

Docket Item #3
SPECIAL USE PERMIT #2005-0067

Planning Commission Meeting
September 8, 2005

ISSUE: Consideration of a request for a special use permit to operate an amusement enterprise and for a parking reduction.

APPLICANT: The StrikeZone Baseball and Softball Academy, LLC
by Donald Conley and Karen Ford

LOCATION: 820 South Pickett Street

ZONE: I/Industrial

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 applicants, The StrikeZone Baseball and Softball Academy, LLC, by Donald Conley and Karen Ford, request special use permit approval for the operation of an amusement enterprise located at 820 South Pickett Street, as well as a parking reduction.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject property is one lot of record with 210 feet of frontage on S. Pickett Street, 507 feet of depth and a total lot area of approximately .75 acre. The site is developed with a warehouse building and is occupied by warehouse, office, and an Asian food operation. Access to the property is from South Pickett Street. The surrounding area is occupied by a mix of industrial warehouse and office uses.



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The applicant proposes to operate a facility for indoor baseball and softball, providing instruction and a place to practice hitting and pitching year-round. Clinics will be offered to youth ages eight to 15 on evenings and weekends. Memberships will be offered to those who wish to practice batting year-round in an indoor facility. Patrons are anticipated to be mainly youth accompanied by their parent(s). The facility will not be open to the public at large and will be on a membership and appointment only basis. The facility will be an open warehouse divided by nets into instruction areas. There will be three pitching machines that will be stationary and one portable machine. Specific aspects of the operation are described by the applicant as follows:

Hours:	Monday through Friday (September -June)	4:00pm-9:00pm
	Saturday (November-June)	8:00am-8:00pm
	Sunday (year-round)	12 noon-6:00pm
	Monday through Saturday (June-September)	9:00am-9:00pm

Number of patrons: The applicant anticipates no more than 20 patrons at any one time, and no more than 35 people total in the facility at any one time, including any parents of students, students and employees. There will be four batting cages and they cannot be used during clinics. Members will only be allowed in by appointment, therefore, no more than four members will be using the facility at any one time.

- Noise: According to the applicant, noise levels will be minimal and will not be heard outside the facility. Nets will be used to eliminate any noise of balls hitting walls or ceilings.
- Employees: From November through March, there will be approximately five employees (four coaches and one administrative staff) on Saturday from 8:00 am to 3:00 pm and on Sunday from 12:00 noon to 5:00 pm. At all other times during the hours of operation there will be two administrative employees on the premises, except during spring break when there will be five employees.
- Trash/Litter: The applicant anticipates minimal trash, no more than one bag each week. Trash receptacles are available inside for patrons.

PARKING

According to Section 8-200 (A)(13) of the Zoning Ordinance, an amusement enterprise requires one parking space for every 200 square feet of floor area. A baseball/softball training facility with 5,900 square feet will be required to provide 30 off-street parking spaces. In this case, the applicant is only able to provide 15. Therefore, the applicant requests a parking reduction.

In support of the parking reduction, the applicant states that although the facility is large, it can only accommodate 20 patrons at any one time. Most of the patrons will be carpooling for clinics or will be dropped off and picked up. In addition, the hours of operation are after business hours, 4:00 pm to 9:00 pm Monday through Friday and 8:00 am to 8:00 pm on weekends, when other building tenants would not be present. When clinics are not in session, members may use the facility by appointment only, and there will only be the capacity for four members at any one time to use the four cages. There is street parking available on South Pickett Street from 7:00 am to 12:00 midnight. Regarding potential impacts on the surrounding neighborhood, the applicant states that the surrounding area is zoned industrial and used for industrial, business and some retail space, therefore, there will be no impact on residential neighbors. Street parking is used by other surrounding businesses during normal business hours, however, the proposed hours of the operation are evenings and weekends when these spaces would be available.

ZONING/MASTER PLAN DESIGNATION

The subject property is located in the I/Industrial zone. Section 4-1203 (A.1) of the Zoning Ordinance allows an amusement enterprise in the I zone only with a special use permit.

The proposed use is consistent with the Landmark/Van Dorn Small Area Plan chapter of the Master Plan which designates the property for uses consistent with the I zone.

II. STAFF ANALYSIS

Staff does not object to the proposed baseball/softball instruction and practice facility. The use is located in a warehouse building in an industrial area where it will not have impacts on residential neighbors. It is not a use with late hours, and its activities provide a service to area baseball/softball players.

Regarding the parking reduction, staff finds that the proposed use will not generate a very high parking demand. The requirement for amusement enterprises includes uses such as skating rinks, dance halls, bingo halls, and other uses where there are a high number of individuals gathering in a space. In this case, the facility is a large space, but with a low number of users proposed in the space. A large area is needed for pitching machines and batting practice. Also, the clinics will be for children who will often carpool and/or be dropped off, reducing the demand for parking. In addition, the proposed facility's peak hours are generally evenings and weekends, outside of business hours, when there will also be street parking available if needed. Finally, the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services did not object to the proposed reduction.

Staff recommends a one year review to ensure compliance with the special use permit.

With this condition, 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 corporation in which the applicant has a controlling interest. (P&Z)
2. The hours of operation of the baseball/softball facility shall be limited to 8:00 am to 10:00 pm daily. (P&Z)
3. The applicant shall post the hours of operation at the entrance of the business. (P&Z)
4. 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 and a robbery awareness program for all employees. (Police)
5. The applicant shall maintain lighting to the satisfaction of the Director of T&ES in consultation with the Chief of Police. (P&Z)

6. 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, and on how to prevent underage sales of alcohol. (P&Z)
7. 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, 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)

STAFF: Eileen Fogarty, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning;
Richard Josephson, 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:

- F-1 T&ES finds that the proposed facility will have a negligible impact on available on-street parking, and supports the applicant's request for a parking reduction.

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 The current use is classified as F-Factory, S-Storage; the proposed use is A-Assembly. Change of use, in whole or in part, will require a certificate of use and occupancy (USBC 119.4) and compliance with USBC 119.2. including but not limited to: limitations of exit travel distance, emergency and exit lighting, a manual fire alarm system, and accessibility for persons with disabilities.
- C-2 Prior to the application for new Certificate of Occupancy, the applicant shall submit a building permit for a change of use. Drawings prepared by a licensed architect or professional engineer shall accompany the permit application. These plans shall show provide existing conditions, construction type data, and a plot plan. In addition, these plans shall show proposed conditions and provide data by the design professional which details how the proposed use will comply with the current edition of the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code for the new use in the area of structural strength, means of egress, passive and active fire protection, heating and ventilating systems, handicapped accessibility and plumbing facilities.
- C-3 New construction must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-4 Alterations to the existing structure must comply with the current edition of the Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC).
- C-5 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.
- C-6 Required exits, parking, and facilities shall be accessible for persons with disabilities. An accessible entrance is required.

- C-7 A fire prevention code permit is required for the proposed operation. An egress plan showing fixture location, aisles and exit doors shall be submitted for review with the permit application.

Health Department:

- F-1 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.

The following recommendation related to site lighting has not been included as a condition; rather, staff has recommended that the applicant maintain lighting to the satisfaction of the Director of T&ES in consultation with the Chief of Police, which will likely result in lower lighting levels than recommended by the Police.

- R-3 Due to the noted hours of operation, it is recommended that the lighting level for the parking lot be a minimum of 2.0 foot candles minimum maintained.
- F-1 The applicant is not seeking and “ABC” permit. The Police Department concurs.

SUP#2005-0067
820 S. Pickett Street

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