

Docket Item #6  
SPECIAL USE PERMIT #2005-0008

Planning Commission Meeting  
April 5, 2005

**ISSUE:** Consideration of a request for special use permit for change of ownership and to expand an existing light automobile repair business to include general automobile repair as an expansion of a noncomplying use.

**APPLICANT:** Corvette Specialist, Inc.  
by Adrian Mungiu

**LOCATION:** 5130 Eisenhower Avenue

**ZONE:** OCH/Office Commercial High

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

**SITE GRAPHIC**  
**AVAILABLE IN THE PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICE**

## I. DISCUSSION

### REQUEST

The applicant, Corvette Specialist, Inc., requests special use permit approval to (1) change the ownership and (2) expand an existing light automobile repair garage to include general repair located at 5310 Eisenhower Avenue. General automobile repair is not permitted in the OCH, office commercial high zone. The applicant is availing himself of industrial square feet within the warehouse complex defined as “noncomplying space” in order to allow the existing light automobile repair garage to intensify to general automobile repair.

### SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject property is one lot of record with an estimated 200 feet of frontage along Eisenhower Avenue, a depth ranging from 500 to 600 feet and a lot area of approximately 104,720 square feet. One two-story industrial building with a total of 62,000 square feet has been divided into office space and seven warehouse units. The warehouse building includes loading facilities and the site has 103 parking spaces.



The Waste-to-Energy plant, the City impound lot, and firing range are all located across Eisenhower Avenue to the north of the subject property. Warehouse and office uses are located to the east and west, and the Van Dorn Metro Station is located to the west. Metro and railroad tracks are located south of the property along the Fairfax County border.

### PROPOSAL

Corvette Specialist is a full service automobile repair garage that includes mechanical repair and maintenance, including interior restoration. Currently all body repair and painting is subcontracted out to another business. Vehicles are also cleaned and detailed on premises prior to the owners collecting their vehicles.

The general auto repair facility will include transmission and engine work including rebuilding, alignments, general tuning, and in the future paint and body restorations within a restoration booth. The applicant states that the request for general auto repair will not increase the number of vehicles on the property or intensify the existing light automobile operation. The applicant indicates that the garage volume is low, approximately three patrons a day because of the special work that is performed.

In late January and March of 2005, staff inspected the premises and found that the business was conducting light automobile repair as conditioned by SUP#96-0041.

BACKGROUND

There are three general auto repair facilities in the warehouse complex not including Corvette Specialist. These are Porsha Pit Stop at 5312 Eisenhower Avenue, East Coast Transmissions at 5316 Eisenhower, and East Coast Collision Auto Body at 5320 Eisenhower.

Corvette Specialist occupies a warehouse unit of approximately 7,320 square feet. As indicated on the applicant's plan, the garage currently accommodates 4 lifts and 12 service bays, a small office and storage area for parts. Corvette Specialist, previously owned by Georgia Demitras, is authorized to operate light automobile repair pursuant to Special Use Permit #96-0041.

The applicant purchased the automobile repair garage in October 2004, under the impression that he could conduct general automobile repair. When the applicant filed his business license with the City, staff advised him that he was required to (1) transfer the approved Special Use Permit #96-0041 to his name and (2) obtain special use permit approval to expand from light automobile repair to general automobile repair. The applicant indicated to staff that he purchased the business under the impression he could conduct general repair and was informed by the prior owner of the garage that he could do so. The applicant is filing this special use permit application to allow general automobile repair.

The following list indicates the existing businesses, including those that are operating pursuant to approved special use permits, within 5300-5320 Eisenhower Avenue.

<b>SUP#</b>	<b>Name/Address</b>	<b>Use</b>	<b>Area</b>
sup not required	5300 Eisenhower	Offices	6,000 sq ft
sup not required	Modern Diaper Service 5318 Eisenhower	Industrial Laundry	8,000 sq ft
#2034	East Coast Collision 5320 Eisenhower	General Auto	8,000 sq ft
#2581 and #2581-A	East Coast Transmission 5316 Eisenhower	General Auto	8,000 sq ft
#95-0126	Sport Rock 5308 Eisenhower	Amusement Enterprise	8,000 sq ft

#96-0041	Corvette Specialist 5310 Eisenhower	Light Auto Repair	7,320 sq ft
#96-0087	Krucoff Realty 5300-5320 Eisenhower	Noncomplying Uses Umbrellas SUP	
#2000-0058	Land Rover 5314 Eisenhower	Light Auto Repair	8,000 sq ft
#2003-0013	Porsha Pitstop 5312 Eisenhower	General Repair	8,000 sq ft
#2004-0049	East Coast Transmission 5320 Eisenhower	General Repair (Amendment)	

On March 15, 1997, City Council granted Special Use Permit #96-0087 to Krucoff Realty partnership (owner of the property in which the applicant occupies a tenant space) for a variety of noncomplying and special uses in the warehouse building. This umbrella SUP (#96-0087) for the site approved a group of uses, including both noncomplying uses and special uses in the OCH zone, with the intent that these uses could occupy the building without separate SUP approval. Some uses in these categories, including light and general auto repair, were specifically excluded so that they can be considered on a case by case basis with separate SUP approval. East Coast Transmissions and East Coast Collision Auto Body were approved prior to an umbrella special use permit and continue to operate as separate noncomplying uses.

At the time the umbrella SUP was approved, a total of 24,000 square feet of space was occupied by noncomplying uses. The amount of space noncomplying uses can occupy under the umbrella permit is thus limited to 24,000 square feet. The subject auto repair business requests approval to conduct general auto repair, a noncomplying use, in 7,600 square feet of space. Essentially, it asks to “borrow” any remaining noncomplying space from the original umbrella permit and apply that remaining noncomplying space to allow the applicant to operate general auto repair. General auto repair is otherwise not permitted as a use in the OCH zone.

Two businesses, Modern Diaper Service and Porsha Pit Shop, currently use a total of 16,000 square feet of “noncomplying industrial space” per the umbrella sup. The umbrella sup has set aside not more than 24,000 square feet of “noncomplying space”. The remaining 8,000 square feet under the umbrella sup can be applied to Corvette Specialist to allow the existing garage to perform general repair.

**Uses Allowed Pursuant to Special Use Permit #96-0047**

Modern Diaper Service	industrial laundry	8,000 sq ft
Porsha Pit Stop	general repair	8,000 sq ft
Corvette Specialist	general repair	8,000 sq ft
Total Noncomplying Space Used		24,000 sq ft
Permitted Noncomplying Space Per SUP#96-0047		24,000 sq ft

Once Corvette Specialist uses up the remaining 8,000 square feet of “noncomplying space” there will be no other expansions or noncomplying uses permitted within the warehouse complex. Only after Modern Diaper Service, Porsha Pit Stop or Corvette Specialist leave will noncomplying space become available for future commercial tenants that are uses not permitted either by-right or by special use permit in the OCH zone.

PARKING

Section 8-200(B)(20) of the Zoning Ordinance requires an automobile repair garage to provide 1.2 off-street parking space for each 500 square feet of industrial warehouse space. A 7,320 square foot repair garage is required to provide 18 off-street parking spaces. The applicant provides 23 spaces. At the front of the garage 11 parking spaces are provided for customers and repaired vehicles parked awaiting their owners to pick up. Within the building a total of 12 vehicles can be parked and after hours up to 14 vehicles can be parked in the drive aisle. In addition, at the rear of the building, are six more spaces.

ZONING/MASTER PLAN DESIGNATION

The subject property is located in the OCH/Office Commercial High zone. Section 4-1103(Q) of the zoning ordinance allows only light automobile repair in the OCH zone with a special use permit. General auto repair may be permitted with a special use permit, only if the total square feet of space occupied by noncomplying uses in the building does not exceed 24,000 square feet (SUP #96-0087).

The proposed use is consistent with the Landmark/Van Dorn small area plan chapter of the Master Plan which designates the property for office and commercial uses.

**II. STAFF ANALYSIS**

Staff does not object to the expansion of an existing light automobile repair garage to include general auto repair at 5310 Eisenhower Avenue. Although in general staff would like to see uses more compatible with the current zoning, the proposed use is compatible with the existing, more industrial

type uses in the building, which include three existing light and general auto repair establishments. Although the prior operator of the garage performed general automobile repair without special use permit approval, the City did bring the prior operator into compliance with the special use permit and building code requirements. In addition, problems in the past with excessive cars on the property occurred. Staff did not, however, observe such a problem when inspecting the site, and there have not been any recent complaints. Additionally, the applicant states that conducting general auto repair instead of light will not increase the number of vehicles on the property or intensify the existing operation. Staff also recommends approval of slightly longer Saturday hours for this garage in order to be consistent with other businesses hours of operation in the center.

Staff recommends approval of the special use permit with the following conditions.

### 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 corporation in which the applicant has a controlling interest. (P&Z)
2. **CONDITION AMENDED BY STAFF:** Work performed on automobiles on the premises shall include ~~be limited~~ general automobile repair as defined by section 2-115 of the zoning ordinance and ~~to~~ light automobile repair (minor service work) including, tune up, lubrication, alignment, fuel system, brakes, mufflers, electrical work, replacement of small items and installation of accessories. (P&Z)
3. No repair work shall be done outside. (P&Z) (SUP#96-0041)
4. **CONDITION AMENDED BY STAFF:** No more than ~~eight~~ eleven vehicles shall be parked or stored outside at any time. The applicant shall maintain 10 parking spaces inside the building for employees and customers at all times. These 10 spaces shall not be used for automobile repair. (P&Z)
5. No junked, abandoned, or stripped vehicles shall be parked or stored outside. (P&Z) (SUP#96-0041)
6. No vehicles shall be displayed, parked, or stored on a public right-of-way. (P&Z) (SUP#96-0041)

7. No vehicle parts, tires, or other materials shall be permitted to accumulate outside except in a dumpster or other suitable trash receptacle or enclosure. (P&Z) (SUP#96-0041)
8. **CONDITION AMENDED BY STAFF:** The hours of operation shall be limited to 7:30 A.M. to 8:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M., Monday through Friday and 9:00 A.M. to 6:00 P.M. on Saturday. (P&Z)
9. **CONDITION AMENDED BY STAFF:** All waste products including but not limited to organic compounds (solvents), motor oil, compressor lubricant and antifreeze shall be disposed of in accordance with all local, state and federal ordinances or regulations and shall not be discharged to the sanitary or storm sewers, or be discharged onto the ground. (T&ES) (~~Health~~) (SUP#96-0041)
10. **CONDITION AMENDED BY STAFF:** The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria Best Management Practices mManual for aAutomotive rRelated iIndustries. A copy can be obtained by contacting the Division of Environmental Quality on 703/519-3400, extension 166. (T&ES) (SUP#96-0041)
11. **CONDITION AMENDED BY STAFF:** Loudspeakers shall be prohibited from the exterior of the building, and nNo amplified sounds shall be audible at the property line. (~~Health~~) (SUP#96-0041) (T&ES)
12. **CONDITION AMENDED BY STAFF:** The applicant shall contact the Crime Prevention Unit of the Alexandria Police Department for a security survey at 703-838-4520 regarding a security survey for the business and robbery awareness program for all employees. (Police) (SUP#96-0041)
13. **CONDITION AMENDED BY STAFF:** 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 has received a request from any person to docket the permit for review as a result of a complaint that arises to the level of a violation, or (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) (SUP#96-0041)



14. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** No banners, streamers, flags, or similar advertising devices shall be displayed on the premises, but signs advertising the general business conducted on the premises may be displayed in accordance with Article IX, Section 9-100 of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Alexandria, Virginia. (P&Z)
15. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** The application of paints or coatings shall be prohibited at the site, unless a paint spray booth is designed and built to the satisfaction of the Director of Code Enforcement. If automotive refinishing is permitted, no materials shall be disposed of by venting to the atmosphere and no paints or coating shall be applied outside of the approved paint spray booth. (P&Z) (T&ES)
16. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** No material shall be disposed of by venting into the atmosphere. (T&ES)
17. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** 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)

**STAFF:** Eileen Fogarty, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning;  
Richard Josephson, Deputy Director;  
Peter Leiberg, Zoning Manager.

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**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:

- 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.
- F-1 The Corvette Specialist is located along an unnamed dead-end driveway. In addition to the subject use there is also the East Coast Collision Center automotive repair shop. The existing driveway serving these uses is in acceptable condition.

##### Code Enforcement:

- C-1 A new Fire Prevention Permit is required for the increased work including autobody painting and repair.
- C-2 A construction permit and final inspections are required for the installation and use of the spray booth.
- C-3 Updated lists of all Material Safety Data Sheets shall be maintained on premises.
- C-4 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-5 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-6 Construction permits are required for this project. Plans shall accompany the permit application that fully detail the construction as well as layouts and schematics of the mechanical, electrical, and plumbing systems.

##### Health Department:

No Comments

Police Department:

- R-1 The applicant is to contact the Community Relations Unit of the Alexandria Police Department at 703-838-4520 regarding a security survey for the business.
- R-2 The applicant is to contact the Community Relations Unit of the Alexandria Police Department at 703-838-4520 regarding a robbery awareness program for all employees.

SUP#2005-0008  
5310 Eisenhower Avenue

**REPORT ATTACHMENTS  
AVAILABLE IN THE PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICE**