



CITY OF HARRISONBURG COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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January 31, 2022

TO THE MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL CITY OF HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA

SUBJECT: *Consider a request from Vincenzo Luigi Dattolo with representatives Blue Ridge Marble, LLC for a special use permit to allow manufacturing, processing and assembly operations at 84 Pleasant Valley Road*

EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF HARRISONBURG PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING HELD ON: January 12, 2022

Chair Finnegan read the request and asked staff to review.

Ms. Banks said that the Comprehensive Plan designates this site as Commercial. Commercial uses include retail, office, professional service functions, restaurants, and lodging uses. Commercial areas should offer connecting streets, biking and walking facilities, and public transit services. Interparcel access and connections are essential to maintaining traffic safety and flow along arterials. Parking should be located to the sides or rear of buildings.

The following land uses are located on and adjacent to the property:

Site: Marble and Granite countertop sales and showroom; zoned B-2

North: Commercial businesses and vacant land; zoned B-2

East: Vacant building; zoned B-2

South: Across Pleasant Valley Road, commercial businesses; zoned B-2

West: Commercial businesses; zoned B-2

The applicant is requesting a special use permit (SUP) per Section 10-3-91 (1) of the Zoning Ordinance to allow a manufacturing, processing and assembly use, involving 15 persons or less per shift, at 84 Pleasant Valley Road. If approved, Blue Ridge Marble, LLC would operate a cultured marble sink and vanity manufacturing business from the location.

The +/- 2.9-acre site consists of a +/- 15,140 square feet enclosed building, several pole-shed structures and associated paved parking. Currently, Ital Marble and Granite, LLC operates from within the building, occupying +/- 10,140 square feet and, if the SUP is approved, Blue Ridge Marble would occupy +/- 5,000-square feet.

The applicant describes the cultured marble sink and vanity process as a “modest” operation. It consists of blending a marble “matrix” with a polyester resin and pouring into molds. A mold sits for approximately 24 hours, before being released and the finished product is lightly polished and boxed for delivery. All operations, equipment, and storage will be indoors, which is required by the SUP in the B-2 district. The process functions with two employees and occasional deliveries would be made to the site.

Parking will need to be provided on site for the proposed use as well as for the existing use. The Zoning Ordinance requires manufacturing operations to have one (1) parking space for every two (2) persons working on the premises on a maximum shift, plus parking spaces for every truck or other vehicle used in connection therewith. With only two employees and no other vehicles associated with the manufacturing use, one off-street parking space would be required for Blue Ridge Marble. For the existing Ital Marble & Granite, LLC, use, which is considered a retail use and consisting of 10,140 square feet, parking is calculated at one parking space for every 250 square feet of gross floor area – totaling a required 41 spaces. Therefore, a total of 42 off-street parking spaces are required on the site to accommodate the Zoning Ordinance parking requirements. Currently, there are 18 marked parking spaces; it appears they have the ability to stripe or designate the additional parking spaces needed.

The applicant has been informed that if the SUP is approved, they will need to work with the Building Code Division to ensure that all Building Code requirements are met and to obtain a change of use permit for the portion of the building they will occupy. Additionally, the required parking spaces will need to be striped or designated. If signage is desired for the business, a separate sign permit is required. The applicant will need to work with Planning and Zoning staff to ensure that all parking and sign regulations are met.

Staff considers this an appropriate reuse of vacant space within an existing building. The process is self-contained within the building and does not promote additional traffic on site. Overall, staff believes the cultured marble sink and vanity processing use should have no adverse effect on the health, safety or comfort to people in the area and is compatible with uses generally permitted in the B-2 zoning district. If approved, staff suggests conditioning the SUP with the following:

- The special use permit shall be limited to the processing of a matrix and production of marble sinks and vanities use as described in the applicant’s letter, or to a substantially similar process.
- If in the opinion of Planning Commission or City Council, the use becomes a nuisance, the special use permit can be recalled for further review, which could lead to the need for additional conditions, restrictions, or the revocation of the permit.

Staff recommends approving the special use permit with the suggested conditions.

Chair Finnegan asked if there were any questions for staff.

Councilmember Dent said that 42 parking spaces seems excessive to me given that a retail outfit is doing fine with 18, so why for two people would we need to add 42. That seems out of proportion.

Ms. Banks said that our parking regulations for the retail use are based on the overall square footage of the building. I imagine that originally this building had more parking spaces marked and over time they have disappeared. Whenever we look at projects like this and we see a deficit in meeting our parking requirements, we do require that they bring their parking up to meet the requirements in the Zoning Ordinance. I happen to agree that it is a lot. Parking is something that is being looked at and considered in the Zoning Ordinance update.

Councilmember Dent said I might propose and amended condition to the effect of, perhaps a waiver of that maximum amount to a lower more reasonable amount.

Ms. Banks said that is not a condition that we can do. We do have the other SUP where you could ask for a reduction in parking, but part of that request also says that you have to have the open green space left available. In this case, the whole parcel was already paved.

Councilmember Dent said that you pointed out areas on the map where they could stripe new parking.

Ms. Banks said that they could stripe, put curb stops or put landscape timbers to designate the parking.

Chair Finnegan said that he agrees. That is an extremely high number of parking spaces for the use of this building.

Commissioner Whitten said that is the requirement that we have now. It is being looked at. We hope it will be successful and we hope that they will stay there. Maybe they will need more parking eventually. If someone else moved in there, with that square footage, they could need 42 spaces. It seems excessive for now, but it is the law that is on the books at this point. If they can make the change in the ordinance on the side of less parking, then I am in favor of that too.

Commissioner Byrd said I want to make sure I understand. This is a SUP so that they can do manufacturing. Staff is recommending a condition to make it specific to this matrix formation process.

Ms. Banks said yes and added or a similar process.

Councilmember Dent said my second question is the health and safety of that process, since it is enclosed even though it is a large warehouse space. Are there any toxic fumes associated with this resin? Does it need special venting? How would we determine those needs for the site?

Ms. Banks said that we can ask the applicant. When they are working with the Building Codes division, that is something that will be discussed.

Chair Finnegan asked if there were any more questions for staff. Hearing none, he opened the public hearing and invited the applicant or applicant's representative to speak to their request.

Daniel Claxton, applicant's representative, came forward to speak to the request. The applicant is the building owner. I am one of the co-owners of Blue Ridge Marble. To answer the question about the fumes, there is an acetone process that is used to clean the bowls that has a fume that comes off of it. The cleaning area is an open area that is well ventilated that has fans. We will talk with the building codes staff. If they determine that there is something additional that we need, will do not have a problem looking into getting some type of filtration or something like that. That is something that we were anticipating anyway.

Chair Finnegan asked if that is regulated. I assume that fumes out of manufacturing plants and processes, places like this, have to adhere to State and Federal environmental standards.

Mr. Claxton said we are in contact with the (19:17:06). There is a report draft with them. It is called a W-7. They were not concerned acetone. There is a spray application of a gel-coat that goes on the mold before the matrix goes in there. They were more concerned about the spray. Having a paint booth is what they were regulating for us.

Chair Finnegan asked if there were any questions for the applicant's representative. Hearing none, he asked if there was anyone on the phone wishing to speak to the request. Hearing none, he closed the public hearing and opened the matter for discussion.

Commissioner Baugh moved to recommend approval of the SUP as recommended by staff.

Commissioner Whitten seconded the motion.

Chair Finnegan called for a roll call vote.

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| Commissioner Armstrong | Aye |
| Commissioner Baugh | Aye |
| Commissioner Byrd | Aye |
| Councilmember Dent | Aye |
| Commissioner Orndoff | Aye |
| Commissioner Whitten | Aye |
| Chair Finnegan | Aye |

The motion to recommend approval of the SUP request, as presented, passed (7-0). The recommendation will move forward to City Council on February 8, 2022.