

Albemarle County Planning Commission
March 6, 2018

The Albemarle County Planning Commission held a public hearing on Tuesday, March 6, 2018, at 6:00 p.m., at the County Office Building, Lane Auditorium, Second Floor, 401 McIntire Road, Charlottesville, Virginia.

Members attending were Tim Keller, Chair; Julian Bivins, Daphne Spain; Pam Riley, Vice-Chair, Bruce Dotson and Bill Palmer, UVA representative. Commissioners absent were Karen Firehock and Jennie More.

Other officials present were Cameron Langille, Senior Planner; J.T. Newberry, Senior Planner; David Benish, Chief of Planning; Andrew Gast-Bray, Assistant Director of Community Development/Director of Planning; Sharon Taylor, Clerk to Planning Commission and John Blair, Deputy County Attorney.

Call to Order and Establish Quorum

Mr. Keller, Chair, called the regular meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and established a quorum.

The meeting moved to the next agenda item.

From the Public: Matters Not Listed for Public Hearing on the Agenda

Mr. Keller invited comment from the public on other matters not listed on the agenda. Hearing none, Mr. Keller said the meeting would move on to the public hearings.

Public Hearing Items

SP-2017-00016 Caliber Collision

MAGISTERIAL DISTRICT: Scottsville

TAX MAP/PARCEL(S): 07700-00-00-011F0

LOCATION: West side of Avon Street Extended (Route 742) approximately 300 feet north of the intersection of 5th Street Station Parkway and Avon Street Extended (Route 742).

PROPOSAL: Proposed body shop in a new building of approximately 18,700, which includes approximately 2,200 sq. ft. of office space. The body shop and associated improvements are proposed within the approximately 2.41 acre portion of the property zoned HC Highway Commercial. PETITION: Body shop in the HC Zoning District on a 4.382-acre parcel under Section 24.2.2.17 of the Zoning Ordinance. No dwellings proposed.

ZONING: HC Highway Commercial which allows commercial and service; residential by special use permit (15 units/ acre); and RA Rural Area - agricultural, forestal, and fishery uses; residential density (0.5 unit/acre in development lots

OVERLAY DISTRICT(S): Entrance Corridor, Airport Impact Area, Flood Hazard Overlay District, Steep Slopes - Preserved

COMPREHENSIVE PLAN: Industrial which allows manufacturing, storage, distribution, office and commercial activities related to industrial use and research and development; and Parks and Green Systems which allows parks, playgrounds, play fields, greenways, trails, paths, recreational facilities and equipment, plazas, outdoor sitting areas, natural areas, preservation of stream buffers, floodplains and steep slopes adjacent to rivers and streams in Neighborhood 4 of the Southern and Western Urban Neighborhoods Master Plan.

(Cameron Langille)

Cameron Langille, Senior Planner with the Department of Community Development said he was the lead planner on this special use permit for SP-2017-00016 Caliber Collision. Mr. Langille summarized the request in a PowerPoint presentation.

This application is on tax map/parcel 77-11F and is located on the west side of Avon Street extended approximately 300 feet north of the intersection between Fifth Street Station Parkway and Avon Street Extended. The parcel is highlighted on the slide, measures 4.382 acres and is completely undeveloped. There has never been a site plan or special use permit application submitted to the county for this property before. The rear property boundary follows the Moore's Creek centerline. The parcel is actually split-zoned - the 2.41 acres closest to Avon Street Extended is zoned HC, Highway Commercial and the rear 1.972 acres is zoned Rural Areas.

The Overlay District Map shows the Overlay Districts that are on this property. It is in the Airport Impact Overlay District as well as the Flood Hazard Overlay District and it does have Preserved Steep Slopes. The steep slopes are in green and the Flood Hazard District is the striped blue at the rear of the property. As shown in the slides, those environmental features overlay districts are entirely located within the Rural Areas portion of the property; they are not in the Highway Commercial area.

This property is located in Neighborhood IV of the Southern and Western Urban Neighborhoods Development area. The land use called for on tax map/parcel 77-11F has two different classifications. The area shown in green are parks and green systems that actually coincides with where preserved steep slopes as well as the Flood Hazard Overlay Districts are located. He noted that there is a Water Protection Ordinance stream buffer on the property, which is located entirely within that Parks and Green Systems portion. The area shown in purple is industrial.

To get into the specifics of the proposal the applicants are looking to do a body shop in the portion of the property that is zoned Highway Commercial. There are no improvements proposed in the Rural Area portion of the property. Under our Zoning Ordinance, body shops are special uses and are not permitted by right in the Highway Commercial District and so they are looking to do a single-story building that measures 18,635 square feet. About 2,200 square feet of that will be office space and the remainder of the building will be used for shop floor. The applicant will be doing a

parking lot as shown in the conceptual drawing. It is going to have 81 total spaces; but 56 of those parking spaces will be for employees and customers.

In terms of utilities, they will be connecting to Albemarle County Service Authority public water lines that are located along Avon Street Extended. The nearest public sewer lines are actually located in the Willoughby Subdivision, which is located behind this property across Moore's Creek. Because of that, the applicant wants to do a private septic system under the parking lot. The Virginia Department of Health has reviewed that and they have said that it is feasible to do a septic system underneath the parking lot that will be entirely within the Highway Commercial zoned portion of the property. When it comes time for a final site plan later, they will need to get a construction permit from the Virginia of Health and he just wanted to make that known that has been evaluated at this point in the process.

In terms of other improvements that we are looking at with this special use permit, in the right-of-way of Avon Street Extended there is actually no sidewalks along this property frontage. The applicant is proposing to construct new sidewalks within the right-of-way to connect to the existing system that is located south of the property. It kind of ends just north of the intersection of the Fifth Street Station Parkway.

In the conceptual site plan that is tied to this special use permit application Mr. Langille pointed out the building and that at its closest point it is located approximately 11' from the proposed right-of-way line. It will be within our maximum 30' front setback so it meets all of our setback standards. He pointed out the other improvements that will be done, which includes the location of the driveway that will be situated overtop of an existing 50' shared driveway easement that is for the benefit of the Avon Motors property just to the north as well as the Caliper Collision property. They will be doing some parking on this side of the building as well as some parking in other areas for customers. Behind the building is where they will have their vehicle storage spaces. There is some employee parking area in the center area of the parking lot.

Mr. Langille pointed out the conceptual grading plan that is associated with the application. They are going to be doing a stormwater device in this area and the septic system drainfields are located in this area. He called out in the this drawing that the zoning ordinance actually requires properties that are adjacent to residential or rural area zoning districts to maintain a 20' no disturbance buffer. With this application, there is a dashed line, which is the 20' measurement line from this dashed line, which is the zoning district boundary line. Therefore, there will be no improvements or no grading located in that no disturbance buffer and if they were looking to do that they would have to get a special exception, but they have managed to fit everything outside of that buffer.

The applicant also included a conceptual landscaping plan with their application. He has sort of clipped it in the slide to just the area where we will be installing new landscaping. The applicant is not going to be doing anything in the rural area portion of the property where those preserved steep slopes and the floodplain area is located

since it is all up front. They do have some street trees here, which species are medium and large shade trees that meet the requirements of our site plan ordinance. There are also some trees within the parking lot and at the rear of the property; they are going to do a line of shrubs to provide an additional screening measure. Mr. Langille pointed out that was brought as something the residents of Willoughby wanted to see when the community meeting was held for this special use permit application. On the conceptual site plan, they were proposing to do a fence back there as well so this is going to be a combined constructed screen with landscaping measures as well.

Staff recommends approval of the special use permit with several conditions that are included in the staff report. Staff feels that this application meets pretty much all of the Neighborhood Model principles contained in the Comprehensive Plan. We do not think that it poses any substantial detriment to adjacent lots and it will be similar in character to the existing uses in the surrounding area that are in the Highway Commercial zoning district. The other properties near this site are all zoned Light Industry and they are similar in nature of warehousing and distribution type of uses. He noted that a body shop is not substantially different from that type of use. The one aspect of this application that we do not feel entirely meets the Neighborhood Model principle of pedestrian orientation relates to the architectural renderings that we have looked at for the new building.

In a slide traveling north along Avon Street Extended Mr. Langille pointed out where the building will be located and what it will look like if you were traveling north along Avon Street Extended. He pointed out the intersection with the Fifth Street Station Parkway and Avon Street and the location of the building. He pointed out the renderings and the side of the building that will face Avon Street Extended. If you notice, there are not a lot of windows included along this building face. It has a very large massing just kind of a monolithic looking wall. With the pedestrian orientation principle, we are looking for applications to make it more inviting for pedestrians walking along the street. We also think that architectural detailing is necessary just so that it provides a more comforting experience. Staff recommends one condition that recommends more fenestration or additional architectural details along this building wall. The applicant wants to speak with the Planning Commission about that recommendation from staff and he will leave that up to them once the floor is open for public comment.

Mr. Langille said the conditions recommended are in the staff report and he was not going to read all of them. However, the one related to that building wall is sub letter b) which states Additional fenestration or architectural features shall be added along the 02 left elevation south façade to provide pedestrian orientation to the satisfaction of the Director of Planning or his/her designee. Mr. Langille said staff recommends approval of the application with conditions and that he will take questions from the Commission.

Mr. Keller invited questions for staff.

Ms. Spain asked is a commercial enterprise required to have a septic tank pumped out every five years since that is the recommendation for residences. She asked is there any type of requirement for commercial businesses.

Mr. Langille replied that he was not sure; however, he could look into that and get back to her. He said all of the requirements for that are State Code regulations, which are handled by the Health Department. When the site plan comes in for this, we will forward a copy of the Virginia Department of Health and they will look at that. He noted there is a construction permit for that and then have requirements for ongoing maintenance. He said he was not sure exactly what the timing was for doing that.

Mr. Keller opened the public hearing and invited the applicant to come forward and address the Commission.

Rusty Coan, with Cross Development, 4336 Marsh Ridge Road, Carlton, Texas 75010, said they were under contract to purchase this 4.38 acre property for Caliber Collision. To give some history of Caliber Collision since they are not in the community he pointed out Caliber has over 520 stores in 17 states with 38 locations in Virginia alone. He said Harrisonburg and Culpeper are the closest. He said they do about 1.4 billion dollars annually in revenue and they are an industry leader from an insurance standpoint. As far as uses in the building, we are strictly an auto body and a paint repair shop. We will not be doing any transmission work, engineer work, tires or things like that.

Mr. Coan said Cameron spoke to the site plan and explained we have about 18,600 square foot building and two doors on the back side of the building to enter cars. In working with the Architectural Review in early November of last year that building does have some projections to it - there are two columns there and the middle piece comes away from the wall along with the left side where we added a bump out and bump up to match the door area on the right. We also another column similar to the two that will be in the middle right under it, which is the one you will see from the Fifth Street Station signal. He said we have some landscaping in front and submitted the Architectural Review Board with two options on that landscaping with one meeting the regular spacing and one grouping three to five trees together. Mr. Coan said we are happy to install either one of those. He pointed out the engineer was here, Freeman Kaufman, who can answer questions on the site plan or storm drainage and he would be happy to answer questions.

Mr. Keller invited questions from the Commission.

Mr. Dotson asked how are liquids from radiators, transmissions or other damaged things from cars that are being worked on handled in whether they would be hooked to the system or septic system. He said related to that how are floor drains handled in the work bays.

Mr. Coan replied typically in our shop cars will come in a U-shaped fashion and go to tech bays there. Again, if a car is damaged enough to have engine trouble and things

like that we are probably not working on it at this shop. We do have a detail bay and storage area that are outside which will be screened by the fencing. The detail bay will have its separate drain and oil/water separator that will tie into the septic system. He said that Todd can speak to how that will operate. He pointed out they have hired somebody locally to design that and to the question on maintenance whatever that requirement is we will maintain it based on that.

Todd Burnette, with Freeman and Kaufman, said to answer your question that upstream of the actual septic system we will have a sand/oil separator. He said all drainage inside the building goes through the septic that goes into a sand/oil separator that is separate from the septic system upstream of it. So if there is any antifreeze or whatever there may be that is collected there and that is cleaned out on a different basis than your typical septic system.

Mr. Bivins asked the applicant to speak to the additional windows or as they set on the sidewalk since he did not hear him speak to that.

Mr. Coan replied that he did not other than he had gone through the Architectural Review Board we were able to make some extensions from the face and so it is not just one big massive building since there are some bump outs and bump ups as well. He said that middle section, the stone columns there, are probably about a third of that building. He said you really could not see into that with the landscape in front of them, but kind of where that building changes colors from the tan to the dark there are two stone columns that stick out a foot. It is very similar to what is in Fifth Street Station in the Dick's. He said the two stone columns and those will bump out from that face about 1' X 4' wide and the top has some cornice on it that will stick up higher than the existing building there. It will be the same on both ends and where the doors are in the office. He said the whole face along Avon Street is basically a shop. Again, if we need to add windows it will be full windows. He said you won't really see in there and the doors will be in the back. He pointed out they do have a screened fence around the whole thing and as Cameron said about the community meeting that we added some landscaping in the back at the request of the neighbors.

Mr. Bivins said in staff's recommendation about additional fenestration or architectural features he asked are you saying you will use architectural features.

Mr. Coan replied that he was saying that we through the Architectural Review Board added some of those bump outs, again, very similar to the Fifth Street Station at Dick's. He said we can definitely add them if we need to. As people are driving up and down the road he did not know that they are facing that but we can definitely add them if we need to. He asked if there any direction on the number and location. He pointed out that was a struggle with the Architectural Review Board that the Code did not really spell out you had to do X amount of things but that was like a list of options. Again, he pointed out what we had there is what we settled on in early November.

Ms. Spain said the narrative talks about a proposed 23 employees and is that based on other locations that employee that many people and is there a supply of mechanics that can do the work.

Mr. Coan replied yes, based on this size building we will probably have 20 to 25 employees and a lot them would be a tech in the back and Caliber spends in the neighborhood of ten to twelve million dollars a year on training alone. He noted that they have 10,800 employees across the country and as new things come out they are on the forefront of training of those folks.

Ms. Riley said just a follow-up on the question about the fenestration – this is an evolving corridor for pedestrian use and she is glad to see that there are sidewalks provided; but you had mentioned that if there was to be some windows that they would be full windows. She asked have you done this at other locations since she would be interested in seeing something besides just additional columns in terms of pedestrian view.

Mr. Coan replied that in their 500 locations he was sure they have a few of those. He noted the west end on the plan has the full windows; the right side is where our entry door is and the windows in the bottom elevation are all office windows. He pointed out those windows will be real and you can see in there again on the left hand side of that large face along Avon; it is a full window. He pointed out the office door and that there is a full window there as well.

Ms. Riley said at the community meeting the neighbors in the Willoughby Neighborhood expressed an interest in knowing more about the lighting to make sure there would not be lighting at nighttime or lighting that would shine into those home. She asked Mr. Coan to talk a little bit about the outdoor lighting. Related to that he said there was a detail bay in the rear and she asked will all of the work take place within the building; there is no detail work outdoors.

Mr. Coan replied that all of the body and repair work painting would all be enclosed in that building; but actually, the paint booth is a separate structure permitted through DEQ as well. It will have its own fire sprinkler system and ventilation in kind of an enclosed box that you drive in. The detail is like a wash down areas as a service that we provide before we bring your car back around. He said that is directly behind the building, and again will be covered and behind the screened fence. It will have its own drain and sand/oil separator. As far as the lighting, Mr. Coan said we will meet the Code and have added a 6' fence in the back along with shrubs. He said we have completed a lighting plan as well, and asked staff if that was correct.

Mr. Langille replied that there was no lighting plan included with this special use permit.

Mr. Coan suggested that they may have submitted it with the Architectural Review Board.

Mr. Langille noted the zoning ordinance has some requirements for using full cut off fixtures and basically maintaining a low foot-candle measurement along the property lines and then where that zoning district boundary is between the Highway Commercial and Rural Area portion it can't exceed a certain measurement. He said that will be part of the site plan review process.

Mr. Coan said we are okay following that as well. Again, the back part is where we will have cars and our employees will be moving them in and out as they are awaiting for parts throughout a week. He said for part of Caliber's insurance we do have to keep those secure and so we will have to have enough light to keep those secure but will definitely meet the ordinance.

Mr. Dotson questioned the fenestration since he mentioned the ARB and some time ago, you were before the ARB.

Mr. Coan replied yes, it was November 6 of last year.

Mr. Dotson said that was for a preliminary, and Mr. Coan replied that it was for a conceptual elevation review, and again that is what we landed on there with them. He pointed out we went through there twice and a lot of it centered on that left hand side elevation where we added another bump out and the full windows on that side.

Mr. Dotson asked if this was recommended for approved and then approved would this have to go back to the ARB again or have they completed that process.

Ms. Echols suggested that Mr. Blair could enlighten the Commission on the ARB.

Mr. Blair said this would not have to go back to the Architectural Review Board.

Mr. Coan said he thought it had to go back to the ARB, and Mr. Blair replied no, not currently.

Keller invited public comment. Hearing none, he invited the applicant back up for questions. He said he would jump in on the fenestration and asked if there is an opportunity for natural lighting to come into those bays and would there be some benefit because of color tones to have an area with natural light.

Mr. Coan replied possibly and that there will be 3 or 4 cars per tech bays along that whole wall. He said if you would not see cars when working on them because those would be up higher.

Mr. Keller said when someone is thinking about this neighborhood model and adjacencies it is not necessarily about a pure kind of aesthetic because part of the interest for this business conceivably could be that people walking back and forth might be interested in what they are seeing. He asked Mr. Coan to relay these type of questions to corporate in cases like this when you are in a more urbanizing environment

where with new residential development there will be a lot more pedestrian foot traffic. So that leads to the rationale why designers and planners are interested in breaking up that façade other than the first part he said many are going to be stopped at a traffic light and backed up as they are coming off I-64 before they go into Fifth Street Station. Therefore, he thinks there is going to be a lot of interest from both the automobile passengers and pedestrians. He said it is quite important that there be fenestration, but in the ideal, he would encourage them to think about the benefits to the business for people to be able to see the activity inside. He said we all know that in an industrial building it could have an industrial treatment with a wire mesh over for security inside but that one can see through. He said that is just my personal comment on that.

Ms. Spain agreed with Mr. Keller, but two other options occurs to me. She said when she sees a vast expansive wall as if that she thinks mural would be a great place for one or more mural. She asked staff would a mural count in the Neighborhood Model as street level detail and interest.

Ms. Echols replied that one of the points of the windows or the detailing is to help the pedestrian understand how tall the building is next to them. Therefore, if there was some kind of an illustration on that wall that helps to create a pedestrian understanding of height she thinks that would be fine. The Commission knows in historic preservation it is common for painting to take place on buildings without having to change the façade of those buildings and so that could be a possibility as well.

Ms. Spain said she still agrees that windows would be the best. However, the other option of bio filtered wall or plants on twine or the equivalent of twine going up the side of wall. She said that creates a great deal of interest and it helps offset all of the concrete that is there in the building and the building roof.

Mr. Coan asked if she is suggesting that in lieu of some of the landscaping that is there.

Ms. Spain replied that if he decided to bunch some of the trees rather than spreading them out evenly the way they are illustrated here, then you could have the trees closer to the street and the plants growing up part of the wall. She suggested it be something that makes sense from a design standpoint and for the health of the streets, too. However, the buildings that are covered with vines, flowers and such to change with the seasons she thinks are very effective in creating interest and offsetting some of the downside of concrete.

Mr. Coan asked if they start changing what the ARB approved, then they would have to go back.

Mr. Blair replied no, sir, the conditions can be changed as part of the special use permit.

Ms. Echols said the Planning Commission is recommending conditions to the Board of Supervisors so the Planning Commission could recommend modifications of these conditions that would provide for greater flexibility.

Mr. Blair agreed.

Mr. Coan said if we went to the ARB previously and were set up for that conceptual approval and getting new things where do we start/stop with that.

Mr. Keller referred the question to our county attorney.

Mr. Blair said there would be no further ARB review on this because this will be handled through the special use permit conditions.

Mr. Keller said the Commission's recommendation would be advisory to the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Blair said typically he thinks the Commission would once there is consensus on the conditions at least give the applicant an opportunity to address that voluntarily.

Mr. Keller agreed the applicant still has a chance if they need to and invited other questions for the applicant. There being no further public comment, the public hearing was closed and the matter before the Commission for discussion and action.

Mr. Dotson noted an observation that the majority of our discussion has been about the visual treatment of the wall along the public right-of-way because of the fact that this is in an Entrance Corridor location, which simply shows me the importance of Entrance Corridor designations.

Mr. Keller asked does anyone want to speak to the septic or are we satisfied with the septic under the asphalt because that is under a state review.

Ms. Riley said other than what Commissioner Spain suggested in terms of alternative methods to fenestration for visual interest and helping the pedestrian understand the scale of the building, that she thinks there is consensus on additional fenestration as a preferred method of dealing with this.

Mr. Bivins agreed and wondered if there is a way to modify subsection b that would take into consideration Commissioner Spain's suggestion of consideration about being a bit more creative in the landscape solution that is being proposed because it could be that the bump out piece is actually of sun exposure would be an appropriate or optimal place to have that kind of trellising system that you are suggesting. He said he was not sure how to modify subsection b to have that to include that kind of flexibility.

Mr. Keller suggested that staff may have thoughts on that.

Ms. Echols suggested perhaps to add between fenestration and/or architectural features you might say wall plantings so additional fenestration, wall plantings, or architectural features. She asked would that cover it.

Mr. Keller pointed out that he would like to see whether other commissioners support my proposal for real windows. He asked that to be in the list then and be the first that the ideal would be that the building would be true to itself, represent what was going on in the inside, which then would begin to answer that fenestration and respond to the Neighborhood Model because it would be true interest for people to see. However, he was comfortable with everything that has been proposed thus far except for a mural and he would be happy to have a discussion with Ms. Spain at another time about murals. He said that he did not think in this situation a mural would work; but, he thinks the proposal of vegetation on the building, again, there are maintenance issues that are a whole other discussion just as there are with murals. Mr. Keller said but, that could be said for the plantings as well, and if Ms. Firehock were here she would be telling us about that.

Mr. Dotson said he could sympathize with the applicant wanting direction what do I do and he was not sure it helps him enough to say priority to additional fenestration perhaps in combination then with wall plantings and architectural features. He did not think we have the ability sitting here tonight since we don't know what happens on the inside of the building; we don't know to what extent – is it one window, five windows, and he did not see how we can resolve that tonight. However, he could see saying give priority to fenestration and then let the applicant in discussion with the staff come up with a plan to take to the Board.

Mr. Keller said he was comfortable with that and asked Ms. Echols to suggest how we would modify that one condition so that we could then make a motion with that included.

Ms. Echols said she was wondering if it is a priority should be given to additional fenestration. She asked Mr. Dotson if that was what he was saying.

Mr. Dotson replied yes, it was priority to additional fenestration in combination with wall plantings and architectural features and so it was not one or any of the others but a priority in sort of a pecking order.

Mr. Keller said parenthetically it would be nice if the fenestration would be functional if possible and then that would allow the option for the faux if necessary.

Mr. Dotson said he would guess he would take faux fenestration as an architectural feature.

Mr. Keller agreed.

Ms. Echols reiterated that it would say priority should be given to providing additional fenestration wall or a combination of wall plantings, architectural features and fenestration along this particular elevation.

Mr. Keller noted that all the Commissioners were nodding their heads and asked for a motion.

Ms. Riley moved to recommend approval of SP-2017-00016 Caliper Collision with the changes recommended by staff and conditions outlined in the staff report, as amended for condition b, subdivision b.

Ms. Spain seconded the motion.

Mr. Keller invited further discussion. There being none, the roll was called.

The motion was approved by a vote of 5:0:2 (More, Firehock absent).

Mr. Keller thanked the applicant and said this request for SP-2017-00016 Caliber Collision is moving forwarding to the Board of Supervisors with a recommendation for approval.

The meeting moved to the next item on the agenda.