

Docket Item #10
SPECIAL USE PERMIT #2004-0007

Planning Commission Meeting
April 6, 2004

ISSUE: Consideration of a request for a special use permit to operate a vehicle impound and storage lot.

APPLICANT: Abe Sbitan
by James C. Pan

LOCATION: 3016 Colvin Street

ZONE: I/Industrial

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends **approval** of the application subject to compliance with all applicable codes and ordinances and the recommended permit conditions found in Section III of this report.

I. DISCUSSION

REQUEST

The applicant, Abe Sbitan, requests special use permit approval for the operation of a vehicle impound and storage lot located at 3016 Colvin Street.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject property is one lot of record with 50 feet of frontage on Colvin Street, 85 feet of depth and a total lot area of 4,250 square feet. The property is a concrete parking lot that serves the adjacent office building at 3014 Colvin Street.

SURROUNDING USES

The subject property is surrounded mostly by industrial uses. Located to the west is an automobile repair and truck storage business (SUP#99-0015). Located to the north is an office building and a motorcycle and auto repair garage. Located to the east is a one story office building where the applicant proposes to have its office and to the south is open space.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes to operate an impound and storage lot for towed vehicles. The applicant anticipates that the lot can store up to 17 vehicles. The storage lot is proposed to be enclosed by a fence on all sides. Tow trucks are proposed to be stored off site when not in use. The tow truck drivers will not park on site. Towing and storage will take place 24 hours a day. The office for the impound lot will be located in the adjacent office building at 3014 Colvin Street. The impound lot will be located at the rear half of the parking area, while the front half will continue to be used as parking to serve the adjacent office building. One dispatcher will be available in the office to assist owners of stored vehicles.

The Zoning Ordinance does not specify a parking requirement for impound lots. The applicant proposes up to 17 vehicles to be stored in the lot, and that the one employee dispatcher park in the spaces located at the front of the subject lot used by the adjacent office building (see attached plan).

ZONING

The subject property is located in the I/Industrial zone. Section 4-1203(T) of the Zoning Ordinance allows a vehicle towing service and associated impound lot in the Industrial zone only with a special use permit.

MASTER PLAN

The proposed use is consistent with the Taylor Run Duke Street small area plan chapter of the Master Plan which designates the property for industrial use.

II. STAFF ANALYSIS

Staff does not object to the proposed vehicle impound lot at 3016 Colvin Street and staff finds that it is an appropriate use in this industrial area. The proposed impound area will be located at the rear of the property and the applicant has agreed to install fencing to screen it, minimizing its visual impact from the public right-of-way. In addition, there are no residential uses in the immediate area that would be impacted by aspects of the operation such as the long hours and noise associated with loading and unloading of vehicles.

Staff has included conditions restricting parking, loading, or unloading of vehicles on the public right-of-way, and has included a condition restricting the applicant from blocking or impeding traffic on Colvin as a result of “jockeying” vehicles in the parking area. Staff has also included a condition that prohibits any vehicle repair on the premises. Finally, staff recommends that the design and materials of the fencing be to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning and Zoning.

With these conditions, staff recommends approval of the special use permit.

III. RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

Staff recommends **approval** subject to compliance with all applicable codes and ordinances and the following conditions:

1. The special use permit shall be granted to the applicant only or to any business or entity in which the applicant has a controlling interest. (P&Z)
2. The business may operate up to 24 hours daily. (P&Z)
3. No vehicles shall be displayed, parked, or stored on a public right-of-way. (P&Z)
4. At no time will the applicant block or impede traffic on Colvin Street as a result of maneuvering or "jockeying" the vehicles in the parking area. (P&Z)
5. All lighting shall be directed downward and shall be screened at the sides to avoid glare on the street and on adjacent properties and public rights-of-way to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning and Zoning. (P&Z)
6. Vehicles shall be loaded/unloaded on-site, not from the public street. (T&ES) (P&Z)
7. No vehicular maintenance shall be performed on the premises. (T&ES)(Code Enforcement)(P&Z)

8. Fencing to screen the parking shall be installed with design and materials subject to approval by the Director of Planning and Zoning. (P&Z)
9. This approval is limited to the rear (southern) half of the parking lot at 3016 Colvin Street. (P&Z)
10. The applicant shall conduct employee training sessions on an ongoing basis, including as part of any employee orientation, to discuss all SUP provisions and requirements. (P&Z)
11. The Director of Planning and Zoning shall review the special use permit after it has been operational for one year, and shall docket the matter for consideration by the Planning Commission and City Council if (a) there have been documented violations of the permit conditions which were not corrected immediately, constitute repeat violations or which create a direct and immediate adverse zoning impact on the surrounding community; (b) the director received a request from any person to docket the permit for review as the result of a complaint that rises to the level of a violation of the permit conditions, (c) the director has determined that there are problems with the operation of the use and that new or revised conditions are needed. (P&Z)

STAFF: Eileen Fogarty, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning;
Barbara Ross, Deputy Director;
Valerie Peterson, Urban Planner.

Staff Note: In accordance with section 11-506(c) of the zoning ordinance, construction or operation shall be commenced and diligently and substantially pursued within 18 months of the date of granting of a special use permit by City Council or the special use permit shall become void.

IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Legend: C - code requirement R - recommendation S - suggestion F - finding

Transportation & Environmental Services:

- R-1 Vehicles shall be loaded/unloaded on-site, not from the public street.
- R-2 No vehicular maintenance shall be performed on the premises.
- C-1 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line.

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 The servicing and or repair of motor vehicles on this site shall be prohibited.

Health Department:

- F-1 No comments.

Police Department:

- F-1 No objections.