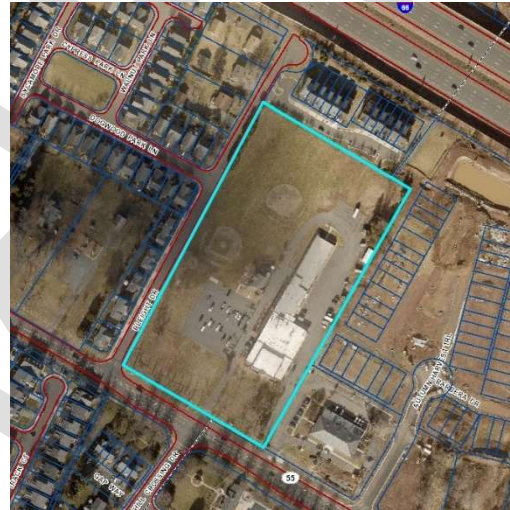




Town of Haymarket
15000 Washington Street, #100
Haymarket, VA 20169
703-753-2600

STAFF REPORT

TC Meeting Date: May 5, 2025
Agenda Title: Special Use Permit Application #2024-002, Religious Assembly for Haymarket Islamic Center
Zoning District: B-1 Town Center
Requested Action: Approval of SUP#2024-002
Staff Lead: Thomas Britt, Town Planner



The applicant is requesting to operate a tenant space at 14600 Washington Street, as a place of public assembly, with the assembly type being religious assembly.

The property is located on the eastern end of the corporate limits of Haymarket, at the intersection of Washington Street and Greenhill Crossing Drive.

The Haymarket Planning Commission previously recommended approval of SUP#2024-002 with conditions in the January 14th 2025 meeting. Please see the attached Planning Commission minutes for reference.

BACKGROUND

Request: The applicant, Haymarket Islamic Center, has requested to operate a single tenant space as a space for religious assembly.

Site Location: 14600 Washington Street, north of the intersection of Washington Street and Greenhill Crossing Drive. The tenant space is suite #160, noted on their proposal. Suite 155 has since been occupied by another tenant.

Zoning: This site is zoned B-1, Town Center.

Surrounding Land Uses: Immediately on site near the main building is a Lewis Home single family home that has been repurposed as a restaurant carry out use. The site is surrounded by R-2 zoned properties to the north, west, and south of the property, with R-1 zoned single family neighborhoods and the Town Park just outside of the adjacent R-2 zoned properties. To the east of the site in Prince William County are a multitenant commercial building and residential subdivisions.

Background and Context: The main building at 14600 Washington street has housed multiple tenants representing various types of businesses in Town. Haymarket Islamic Center, the applicant, has been using a community space in a nearby neighborhood outside of Haymarket to hold prayer service multiple times a day as part of the Muslim faith. The applicant is proposing to use a tenant space in the this building to hold these daily prayer services as well as an assembly space to hold Ramadan celebration during the month it takes place. The goal of this use is to provide a more convenient location for prayer services in the Muslim community in west Prince William County. Currently the closest area to hold daily prayer services is in Manassas, and small community spaces are being temporarily used for prayer services currently. This proposal will allow for a more permanent location for the Haymarket Islamic Center to hold daily prayer services for the Muslim community in West Prince William County.

There would be five daily prayer services held, with the number of attendees varying based on the day of the week and time of day. Attached to this Staff Report is a proposal from the applicant describing the use of the tenant space with the prayer schedule. Since March 3 Town Council Meeting, the applicant has provided an updated narrative with the start time of the earliest prayer service depending on the time of the year (attachments D and E). Additionally, Ramadan services may have social activities taking place in the tenant space afterward. Friday afternoon Jummah prayer service will be split into 1:45pm and 2:45pm services to ease traffic on site (attachment E).

The proposal does not expand the existing site and will occupy only a single tenant space (suite 160).

Town Staff are reviewing this application based on the definition of public assembly in the Zoning Ordinance below. Per this definition religious assembly falls within the , this use is approved by-right only in the T-C Transition Commercial zone and approved via SUP in the B-1 Town Center, B-2 Business Commercial, and I-1 Light Industrial zones, necessitating an SUP application for religious assembly at this location. Since 14600 Washington Street falls in the B-1 Town Center zone, the app

Zoning Ordinance Reference Article II: Definitions

Public assembly. “Facilities that accommodate public assembly for sports, amusements, or entertainment purposes. Typical uses include auditoriums, sports stadiums, convention facilities, religious, and incidental sales, and exhibition facilities.”

Additionally, the property owner must submit a site plan to fulfil Section 58-4.30(a) of the Zoning Ordinance, related to general provisions of SUP review: “*After approval of a special use permit by the Haymarket Town Council, the applicant shall have one year to submit site or subdivision plans for the approved use and shall occupy the site and commence the use within five years of approval of the site plan, provided that the Haymarket Town Council may allow, at the time and as part of approval, a longer period. If the use has not begun as provided above, the special use permit shall be void, and the use may not thereafter be begun except upon approval of another special use permit.*”

Sec. 58-4.29. - Conditions attached to the approval of a special use permit.

- (a) *“In approving a special use permit, the Haymarket Town Council may attach reasonable conditions, including an expiration date, to such approval with or without the applicant's consent. Once a special use permit is approved with conditions attached, such conditions shall be considered as a part of the text of this chapter and may be administered and enforced by the zoning administrator. A violation of an attached condition shall be considered a violation of this chapter.*
- (b) *A condition attached to the approval of a special use permit may only be modified by a subsequent application for a special use permit or by the approval of a minor modification in accordance with section 58-3.30.”*

Additional Analysis for Matters to be Considered in Special Use Permit Application Review follows.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Matters to be Considered in Application Review (per Section 58-4.28 of the Zoning Ordinance)

(1) The nature of the proposed use, including factors such as traffic, noise, light, hours of operation, and number of employees involved.

The use will be contained to the tenant space the applicant has leased. There will be little to no additional light or noise greater than that of existing tenants at this building. Depending on the time of year, the dawn prayer service may be much earlier than most tenants at this building. There is a significant increase in projected car traffic potentially during Friday afternoon prayer service, and especially during the month of Ramadan. The applicant has provided a submittal showing the projected amount of traffic and vehicles that would use the site, which within includes a service by service estimate of the amount of vehicles that would use the site. Currently no traffic study for the site has been conducted to account for current vehicle traffic or future traffic projections if this use is approved. VDOT statistics from January 2022 show average daily traffic along the section of Washington Street that passes the site is 10,000 vehicles per day. The last available traffic data or anywhere else on site is from 1994, which is not reflective of modern traffic.

The applicant has stated that during Ramadan events, members of the congregation will volunteer to help guide cars to parking when traffic increases during that event. The Haymarket Police Department has confirmed they help with guiding traffic for Sunday services for one of the existing churches in Haymarket. The Haymarket Police Department has stated willingness to aid in guiding traffic if requested by the applicant, if officers are . Please see the attached email from Haymarket's Police Chief on this subject. Prince William Police can also be contacted to aid in traffic movement if necessary, per attached email correspondence with Haymarket's Police Chief and the landlord.

The site plan submission requirement in Section 58-4.30(a) of the Zoning Ordinance can help mitigate entry exit conflicts on the site and other traffic issues by bringing it to VDOT standards through a site plan.

(2) The character of the existing area, including existing structures and structures under construction, existing public facilities, and public facilities under construction, and private, commercial and/or service facilities available within the existing area.

The use will not alter the existing structure in any way unless doors are added to aid in increasing occupancy, and there are no areas under construction that will be affected by this use. Customers from the other tenant spaces may struggle to find parking in the existing lot at certain times of day and during parts of Ramadan due to the frequency/length of the prayer

services, but for most hours of the day the parking of this lot will not be significantly affected. There will be a moderate noise increase for neighboring residents during the evening Isha prayer service in the summer, which would start around 10pm.

(3) The area's designation on the town's comprehensive plan, and relevant text provisions of the plan.

Town Comprehensive Plan. 1.2.9 Community Design Policy
Commercial/Residential Blend East of Town's Center

"Traveling east from the central portion of town, Haymarket unfolds in a pleasant mix of older, residential homes and low intensity commercial uses such as a veterinary clinic and a Baptist Church. This blend of uses continues to the eastern town limit, where a neo-colonial residential development is across the street from public uses in two Sears houses fronted by a planned village green. The two Sears structures fit this area architecturally and historically and should be preserved, if at all possible. Almost all the land north and south of Washington Street is developed. Much of the available land on the north side of Washington Street seems well suited to low intensity commercial uses, with adequate buffering to separate it from residential neighborhoods. Whenever possible, existing residential buildings should be converted to commercial use, rather than have new buildings constructed, to continue the open, small town atmosphere and sense of place."

The proposed use has adequate buffering from existing residential neighborhoods within the Town because of the open space separating the building from Bleight Drive and Alexandra's Keep Lane, but there is minimal buffering between the site and the adjacent subdivision in Prince William County. This proposal does not qualify as an adaptive reuse of a residential building. This use will continue the open small town atmosphere due to no structural changes. While the traffic volume may increase heavily in this area due to the proposed use, the use of this tenant space as a place of public assembly for religious use reflects existing businesses mentioned in the comprehensive plan, and the use does not alter the sense of place within the community.

(4) The minimum off-street parking area required, and the amount of space needed for the loading and unloading of trucks.

Section 58-7.1 of the Zoning Ordinance is written below:

Sec. 58-7.1. - Minimum off-street parking and loading.

- (a) Minimum standards. At the time of erection of any main building, or at the time any main building or its accessory uses is enlarged, or the use changed, all provisions of article XIII shall be met along with minimum required off-street parking and loading space with adequate provision for entrance and exit of motor vehicles, in accordance with the following table
- (b) Parking space as required in this section shall be on the same lot with the main building; except that in the case of buildings other than dwellings, spaces may be located as far away as 750 feet. Every parcel of land used as a public parking area and motor vehicle ways shall be surfaced with all- weather surfaces, excluding gravel surfaces. It shall have appropriate guards where needed as determined by the administrator. Any lights used to illuminate such parking areas shall be so arranged as to reflect the light away from adjoining premises in a residential district.

The minimum parking requirements for a religious assembly or church are 1 spot per 4 seats or attendees per the Zoning Ordinance. The minimum number of parking spaces required to be provided for this use is 37.5, rounded up to 38 spaces. On site the application claims 185 spaces, which replaced the crossed out 150 spaces. The Town Planner inspected the site on March 25, 2025, and counted 132 marked spaces on site. Town Staff and the landlord met on site on March 31, 2025 to discuss Town Council's request to provide striping on the paved portions of the site to provide more visible parking options on site for this use as part of a potential condition of approval. Per the discussion on site and a landlord submitted sketch of a draft striping plan, the site could be striped to show 201 marked spaces (attachment H). The number of spaces on the striping proposal may be reduced to 198 based on fire lane requirements.

Subsequently, the landlord has striped the site to include per their count 204 spaces. In the rear of the property by Suite 160 there are 20 parking spaces stacked 2 by 10, with the only access to the back 10 spaces being through the grass. Town staff do not count these back 10 spaces as part of the total count due to no access to the spots from the paved surface on the site, reducing the count of available striped spaces to 194. There are 3 striped spots near the loading area close to the rear of the property that cause a very narrow aisle between the striped parking areas on site. The narrow aisle created by these three striped spots may create issues with the loading and unloading of trucks in the adjacent bay. Until Town staff receive comment from Prince William County's Fire Marshal on emergency vehicle access through that aisle width, these three spots will not count toward the parking total, leaving available spaces at 191.

The Haymarket Police Department has provided drone footage of the site Friday the 25th of April at 1:45pm, 2:15pm, and 3:10pm to show the existing parking conditions of the site when the Friday afternoon prayer service would take place. Based on the above pictures, there is adequate parking on the main lot on site at the time of the busiest prayer service, with additional parking open at the rear of the site near Suite 160, where the proposed public assembly will operate, and many spots further along the rear and side of the building.

Based on a submitted tabulation from the landlord and a recalculation by Town Staff (exhibit F and exhibit G), the number of spaces required on site for all uses are 168.8 (rounded down to 168). With the subsequent striping of the site since the March work session, the addition of this proposed use is shown to be able to utilize the site and total uses will not exceed the 191 parking spaces on site, per the Zoning Ordinance parking requirements.

(5) Whether the public health, safety and welfare will be preserved, and any reasonable conditions necessary for such preservation.

The increases in vehicle traffic at certain times of the day caused by the proposed use may negatively affect the pedestrian and car traffic using the existing tenant spaces due to overcrowding. Consideration should be given to approval conditions where the applicant provides Town Staff with an occupancy card and the final occupancy permit. Town Staff are meeting with a member of the Prince William County Fire Marshal on site to receive comment on the aisle width near the loading bay of the building to ensure it can be safely navigated by emergency vehicles.

(6) Any other factors relating to the purposes of zoning that the Planning Commission and/or Haymarket Town Council, in its legislative discretion, shall consider as relevant.

The current Zoning Ordinance only states religious assembly as mentioned within the definition of “Public Assembly.” Aside from the parking requirements for religious assembly, there are no congregation attendance requirements or other measurable factors that would allow Town Staff or the Town Council to evaluate at face value a church site versus a smaller tenant use such as the one presented in this application. Town Staff have reached out to Prince William County’s Building Department for projected occupancy standards for each tenant space. In conversation with staff from the Prince William County Building Department, it is possible for the tenant space to hold the projected number of attendees to the prayer services, but there would need to be additional doors installed in the tenant space depending on the building’s ingress/egress arrangement, and potentially a new fire alarm and sprinkler system depending on the final occupancy calculation. As referenced in the above sections,

the proposed use of a religious assembly for the Haymarket Islamic Center does not significantly alter the site as it is contained within one tenant space and reflects the existing character of this side of the Town. However, per Section 58-4.30(a) of the Zoning Ordinance, which has been triggered due to the special use application for public assembly, a site plan still must be submitted by the applicant (landlord) for the site to comply with this section as part of special use permit approval. The timeframe to submit the site plan is within one year of approval of the SUP.

Section 58-3.6 of the Zoning Ordinance (procedures and requirements) states the following about changes in use:

“Before a building permit shall be issued or construction commenced on any permitted use, or a permit issued for a new use or a change of use, a site plan prepared in accordance with this chapter shall be submitted for review. If the change of use does not require additional parking, change in ingress/egress, or other exterior modifications, then the site plan requirement may be waived at the discretion of the Zoning Administrator.”

Per this Ordinance section, the Zoning Administrator can waive the site plan requirement triggered by this application. However, the existing issues with the ingress and egress points onto the site are cause for the Zoning Administrator to not grant the waiver for the site plan requirement for this application.

The frequency of the prayer services and the projected attendance of Friday services and Ramadan events may cause a highly intensive use of the parking lot that will be of detriment to the other tenants and visitors to this property when entering and exiting the site onto Washington Street. The striping of the site and comparison to the parking tabulation show that the site meets minimum parking requirements with the addition of this tenant. Outside of the site plan submission requirements, the applicant has provided sufficient information to show attendance standards, mitigation of traffic within the site, and showing the site can accommodate the parking of this use.

With these effects and other factors considered, Town Staff recommend that the Town Council approve the SUP for public assembly at 14600 Washington Street Suite 160, with conditions related to providing the occupancy card from Prince William County’s Building Department, providing a copy of the occupancy permit from Prince William County’s Building Department, and the submission of a site plan within One year of the approval of the SUP.

Draft Motion(s):

Town Staff will provide a draft motion and resolution for the Town Council at the May 5 Regular Meeting.

Public Notice and Input

The Town posted notice of public hearing for the SUP application for all residents of the Town in the Prince William Times on Thursday February 13th 2025, and Thursday, February 20th 2025.

STAFF CONTACT INFORMATION

Thomas Britt, (703) 753-2600
tbritt@townofhaymarket.org

ATTACHMENTS

- A—Special Use Permit application for SUP#2024-002
- B—Planning Commission minutes
- C—Satellite imagery of site
- D—Applicant submitted narrative
- E—Updated applicant narrative
- F—Landlord submitted Parking Tabulation with Staff tabulation included
- G—Landlord resubmitted Parking Tabulation based on current tenants
- H—Landlord sketch of proposed striping plan of paved surface on site
- I—Satellite imagery of striped parking spots on site
- J—Timestamped drone imagery of site from Friday, April 25, 2025
- K—Correspondence with Haymarket PD on directing traffic on site
- L—landlord and Haymarket PD correspondence discussing PWC Police directing traffic on site