

PLANNING AND ZONING BOARD REPORT

PZB Project Number 25-00500012: A Conditional Use Permit (CUP) request for Gentle Pet Crossing to operate a Medium-Intensity Pet Funeral Home/Crematory at 1925 7th Court North. The property is zoned Industrial Park of Commerce (IPOC) and has an Industrial (I) Future Land Use (FLU) designation.

Meeting Date: February 4, 2026

Property Owner: WAREHOUSE ON 7TH LLC

Applicant: Juanique Chadinha-Branca – Gentle Pet Crossing LLC

Address: 1925 7th Court North

PCN: 38-43-44-21-07-000-0062

Size: 0.31 Acre Lot /±2,400 sf proposed use area within an existing ±9,200 square foot building

General Location: West of Barnett Drive between 7th Avenue North and 7th Court North

Existing Land Use: Industrial

Current Future Land Use Designation: Industrial (I)

Zoning District: Industrial Park of Commerce (I-POC)

Location Map



RECOMMENDATION

The documentation and materials provided with the application request were reviewed for compliance with the applicable guidelines and standards found in the City of Lake Worth Beach Land Development Regulations (LDRs), and for consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and Strategic Plan. The proposed use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan, Strategic Plan, and LDRs as conditioned. Therefore, a **recommendation of approval with conditions** is provided to the Planning and Zoning Board. The conditions are located on pages 6-7 of this report.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant, Juanique Chadinha-Branca, on behalf of Gentle Pet Crossing LLC, is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to establish a Medium-Intensity Pet Funeral Home/Crematory at 1925 7th Court North. The subject parcel is approximately 0.31 acres and consists of approximately 9,200-square-foot, four-unit building, with the proposed use occupying one unit located in the northwest portion of the building and consisting of approximately 2,400 square feet.

Gentle Pet Crossing LLC provides animal cremation services utilizing an aquamation process. Aquamation is a fireless cremation method that uses liquid alkaline hydrolysis to reduce remains. Following aquamation, the remaining bones are dried and processed into ashes. The ashes are returned to pet owners in a wooden urn with a brass nameplate and are accompanied by a hair clipping and an aquamation certificate. Clients may also purchase additional memorial items, including urns, bracelets, necklaces, or keychains designed to hold ash remains.

The proposed facility would include refrigeration for the temporary storage of deceased pets prior to the aquamation process. Gentle Pet Crossing LLC also offers in-home pet euthanasia services, which are provided by contracted, self-employed veterinarians. The applicant has confirmed that euthanasia or veterinary services would not be conducted on-site at 1925 7th Court North. Any future proposal to offer such services at the subject property would require separate use approval.

In addition to aquamation services, the applicant proposes to include a designated sanctuary area within the facility to accommodate on-site pet memorial services, allowing pet owners the opportunity to say goodbye prior to the aquamation process. The applicant currently operates a pet funeral home/crematory within the City at 409 South Dixie Highway and proposes to expand operations at the larger 1925 7th Court North location while closing the existing 409 South Dixie Highway site. The applicant also operates business locations in the Cities of Port Saint Lucie and Fort Lauderdale, Florida; however, those locations function solely as sanctuary spaces and do not include crematory or aquamation services. All cremation and aquamation services would be conducted at the proposed Lake Worth Beach location.

Animals are typically picked up by Gentle Pet Crossing LLC, though clients may also drop off pets at the facility. Remains are generally returned to clients within approximately seven (7) days and may be delivered to the client, picked up on-site, or mailed. The facility would operate seven (7) days per week, between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m., by appointment only, with approximately two to three (2–3) employees on-site at any given time.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

At the time of publishing this staff report, staff received one letter in opposition of this application due to concerns of odors and potential impacts to air quality.

BACKGROUND

Below is a summary of the property based on Palm Beach Property Appraiser's records and City records:

Construction: Per the Palm Beach County Property Appraiser, the existing development consists of approximately 9,200 square feet, including 8,800 square feet of warehouse space and 400 square feet of unfinished office area. The structure was built in 1971. The existing 9,200-square-foot building currently consists of four (4) separate units, each assigned to

its own address rather than a unit or bay number. The addresses are 1921 7th Court North, 1925 7th Court North, 1926 7th Avenue North, and 1930 7th Avenue North. The primary address associated with the parcel is 1921 7th Court North.

Use: The unit at 1925 7th Court North is currently vacant, Gentle Pet Crossing LLC is proposing to operate a pet funeral home/crematory use.

The unit at 1921 7th Court North and 1926 7th Avenue North are occupied by 3 Dragons Brewing, a factory use to manufacture soda drinks.

The unit at 1930 7th Avenue North is occupied by Cardona's BJJ Martial Arts LLC, a gym/studio use for a martial arts studio.

The site received a Blanket Conditional Use Permit (PZB 17-00500012) approval for various industrial, commercial, and artisanal uses which did not include a use approval for a Funeral Home/Crematory.

Code Compliance: There are no active code cases associated with this address.

ANALYSIS

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and Strategic Plan

The subject site has a Future Land Use (FLU) designation of Industrial (I). The I FLU is intended to provide for the establishment and enlargement of office, manufacturing and light to moderate industrial uses that would be incompatible in other areas of the city due to increased traffic generation. The implementing zoning district is I-POC. The proposed request is seeking to allow a medium intensity Pet Funeral Home/Crematory at 1925 7th Court North.

The City's Strategic Plan focuses on fostering safer neighborhoods, encouraging community pride, building a vibrant and diverse economy, planning for the future, and enhancing the natural, historic, and cultural environment of the City. Pillar IV.A and Pillar IV.D of the Strategic Plan state that the City shall achieve economic and financial sustainability through a versatile and stable tax base and influence the supply and expansion of jobs. Because the proposed Conditional Use permit will allow for the establishment of a medium-intensity pet funeral home/crematory that will contribute towards the City's tax base and sustain or increase jobs, the proposal is consistent with Pillar IV.A and Pillar IV.D.

Based on the analysis above, the proposed Conditional Use Permit request is consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the City of Lake Worth Beach's Comprehensive Plan and Strategic Plan.

Consistency with the City's Land Development Regulations

The Industrial Park of Commerce (I-POC) zoning district *is intended to provide for the establishment and enlargement of office, manufacturing and light industrial uses without restriction on traffic generating characteristics. The industrial park of commerce district is also intended to permit the establishment of certain other uses which are compatible with industrial operations. Development in the industrial land use category should be guided to minimize negative impacts on nearby residential areas. The industrial park of commerce district implements the industrial land use category of the Lake Worth Comprehensive Plan.*

Analysis: The applicant, Juanique Chadinha-Branca, on behalf of Gentle Pet Crossing LLC, is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to establish a Medium-Intensity Pet Funeral Home/Crematory at 1925 7th Court North. The proposed use would occupy approximately 2,400 square feet within an existing ±9,200-square-foot, four-unit building on a 0.31-acre parcel. The facility would provide animal cremation services utilizing an aquamation (alkaline hydrolysis) process and would be limited to indoor processing and handling of animal remains, including temporary refrigerated storage, private memorial services, and incidental memorial item sales. No euthanasia or veterinary services would be conducted on-site. All wastewater generated by the aquamation process would be subject to review and approval by the City's Utilities

Department, and all biological or hazardous waste would be handled and disposed of in accordance with applicable local, state, and federal regulations. The facility would operate by appointment only, seven days per week between 7:00 a.m. and 9:00 p.m., with approximately two to three employees on-site at any given time and would be required to operate in substantial conformance with the applicant's operational narrative and representations to the City.

The proposed use, as conditioned, is expected to operate at a level of intensity comparable to other permitted uses within the surrounding industrial area and is not anticipated to result in adverse impacts to adjacent properties. The building is already served by municipal services, including water, sewer, refuse, fire and police. The site is also located on a local roadway; no additional public expenditure is required to service the proposed use. The analysis for the proposed conditional use permit is provided in the section below and is consistent with the review criteria located in Attachment A.

The Department of Community Sustainability is tasked in the LDRs to review conditional use applications for consistency with the City's LDRs (Section 23.2-29(i)), for compliance with the following findings for granting conditional uses, supplemental regulations, and to provide a recommendation on the proposed project.

Section 23.2-29(a), Conditional Use Permits: *Conditional uses are defined as generally compatible with the other uses permitted in a district, but that require individual review of their location, design, structure, configuration, density and intensity of use, and may require the imposition of pertinent conditions to ensure the appropriateness and compatibility of the use at a particular location and to prevent or minimize potential adverse impacts to the surrounding area.*

Section 23.2-29(b), Approval Authority: *The planning and zoning board, in accordance with the procedures, standards and limitations of this section, shall approve, approve with conditions, or deny an application for a development permit for a conditional use permit after review and recommendation by the development review official.*

Analysis: A recommendation by the development review official is provided on page 2 of this report, under Recommendation.

Section 23.2-29(c), General Procedures: *The department for community sustainability shall review the application in accordance with these LDRs and prepare a report that summarizes the application and the effect of the proposed conditional use, including whether the application complies with each of the findings for granting conditional uses stated below and provide a recommendation for whether the application should be approved, approved with conditions, or denied.*

Staff Analysis: The subject site is located within an existing 9,200-square-foot building constructed in 1971. The site and building do not conform to current Land Development Regulations (LDRs) related to landscaping, impervious surface coverage, and building coverage. As a result, the provisions of the nonconformities section of the LDRs, Section 23.5-3, apply. The proposed Conditional Use does not involve site or building modifications and would not increase or otherwise adversely affect the existing nonconformities. Therefore, the request is consistent with the applicable nonconformity standards, and no additional action is required. **The proposed conditional use is consistent with the City's LDRs as conditioned based on the following data and analysis:**

Section 12-7, Dumpster Requirements: *The location of all dumpsters shall be approved by the public services director or his designee and/or the building official or his designee. All dumpsters shall meet the requirements set forth in this section and all other ordinances, rules, regulations and policies adopted by the city.*

Analysis: The applicant states they will use standard rolling trash bins, which will be stored indoors and rolled to the northwest corner of the property on scheduled collection days. The Public Works Division, which is responsible for reviewing trash and refuse systems, has reviewed the proposal and indicated no comments.

To ensure compliance with City solid waste regulations, Planning and Zoning staff have added a condition of approval specifying that Gentle Pet Crossing LLC shall not utilize City trash service for the disposal of biological waste, including but not limited to animal remains, biomedical waste, or hazardous waste. Disposal of such materials shall be conducted in accordance with Chapter 12, Health and Sanitation requirements, and all applicable City solid waste collection and disposal regulations.

Per LDRs Section 23.4-10.f)2.A., Exceptions (Off-street Parking). *Parking is not required for changes in use or occupancy or remodeling of existing buildings which do not increase floor area or number of overall existing dwelling units, located outside of the single-family residential SF-R zoning district.*

Staff Analysis: Generally, when a request for conditional use is made without increasing the existing building floor area, additional parking is not required per LDR Section 23.4-10.f)2.A., Exceptions (Off-street Parking). The proposed request involves the reuse of an existing structure with no expansion of the building footprint or square footage; therefore, the parking exception applies.

The applicant indicates that two (2) parking spaces are available directly in front of the unit. The business operates two (2) mini vans, which are typically parked at personal residences, though one vehicle may occasionally remain overnight at the site. Based on the applicable exception, no additional parking spaces are required, and the proposal complies with parking requirements.

Signage: Signage is required to comply with the size and design requirements in the Land Development Regulations. Any proposed signage will be reviewed at building permit for consistency with these requirements.

Section 23.6-1. - Landscape regulations and Section 23.4-13.c.1.A.4.b.iv – Landscape requirements: *The objective of this section is to provide minimum standards for the installation and maintenance of landscaping within the city. Per Section 23.6-1(c)(2), “on the site of a building or open-lot use providing an off-street parking, storage or other vehicular use area, where such an area will not be screened visually by an intervening building or structure from an abutting right-of-way or dedicated alley, shall require landscaping” consistent with this section including a landscape strip ten (10) feet in depth. The site must also be provided with a five-foot wide perimeter planting area with shade trees planted every twenty-five (25) linear feet on center. A hedge must also be maintained within the required planting area.*

Analysis: The subject property is an existing nonconforming site that does not fully comply with the landscape requirements of LDR Section 23.6-1. The site lacks the minimum required landscape buffers and perimeter planting areas due to existing site constraints, including extensive impervious surfaces necessary to accommodate the existing building footprint and vehicular parking. As a result, the site does not fully meet the intent of the current landscape regulations. However, the property received a landscape permit in 2023, and landscaping was installed to the maximum extent feasible, including ground cover, hedging, and trees within limited areas along the north and south sides of the site. The proposed Conditional Use does not include site modifications and would not further reduce or adversely impact the existing landscaping or increase the site’s nonconformity with current landscape standards. As a condition of approval, the subject property will be required to be maintained in continuous compliance with the maintenance and environmental standards of LDR Section 23.6-1, with any noncompliance subject to enforcement in accordance with the Land Development Regulations.

Findings for Granting Conditional Uses

Prior to approving any conditional use permit, the decision-making authority shall find based on competent and substantial evidence that the following criteria related to conditional uses are met:

Section 23.2-29.j) General findings relating to harmony with LDRs and protection of public interest.

Staff Analysis: The proposed conditional use, as conditioned, is in general harmony with the surroundings. The Pet Funeral Home/Crematory use is an anticipated use in the IPOC zoning district. The proposed use will not result in less public benefit, nor will it result in more intensive development than anticipated the zoning district in the comprehensive plan.

Section 23.2-29.k) Specific findings for all conditional uses.

Staff Analysis: The proposed Conditional Use is generally consistent with the surrounding area and aligns with the intended development pattern of the corridor when operated as conditioned. The requested use is a compatible and anticipated activity within the Industrial Park of Commerce (I-POC) zoning district and is not expected to reduce public benefit or result in a more intensive development than envisioned in the zoning district and Comprehensive Plan. To ensure compatibility and limit potential impacts, staff has included conditions of approval specifying that the use shall be limited to animal cremation services utilizing an aquamation (alkaline hydrolysis) process, including temporary refrigerated storage of deceased pets, private memorial services, and incidental memorial item sales, in accordance with the applicant's operational narrative. All processing, storage, and handling of animal remains shall occur entirely within the enclosed building, with no outdoor processing or storage permitted. Additionally, a condition has been added allowing for revocation of the business license and Conditional Use Permit should the property be declared a chronic nuisance resulting from, or related to, the operations of the approved use.

Section 23.2-29.m) Additional requirements.

Staff Analysis: The site does not have any outstanding code enforcement fees or fines due. Any previously imposed conditions of approvals at the site have been met and remain applicable.

CONCLUSION AND CONDITIONS

The Industrial – Park of Commerce (I-POC) zoning district is intended to provide for the establishment and enlargement of office, manufacturing and light industrial uses without restriction on traffic generating characteristics. Based on the data and analysis in this report and the supporting materials by the applicant, the requested Pet Funeral Home/Crematory use is not anticipated to negatively impact adjacent properties as conditioned. Further, the proposed Conditional Use Permit will be compatible with the neighboring uses in the facility and the corridor. Therefore, a recommendation of approval is provided to the PZB with the following conditions:

Planning & Zoning, and Landscaping:

1. The use approval is for the 2,400 square foot unit located at 1925 7th Court North only. Any expansion of use area or relocation of the use shall require additional staff review and approval.
2. The approved use shall be limited to animal cremation services utilizing an aquamation (alkaline hydrolysis) process, including temporary refrigerated storage of deceased pets, private memorial services, and incidental memorial item sales, as described in the applicant's operational narrative.
3. All aquamation processing, storage, and handling of animal remains shall occur entirely within the enclosed building. No outdoor processing or storage shall be permitted.
4. No euthanasia or veterinary services shall be conducted on-site. Any future proposal to provide such services at the subject property shall require separate use approval.
5. Refrigeration units used for temporary storage of animal remains shall be enclosed, screened from public view, and maintained in compliance with applicable health and safety regulations.
6. All wastewater discharge associated with the aquamation process shall be subject to approval by the City's Utilities Department and shall comply with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations.
7. The use shall be operated in substantial conformance with the applicant's operational narrative and representations made to the City. Any material change in the use or process shall require additional review and approval.

8. Gentle Pet Crossing LLC shall not utilize City trash or solid waste collection services for the disposal of biological waste, including but not limited to animal remains, biomedical waste, or hazardous waste. All such materials shall be handled, stored, and disposed of in accordance with Chapter 12, Health and Sanitation requirements, and all applicable local, state, and federal regulations. Standard refuse generated by the business shall comply with City solid waste collection and disposal requirements.
9. The use, handling, production and storage of regulated substances in wellfield zones as defined in the PBC Unified Land Development Code shall be prohibited as provided for in the requirements of the PBC Wellfield Ordinance (ULDC, Article 14, Chapter B).
10. Prior to the issuance of a business license, the business shall contact the City Engineer's office to confirm if additional pollution prevention or other utility requirements are required. A copy of the PBCERM Affidavit shall be provided.
11. All uses shall meet all the requirements and stipulations set forth in City Code Section 15-24, Noise control.
12. Per City Code Section 14-32 and LDR Section 23.2-23, the occupant must obtain and maintain the required Business License.
13. The City shall revoke the business license and the approval of the conditional use permit if the property is declared a chronic nuisance as result of or related to the operations of the requested uses.
14. Signage shall be reviewed through the building permit process for consistency with the requirements of the Land Development Regulations.
15. The property shall be continuously maintained in accordance with LDR Section 23.6-1 and subject to enforcement for noncompliance.

Building Division:

1. The roll-up door shall not be used as a required means of egress.
2. All restroom facilities shall be designed and constructed in compliance with applicable ADA accessibility requirements.
3. The primary building entrance shall comply with all applicable ADA accessibility requirements.
4. An ADA-compliant parking space shall be provided if required by the Florida Building Code and applicable accessibility standards.
5. Additional review comments may be issued upon submitting complete building permit documents.

Electric Utilities:

1. Prior to, or concurrent with, submittal of a Building Permit application, the Developer shall provide electrical load calculations, voltage requirements, and a riser diagram.
2. The location of the meter center shall be clearly shown on the approved site plan.
3. Prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy (CO), a final electrical inspection shall be completed and approved.

Water & Sewer Utilities:

1. Prior to the issuance of a business license, the applicant shall apply for an industrial pretreatment Permit from the IPP program with West Palm Beach utilities.
2. Prior to the issuance of a business license, the waste "white" water drained from the alkaline hydrolysis process shall discharge to a separate drain lateral that will require a grease inceptor. This line must be independent from sink and toilet drains before it is discharged through the grease inceptor, after the inceptor it can tie back into a sanitary lateral.
3. Prior to the issuance of a business license, the water service line must have a reduced pressure zone (RPZ) backflow preventer following the meter.
4. Prior to the issuance of a business license, a clean out for access to clear blockages must be present on the sewer lateral at the property line.

BOARD POTENTIAL MOTION:

I move to **approve** PZB Project Number 25-00500012 with staff recommended conditions for a **Conditional Use Permit** request to establish a Pet Funeral Home/Crematory use based on upon the competent and substantial evidence provided in the staff report and in the testimony at the public hearing.

I move to **disapprove** PZB Project Number 25-00500012 for a **Conditional Use Permit** request to establish a Pet Funeral Home/Crematory use. The project does not meet the conditional use criteria for the following reasons [Board member please state reasons.].

Consequent Action: *The Planning & Zoning Board's decision will be final decision for the Conditional Use Permit. The Applicant may appeal the Board's decision to the City Commission.*

ATTACHMENTS

- A. Findings for Conditional Uses
- B. Application Package (Survey & Justification Statement)

ATTACHMENT A - Findings for Granting Conditional Uses

Section 23.2-29(d) General findings relating to harmony with LDRs and protection of public interest.	Analysis
1. <i>The conditional use exactly as proposed at the location where proposed will be in harmony with the uses which, under these LDRs and the future land use element, are most likely to occur in the immediate area where located.</i>	In compliance as conditioned
2. <i>The conditional use exactly as proposed at the location where proposed will be in harmony with existing uses in the immediate area where located.</i>	In compliance as conditioned
3. <i>The conditional use exactly as proposed will not result in substantially less public benefit or greater harm than would result from use of the site for some use permitted by right or some other conditional use permitted on the site.</i>	In compliance
4. <i>The conditional use exactly as proposed will not result in more intensive development in advance of when such development is approved by the future land use element of the comprehensive plan.</i>	In compliance
Section 23.2-29(e) Specific findings for all conditional uses.	Analysis
1. <i>The proposed conditional use will not generate traffic volumes or movements which will result in a significant adverse impact or reduce the level of service provided on any street to a level lower than would result from a development permitted by right.</i>	In compliance
2. <i>The proposed conditional use will not result in a significantly greater amount of through traffic on local streets than would result from a development permitted by right and is appropriately located with respect to collector and arterial streets</i>	In compliance
3. <i>The proposed conditional use will not produce significant air pollution emissions, or will appropriately mitigate anticipated emissions to a level compatible with that which would result from a development permitted by right.</i>	In compliance as conditioned
4. <i>The proposed conditional use will be so located in relation to the thoroughfare system that neither extension nor enlargement nor any other alteration of that system in a manner resulting in higher net public cost or earlier incursion of public cost than would result from development permitted by right.</i>	In compliance
5. <i>The proposed conditional use will be so located in relation to water lines, sanitary sewers, storm sewers, surface drainage systems and other utility systems that neither extension nor enlargement nor any other alteration of such systems in a manner resulting in higher net public cost or earlier incursion of public cost than would result from development permitted by right.</i>	In compliance as conditioned
6. <i>The proposed conditional use will not place a demand on municipal police or fire protection service beyond the capacity of those services, except that the proposed facility may place a demand on municipal police or fire protection services which does not exceed that likely to result from a development permitted by right.</i>	In compliance

7. *The proposed conditional use will not generate significant noise, or will appropriately mitigate anticipated noise to a level compatible with that which would result from a development permitted by right. Any proposed use must meet all the requirements and stipulations set forth in section 15.24, Noise control.* **In compliance as conditioned**

 8. *The proposed conditional use will not generate light or glare which encroaches onto any residential property in excess of that allowed in section 23.4-10, Exterior lighting.* **In compliance**
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