



MAYOR AND COUNCIL COMMUNICATION

DATE: 10/4/2016

REGULAR

ITEM #: 21

AGENDA ITEM: Conditional Use Permit Request for Self-Service Storage Facility and Exterior Vehicle Storage at 9200 Hudson Blvd N

SUBMITTED BY: Emily Becker, City Planner

THROUGH: Kristina Handt, City Administrator

REVIEWED BY: Stephen Wensman, Planning Director

BACKGROUND:

The property located at 9200 Hudson Boulevard North is currently operated by Midwest Recreation Clearinghouse, LLC (Cranky Ape Powersport Auctions), which remarkets bank-repossessed, insurance-reparable recreational vehicles, and consignments, providing these items for purchase by the general public via an online bidding system, and stores these items at the subject property. This operation is allowed by Interim Use Permit for open sales lot activity, which was granted in 2010. At that time, the property was located in a holding district within the City, which, by the direction of Council, allowed only interim uses. The Interim Use Permit was subject to a number of conditions, including that it would be valid until any one of the following events occurred: after ten years from the date of approval; upon the sale or transfer of ownership; violation of the conditions of this Consent Agreement; or until the redevelopment of the Property for a permitted or conditional use as allowed by the City's zoning regulations.

The subject property has since been rezoned, and is located in a Commercial district. Midwest Recreation Clearinghouse, LLC has expressed plans to relocate and has been in negotiations to sell the property to Wasatch Storage Partners, which plans to redevelop the property for a self-service storage facility with outdoor vehicle storage. These uses are both conditional uses in the Commercial district, and so Wasatch Storage Partners has requested a Conditional Use Permit for the property.

ISSUE BEFORE COUNCIL:

The Council is respectfully requested to consider a request for a Conditional Use Permit for a self-service storage facility and outdoor vehicle storage for the property located at 9200 Hudson Boulevard North.

PROPOSAL DETAILS/ANALYSIS:

Proposal Details:

- The proposed project consists of the addition of four new storage buildings. Outdoor recreational vehicle storage, with a total of 170 parking spaces, is proposed on the northern end of the site, with the possibility of the addition of two future storage buildings.

- The perimeter of the property will be fenced in, and motorized gates with keypad-only access are proposed. There will also be security cameras and an office burglar alarm. In addition to fencing, the perimeter of the property will be landscaped for added screening.
- The south end of Building A will be utilized as an office, which will be open between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. The office provides a location for existing and potential customers to interact with employees, lease units, make payments, and to purchase boxes, tape, locks, and packing material. The facility will staff two to three employees at a time; regional operational and facility managers will also frequent the site. The storage units are accessible through the secured gate at any time.
- A 4-space parking lot is proposed to the west of Existing Building A, accessible through a new driveway off of Hudson Blvd. The main drive aisles between the two existing buildings will remain as two-way traffic and the drive aisles between the proposed storage buildings will provide one-way traffic.
- If the Conditional Use Permit is approved by Council, the applicant intends to proceed with construction drawings and seek approval for building permits. Construction would start as soon as possible, and project completion is anticipated in the second quarter of 2017.

Planning and Zoning Issues:

- *Tree Removal.* The applicant has provided an adequate tree removal plan, which will be subject to replacement requirements.
- *Landscaping.* A landscape plan has been submitted that provides some screening of the property as it abuts residential districts but will need to be updated to include items listed in the recommended conditions of approval in order to be compliant with City standards.
- *Off-Street Parking.* The applicant will need to meet additional requirements for off-street parking as outlined in the recommended conditions of approval.
- *Off-Street Loading.* Staff's interpretation is that the site would not require an off-street loading area due to the nature of the use.
- *Setbacks.* The proposed site plan meets all required setbacks. The property is separated from all residential zones by a minimum of a 75-foot right-of-way.
- *Building Design.* The property is located in the I-94 Corridor and is therefore subject to standards set forth in the City's Design Guidelines & Standards Manual. The site will need to meet conditions set forth in regards to design outlined in the recommended conditions of approval. Specifically, the proposed building material is exterior insulation finishing system (EIFS), which is not a recommended building material in the manual. Additionally, the parapets of the roof are not of varying height as is recommended.
- *Pedestrian Access.* There is an existing on-street bike route on Hudson Boulevard, however, Staff does not find it necessary to require pedestrian access to the facility, as the use normally requires vehicles for hauling storage items.
- *Signage.* Signage will need to comply with the City's Sign Regulations and approved through permits. The sign proposed on the west side of Building A as shown in the Exterior Perspective does not comply, as only one sign per building per street frontage is allowed. Additionally, "No Parking" and "Fire Lane" signs are not indicated on the site plan; these will need to be approved by the City.
- *Lighting.* A photometric plan was provided that shows no direct or sky-reflected glare to be proposed on to adjoining properties or right-of-way. Twelve 25-foot high pole lights with three-

foot bases are proposed within and surrounding the recreational vehicle storage area, with an additional two along the entrance driveway. 165 more lights are proposed to line the storage buildings.

- *Specific Development Standards of Article 7.* All development standards set forth in Article 7 of the Zoning Code for self-service storage facility and sales and storage lots are met. Additionally, standards for exterior storage in the Commercial zoning district are met provided additional screening is provided along 5th Street; this is a recommended condition of approval.
- *Drainage and Stormwater Management and Utilities.* The applicant will need to make all required revisions per the City Engineer's memo dated September 8, 2016 in order to be in compliance with City standards. This is a recommended condition of approval.
- *Fire Safety Access.* The applicant has provided fire truck turning radius for a pumper fire truck. The Fire Chief has stated this is the type of truck that would be used at this site. The site plan shows four fire hydrants but will need to be revised according to comments provided by the City Building Official, Fire Chief, and City Engineer.
- *Environmental Issues.* The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) became aware of a petroleum tank release at the subject property. A report has been submitted to the MPCA regarding this release. Staff has contacted the MPCA regarding this issue and was told that while more information is needed, the site is not viewed as an environmental risk at this time. The City should require remediation has been performed satisfactorily to MPCA standards.

Required Findings:

- The attached Resolution details recommended findings.

Conditions:

- The recommended conditions of approval are outlined in the attached Resolution and address non-compliance with City requirements.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The estimated renovations to the property are \$3.5 to \$4 million. Building permit revenue generated from a project of such value is expected to be around \$30,000. The tax revenue of self-service storage facilities is typically based on the number of units and market data rent prices.

PLANNING COMMISSION/PUBLIC HEARING:

A public hearing was held on the proposed variance at the September 26, 2016 Planning Commission meeting. The meeting minutes are attached to this report. No one from the public spoke at the meeting. The Commission recommended approval with an affirmative vote of 5 to 2. Affirmative comments included the following:

- The proposal is an improvement to current conditions.
- The use is functional and is an "invisible use" serving the community.
- It is a use that has already been designated as conditional in the district.

Some concerns raised included the following:

- That this type of use creates only a few jobs and has less of an impact on taxes than other uses might.
- Concern about impact on adjacent uses and desire for more screening.

- EIFS building material is not desirable; tree removal; and the architecture should be improved (one commissioner suggested a “farm theme”).

OPTIONS:

The Council may:

- Approve the Conditional Use Permit request, with recommended conditions of approval.
- Amend the recommended conditions of approval and approve the Conditional Use Permit request.
- Deny the Conditional Use Permit request.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff respectfully requests that the Council approve, as recommended by the Planning Commission and Staff, the request made by Wasatch Storage Partners for a Conditional Use Permit for a self-service storage facility and outdoor vehicle storage at the property located at 9200 Hudson Boulevard N, subject to conditions of approval with the following motion:

“Move to approve request made by Wasatch Storage Partners for a Conditional Use Permit for a self-service storage facility and outdoor vehicle storage at the property located at 9200 Hudson Boulevard N, subject to the outlined conditions of approval.”

ATTACHMENTS:

- Resolution 2016-87
- Conditional Use Permit application and materials
- Planning Commission meeting minutes (9/26/16)