodate future pedestrian amenities such as benches, planters, and trash containers. All such required amenities shall be decorative, commercial-quality fixtures. Sidewalk design and placement of any of these amenities shall be reviewed and approved by the City of Dacula, Gwinnett County D.O.T or Georgia Department of Transportation depending on who owns the subject right-of-way.
- 1.E. Provide streetlights along all public rights-of-way utilizing decorative light poles/fixtures. Light source shall be high-pressure sodium. Streets lights shall be staggered, 150 feet on-center, along both sides of the roadway. All street lighting shall be subject to review and approval of the City of Dacula, Gwinnett County D.O.T or Georgia Department of Transportation depending on who owns the subject right-of-way. Where applicable, streetlights shall be placed adjacent to required pedestrian amenity sidewalk pads. Light Fixtures which are utilized shall be as follows:

-Fixture Head Pole Type (Streetlight)

-Max. Pole Height = Cobra Head Fluted (Black) 40 ft. or Cobra Head Smooth (Black) 40 ft.

- 1.F. Provide lighting throughout all parking areas utilizing decorative light poles/fixtures. Light source shall be metal halide, not exceeding an average of 4.5 foot-candles of light output throughout the parking area. Other than pedestrian light fixtures which will be less than 14 feet tall, light fixtures shall be hooded. All lighting will be metal halide. Lighting shall be directed to avoid intrusion on adjacent properties and away from adjacent thoroughfares.

Landscaping Requirements

- 2.A. Provide, at a minimum, 20 Tree Density Units per acre for all non-residential development. Type and size of plantings shall be in compliance with the Dacula Buffer Landscape and Tree Ordinance. At least 50% of plantings shall consist of trees 3-inches in caliper (dbh) or greater.
- 2.B. Provide landscaped islands throughout all surface parking areas as required by the Dacula Buffer, Landscape and Tree Ordinance.
- 2.C. Provide a minimum ten-foot wide landscaped strip between all road rights-of-way and the back of-curb of abutting off-street paved parking lots. Landscaped strips between road rights-of-way and the edge of abutting off-street grassed parking areas shall be five-feet in width. At a minimum, landscaped strips shall be planted in accordance with the Dacula Buffer, Landscape and Tree Ordinance.
- 2.D. Provide non-ornamental shade trees spaced 50-feet on-center or grouped at 120-feet on-center along the right of way Highway 29. All street trees shall be a minimum 4-inch caliper (dbh) at the time of planting. Street trees shall be planted six-feet from back-of-curb subject to review and approval of the City of Dacula, Georgia, or Gwinnett Department of Transportation.

Street trees shall be of one or a combination of the following species:

1. Willow Oak
 2. Overcup Oak
 3. Nuttall Oak
 4. Pin Oak
 5. Shumard Oak
 6. Lacebark Elm
 7. Japanese Zelkova
- 2.E. Dumpsters which may be seen from adjacent properties or public parking lots shall be screened from view on all four sides. Screening shall consist of three solid walls of brick,

stucco or split-face block construction, at least six feet in height, with 100 percent solid metal or wooden gates. Dumpsters shall be placed in the rear yard and may be located 0-feet from the property line if the adjoining property is zoned non-residential and 0-feet from all applicable buffers if the adjoining property is zoned residential.

2.F. Natural vegetation shall remain on the property until issuance of a development permit.

3. Parking/Yard, Height & Setback

3.A. For retail developments exceeding 125,000 square feet of gross floor area, at least 10% of all required parking spaces shall be provided in parking areas of porous paving or grass paving systems, such as "Grasscrete" or "Grasspave," not to exceed 1,000 parking spaces or as approved by the City of Dacula.

3.B. Up to 25% of the required parking spaces for any development may be reduced in total area, width or depth for designated small vehicle parking. Each small vehicle parking space shall not be less than eight feet in width and 17 feet in depth.

3.C. Freestanding buildings or shopping center developments containing 7,500 gross square feet of space or less shall provide no more than 20% of parking areas in the front of building(s) and be limited to no more than one double row of parking. No more than 20% of off-street parking areas may be located to the sides of building(s), with the balance of parking located to the rear the building(s).

3.D. For developments exceeding 7,500 square feet, building placement is encouraged to be close to, and oriented toward, the public right-of-way with the majority of parking to the sides and rear where possible.

3.E. Decorative, commercial-quality, bicycle racks, benches and trash receptacles shall be required for all retail and office developments.

4. Signage; Temporary Uses; Peddling

4.A. Except as contained herein, sizes and amount of signage shall not exceed the requirements of the Sign Ordinance.

4.B. Oversized Signs or Billboards shall not be permitted.

4.C. Ground signs shall be limited to monument-type signs. Base and sign structure shall be constructed of materials such as brick, stone, stucco, wood or metal consistent with the architecture and exterior treatment of the building.

4.D. Canopy and awning sign(s) shall be limited to 15 square feet per road frontage. If lighted, lettering shall be individually formed and lighted. No spreader bar signage shall be allowed except as required by the State Fire Marshall.

4.E. Blinking, exposed neon, portable, inflatable and temporary signage shall be prohibited.

4.F. Peddlers shall be prohibited.

4.G. Live human advertisement shall be prohibited within the subject area. To include but not necessarily be limited to sign spinners, twirlers, dancers, clowns, and/or other similar temporary advertising methods commonly provided by costumed or animated humans.

5. Architectural Design

5.A. Architectural design of all non-residential buildings should comply with the following performance guidelines:

(1) Building facades shall be of architectural treatments of glass and/or brick, stone or stucco. Tilt-up or pre-cast concrete or alternate material may be used for industrial, multistory office (3-stories or greater) or hotel development subject to review and approval of the City of Dacula.

(2) Contrasting accent colors of any wall, awning or other feature (other than dark green or brick red) shall be limited to no more than 15% of the total area for any single facade.

(3) Metal sided or portable buildings shall be prohibited.

(4) Buildings shall incorporate live plant material growing immediately in front of or on the building.

(5) Buildings of less than 5,000 square feet of gross floor area shall be designed with pitched roofs, minimum pitch of 4 in 12.

(6) Roofing materials for pitched or mansard roofs shall be limited to the following:

* Metal standing seam of red, green or silver in color.

* Tile, slate or stone.

* Wood shake.

* Shingles with a slate, tile or metal appearance.

(7) All mechanical, HVAC and like systems shall be screened from street level view (within 300 feet) on all sides by an opaque wall or fence of brick, stucco, split-faced block or wood.

(8) Any accessories provided such as railings, benches, trash receptacles and/or bicycle racks shall complement the building design and style.

5.B. Architectural design of all commercial/retail buildings should comply with the following additional performance guidelines:

(1) To lend the appearance of multi-tenant occupancy, facades of multi-tenant buildings shall be varied in depth or parapet height.

(2) Within planned shopping centers, distinct architectural entry identity for individual tenants' entrances shall be provided for suites exceeding 10,000 square feet of leasable area.

(3) Walls visible from roadways or parking areas shall incorporate changes in building material/color or varying edifice detail such as trellises, false windows or recessed panels reminiscent of window, door or colonnade openings, landscaping or storefront every 150 linear feet.

(4) Roof parapets shall be articulated to provide visual diversity. Parapets shall include articulations or architectural features at least every 100 linear feet. The minimum height of articulations or features shall be one foot, and may be provided in height offset or facade projections such as porticoes or towers.

(5) Building design shall include minimum one foot deep cornices, extending along the entire front of buildings and the sides of buildings at least ten feet.

(6) Building design shall include a minimum one foot high contrasting base, extending along the entire front of buildings and the sides of buildings at least ten feet.

5.C. The City Administrator or his or her designee shall have the authority to grant variances for properties contained within the subject area. For clarification purposes, all variance requests within the subject area are considered administrative in nature and shall not require Mayor and City Council Approval. All appeals to requests of variances shall revert to the pre-existing variance process as outlined in the City of Dacula Zoning Resolution.

5.D. The property located at 2145 Winder Highway (Parcel Number 5274-047) shall be rezoned to M-1 (Light Manufacturing District) in the City.