

Docket Item #10  
SPECIAL USE PERMIT #2006-0060

Planning Commission Meeting  
September 7, 2006

**ISSUE:** Consideration of a request for a special use permit to change the ownership and hours of operation of an indoor amusement enterprise (climbing gym).

**APPLICANT:** Sportrock, Inc.  
by Lillian Chao-Quinlan

**LOCATION:** 5308 Eisenhower Avenue

**ZONE:** CDD-4/Coordinated Development District

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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, Sportrock, Inc., requests special use permit approval to change the ownership and hours of operation at an existing indoor amusement enterprise located at 5308 Eisenhower.

### SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject property is one lot of record with approximately 200 feet of frontage along Eisenhower Avenue, a depth of approximately 594 feet, and an area of 2.54 acres. The property is developed with a large warehouse building divided into nine tenant spaces occupied by several auto repair shops, a pet supplies store, and office uses. 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 RF&P rail lines are located south of the property along the Fairfax County border.



### BACKGROUND

On October 14, 1995, City Council granted Special Use Permit #95-0126 for the operation of an indoor climbing gym and for a parking reduction. The facility is 8,000 square feet and offers memberships and daily fees for non-members. The approximately 700 members have unlimited access to the facility. Patrons use the facility for birthday parties, classes, day use, and group events. Rock climbing classes are also offered. All on-site activity takes place indoors; however, some classes are taught at other locations.

On June 9, 2006, as part of the three-year SUP inspection cycle implemented last year, staff visited the subject property to determine if the business was in compliance with the conditions of its special use permit. Staff found no violations of the special use permit.

### PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to change the ownership of the business, and to change the hours of operation on the weekend. The existing and proposed hours are as follows:

<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>
Noon-11:00 p.m. Monday-Friday	Same
11:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. Saturday	10:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m. Saturday
Noon-8:00 p.m. Sunday	10:00 a.m.-9:00 p.m. Sunday

No other changes are proposed.

#### PARKING

Section 8-200(A)(13) of the Zoning Ordinance requires that off-street parking be provided for an indoor amusement enterprise at a ratio of one space for each 200 square feet of floor area. The facility is 8,000 square feet in size. Therefore, the applicant must provide 39 parking spaces. The applicant has 12 designated parking spaces, and is able to use up to 28 spaces after 6:00 p.m. A parking reduction was approved for the operation when the facility was approved in 1995. Staff is not aware of any complaints or issues with parking at the facility.

#### ZONING/MASTER PLAN DESIGNATION

The subject property is zoned OCH/Office Commercial High. Section 4-1103(A) of the Zoning Ordinance permits an amusement enterprise use only with a special use permit in the OCH zone.

The use is consistent with the Landmark/Van Dorn Small Area Plan chapter of the Master Plan which designates the property OCH.

## **II. STAFF ANALYSIS**

Staff does not object to the change of ownership and hours at the climbing gym. Staff has received no complaints regarding the existing operation. Peak hours are during the evening when parking is most available. There are no residential uses in the near vicinity, making the longer hours reasonable. Staff recommends longer hours to provide some flexibility for the future.

Staff recommends approval subject to 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 business or entity in which the applicant has a controlling interest. (P&Z) (SUP#95-0126)

2. No amplified sound shall be audible at the property line. (P&Z) (SUP#95-0126)
3. Lighting in the parking lot shall be maintained at a minimum of 2.0 foot candles. (Police) (SUP#95-0126)
4. **CONDITION AMENDED BY STAFF:** The applicant shall contact the Alexandria Police Department for a security survey. Should the new owner/applicant obtain all new employees then the new applicant is to contact the Community Relations Unit of the Alexandria Police Department at 703 838-4520 regarding a robbery readiness program for new employees. However, if the new owner/applicant retains the current employees, then the robbery readiness program is not necessary. If the new owner applicant deems the program necessary then the new applicant is to contact the Community Relations Unit of the Alexandria Police Department at 703 838-4520 and make a request for the presentation. (Police) (SUP#95-0126)
5. **CONDITION AMENDED BY STAFF:** The hours of operation at the rock climbing facility shall be limited to 9:00 A.M. to 11:00 P.M. daily. ~~Noon and 11:00 P.M., Monday through Friday; 11:00 A.M. and 8:00 P.M., Saturday; and Noon and 8:00 P.M., Sunday, as requested by the applicant.~~ (P&Z) (SUP#95-0126)
6. **CONDITION AMENDED BY STAFF:** The Director of Planning and Zoning shall review the permit after it has been 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 the result of a complaint that rises to the level of a violation of the permit conditions; 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#95-0126)
7. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** The applicant shall encourage its employees to use mass transit or to carpool when traveling to and from work, by posting information regarding DASH and METRO routes, the location where fare passes for transit are sold, and advertising of carpooling opportunities. (P&Z)
8. **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 (P&Z)

9. **CONDITION ADDED BY STAFF:** Loudspeakers shall be prohibited from the exterior of the building, and no amplified sounds shall be audible at the property line. (T&ES)

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

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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.
- R-1 Loudspeakers shall be prohibited from the exterior of the building, and no amplified sounds shall be audible at the property line.

##### Code Enforcement:

- C-1 A new Fire Prevention Permit is required due to the change of ownership.

##### Health Department:

- F-1 No comment.

##### Police Department:

- R-1 The new 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 Should the new owner/applicant obtain all new employees then the new applicant is to contact the Community Relations Unit of the Alexandria Police Department at 703 838-4520 regarding a robbery readiness program for new employees. However, if the new owner/applicant retains the current employees, then the robbery readiness program is not necessary. If the new owner applicant deems the program necessary then the new applicant is to contact the Community Relations Unit of the Alexandria Police Department at 703 838-4520 and make a request for the presentation.
- F-1 The applicant is not seeking and "ABC" permit. The Police Department concurs with this
- F-2 The Police Department has no objections to the change of ownership.

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F-3 The Police Department reviewed the crime stats for Sportrock for a period of three years. The only crimes reported were one larceny from and auto and one grand larceny. Therefore, the Police Department has no objections to the change in hours.



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