



City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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October 6, 2015

TO THE MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL CITY OF HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA

SUBJECT: Public hearing to consider a request from Molly Bou LLC with representative Glenn Loucks for a special use permit per Section 10-3-97 (3) of the Zoning Ordinance to allow business and professional offices within the M-1, General Industrial District. The 0.414 +/- acre parcel is located at 206 South Avenue and is identified as tax map 19-A-3.

EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF HARRISONBURG PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING HELD ON: September 9, 2015

Chair Fitzgerald read the request and asked staff for a review.

Mrs. Banks said the Comprehensive Plan designates this area as Commercial. This designation states that these areas include uses for retail, office, wholesale, or service functions. These areas are generally found along the City's major travel corridors and in the Central Business District of the City.

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

Site: Warehouse and office building, zoned M-1

North: Church, zoned R-1

East: Warehouse and showroom building, zoned M-1

South: Non-conforming apartment buildings, zoned M-1

West: Across South Avenue, single family homes, zoned R-1 and vacant parcel, zoned M-1

The applicant is requesting a special use permit (SUP) per Section 10-3-97(3) of the Zoning Ordinance to allow business and professional offices in the M-1, General Industrial District. The site is along the northern side of South Avenue, about 240 feet west of its intersection with South High Street, in an area with a mix of residential and small scale industrial and business uses. The site is improved with a 5,380 +/- square foot warehouse/office building.

The applicant, who owns and manages multiple properties throughout the local area, desires to relocate his business, Castle Property Management, to the site. The office/administrative component of the business is described as having limited customers, with a majority of the work handled through the mail or by phone; however, there is a large warehousing component for supplies, appliances, building materials, and other equipment for managing property. If approved, the applicant would utilize a portion of the building for the offices of Castle Property Management and a possible future tenant. The remainder would be used as warehousing for Castle Property Management.

Previously, the subject property had been used for industrial warehousing and office space for Southern Refrigeration, a permitted use within the M-1 zoning district. The applicant should be aware that if the SUP is approved, the conversion to a business office use will likely require a change of use permit to ensure the use complies with building code.

Parking for the office use would be calculated at one parking space for every 300 square feet of gross floor area. Warehousing requires one parking space for every two employees working on a maximum shift and one space for each vehicle associated with the warehouse. If approved, staff would work with the applicant to determine the minimum number of off-street parking needed for all uses. Meeting the minimum parking requirements for the intended uses should not be a problem as there is a large parking area which already exists. The property owner must simply delineate the spaces required.

This block of South Avenue, which is designated in the Comprehensive Plan as Commercial, is a mix of residential uses, a church, and a personal service establishment. Staff believes a business office, and the associated warehousing would be compatible with the existing uses in the area and brings the use of the property closer to compliance with the Comprehensive Plan.

Staff recommends approving the special use permit.

Chair Fitzgerald asked if there were any questions for staff. Hearing none, she opened the public hearing and asked if the applicant or the applicant's representative would like to speak.

Glen Loucks of Harrisonburg said Mrs. Banks has done an excellent job of explaining the site and my intentions to you. I am here to answer any particular questions you may have. We have had an office on North Main Street for about 18 years. We starting managing some properties on South Avenue where we saw this property and thought that managing an office and warehouse from this location would be a much better location for our tenants. We desire to make this location our permanent home.

Chair Fitzgerald asked if there were any questions for Mr. Loucks. Hearing none, she asked if there was any one else desiring to speak with regard to the special use public hearing. Hearing none, she closed the public hearing and asked for a motion on the request.

Mr. Colman made a motion to recommend approval of the special use permit as requested.

Mr. Heatwole seconded the motion.

Chair Fitzgerald called for a voice vote on the motion.

All voted in favor of the motion to approve (7-0).

Chair Fitzgerald said this will move forward to City Council on October 13th with a favorable recommendation.

Respectfully Submitted,

Alison Banks
Planner