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Staff Report

Special Exception Request

DATE: November 1, 2022
TO: Moncks Corner Board of Zoning Appeals
FROM: Douglas Polen, Community Development Director
SUBJECT: Special Exception Request
STAFF RECOMMENDATION: **APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS**

Report Summary	
<i>Property Location</i>	2700 S Hwy 52
<i>Property TMS</i>	197-00-01-027
<i>Acreage</i>	5.07 acres
<i>Zoning</i>	C-2, General Commercial
<i>Applicant/Owner</i>	Michael McAlhany
<i>Use</i>	Outdoor Vehicle Storage
<i>Request</i>	Special Exception to allow outdoor storage of vehicles
<i>Current Requirements</i>	Per the Zoning Ordinance, all outdoor vehicle storage requires a special exception to allow the use

Background

The applicant is seeking to purchase property adjacent to his current storage facility, Extra Room Storage, located at 1505 Cypress Gardens Road. The proposed additional property is located at 2700 S. US 52 and is currently owned by Berkeley Electric Cooperative. This property will also be a storage facility featuring outdoor storage.

Per the Zoning ordinance, all mini-warehouses and outdoor storage of vehicles requires a special exception in order to be considered an allowable use. If approved as a use, the Board of Zoning Appeals must designate the proper landscape buffer required in this particular instance.

Analysis

From Sec. 11-2 of the Zoning Ordinance:

Duties of the Board – To permit uses by special exception subject to the terms and conditions for the uses set forth below. Special exceptions may be allowed after determination by the BZA of additional controls required and after the holding of a public hearing. A listed special exception is eligible for location within the subject zoning district if all of the following conditions can be clearly demonstrated to exist:

- a. **The proposed use is consistent with the purpose and intent of the Town's Comprehensive Plan as well as the character and intent of the underlying zoning district;**

Yes. The Comprehensive Plan shows this area as an Employment Area, and the zoning of C-2, General Commercial allows this use.

- b. **The proposed use is compatible with existing uses in the vicinity and will not adversely affect the general welfare or character of the immediate community;**

Yes. While the Town would like to see retail, restaurant, or office uses at this location, the surrounding uses such as the existing storage to the south, the Terminix building to the north, DAK to the east and the Cubesmart storage a quarter mile north show that industrial uses are very common in this area.

- c. **Adequate provision is made for such items as setbacks, buffering (including fences and/or landscaping) to protect adjacent properties from the possible adverse influence of the proposed use, such as noise, vibration, dust, glare, odor, traffic congestion, and similar factors;**

Should the Board of Zoning Appeals approve the use of outdoor vehicle storage on this lot, Staff strongly recommends the equivalent of a Type D buffer be placed on the property, so as to shield the vehicles from view by the nearby properties and the road. A Type C buffer with an opaque screen is the equivalent of a Type D.

- d. **Where applicable, the proposed use will be developed in a way that will preserve and incorporate and important natural features;**

The property appears to be free of any natural features.

- e. **The proposed use shall not destroy, create a loss, or cause damage to natural, scenic, or historic features of significant importance;**

This is a heavily trafficked residential area with considerable recent commercial investment, so the Town wishes to see the beauty of the area protected as much as possible.

- f. **Vehicular traffic and pedestrian movement on adjacent roads shall not be hindered or endangered;**

Staff sees no negative effect on adjacent roads.

- g. **The proposed use complies with all applicable regulations and development standards of the Town.**

Yes.

Staff Recommendation

Staff recommends **APPROVAL** with the following requirements:

1. A Type D Equivalent buffer along U.S. 52. This would most likely take the form of a Type C Buffer and opaque screen. A Type C buffer is 25' deep and features six trees and fifty shrubs per 100 linear feet. The applicant submitted a tree plan that appears to be approximately 22' deep with five trees and fifty shrubs per 100 linear feet but which meets the plantings proposed for the existing storage facility. Staff would like to see the same Type D equivalent buffer placed along both properties, as the southern storage area has not yet been planted.
2. The applicant also proposes to place fence stripping into the existing chain link fence to create a visual barrier. The Town would prefer to see a wooden privacy fence placed in front of the chain link as the fence stripping. If the Board chooses not to require a wooden fence, the Town would like to see stripping along the entire length of the fence across both storage properties owned by the applicant.
3. The Town recommends a modified Type B Buffer and fence stripping along the north side of the property adjacent to Terminix to shield the view from the road. A Type B normally consists of 4 trees and 50 shrubs per 100 linear feet, but in this case 6 trees and no shrubs located behind the existing fence makes more sense. This fence will also feature stripping.
4. No buffer would be required from the south of the property or on the east side of the property.

The Board may also wish to consider any specified conditions it wishes to place upon the property should it determine to grant a special exception.