



# City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

Department of Planning & Community Development  
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To: Kurt Hodgen, City Manager  
From: Planning Commission and  
Adam Fletcher, Director of Planning and Community Development  
Date: August 9, 2016 City Council Meeting  
Re: Special Use Permit – 40 West Washington Street (Section 10-3-97(3)) to allow business and professional offices on an M-1, General Industrial District parcel.

**Summary:** Public hearing to consider a request from Girl Power, LLC with property representative Ashley Swartz for a special use permit per section 10-3-97(3) of the M-1, General Industrial District to allow for Business and Professional Offices. The 0.45 +/- acre property is located at 40 West Washington Street and is identified as tax map parcel 40-N-27.

**Background:** The Comprehensive Plan designates this area as Planned Business. This designation states that these areas are suitable for commercial development but need careful controls to ensure compatibility with adjacent land uses.

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

- Site:** 5,580 +/- square foot building which houses Claudia's Hand Dyed Yarn business, zoned M-1
- North:** Poultry facility and other industrial uses, zoned M-1
- East:** Across Norfolk & Southern Railroad, an automotive repair and towing business, zoned M-1
- South:** Across West Washington Street, George's Food, zoned M-1
- West:** Across Massanutten Street, parking for industrial uses, zoned M-1 and dwelling units, zoned R-2

**Key Issues:** The applicants are 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 property is located along the northern side of West Washington Street, at its intersection with Massanutten Street. This section of West Washington Street is a mix of industrial and business uses, along with numerous non-conforming residential uses.

The site is improved with a 5,580 +/- square foot building that was originally constructed in 1959 as an office building for Valley of Virginia Milk Producers Association. Throughout the years it has served as an office or financial institution serving different property owners to include Shenandoah's Pride Milk Company and Wampler Longacre, Inc. In 2006 a change of use was approved and a Certificate of Occupancy was provided for the business Claudia's Hand Dyed Yarns, which is a small-scale manufacturing and processing use that is permitted by-right within the M-1, district.

At this time, the applicants desire to bring back some of the professional and business office uses to the property. If approved, Claudia's Yarns would continue to occupy approximately 2,100 square feet of the building; while Priority Property Management and Swartz Photography would occupy the remaining square footage. The building, in its current state, consists of three existing office areas and a large work area. As stated in the applicant's letter, they intend to continue to utilize the spatial divisions of the building and do not plan to make any building improvements at this time. Staff has informed the applicants that when they decide to make improvements or renovations they will need to apply for all necessary building and trade permits to ensure they are complying with current regulations.

Also discussed with the applicant was that the existing parking lot would need to be clearly marked to delineate the required parking spaces for all uses that operate on site. Parking for the building would be calculated on the square footage of the separate uses, where Claudia's Yarns, being a manufacturing use with only one employee, would require one parking space for every two employees on a maximum shift; thus, one parking space. The remainder of the building would be used as office area and would require one parking space for every 300 square feet of gross floor area, for a total of 12 parking spaces. The applicant has provided a layout that demonstrates they can provide 27 parking spaces; however, only the required 13 parking spaces would need to be marked. Because this parking lot is existing and no additional parking areas will be added, landscaping is not required.

Staff does have a concern regarding the parking area directly in front of the building, which would allow patrons to back onto West Washington Street. Staff suggests a condition of only allowing angled parking, facing west, along the front of the building. The applicants have agreed to this condition.

This area of West Washington Street, which is designated in the Comprehensive Plan as Planned Business, is a mix of residential uses, parking, and industrial uses. Staff has discussed with the applicants that this is still an industrial district and some uses, much more obnoxious than what is currently in the vicinity, could locate in this area. Staff believes the proposed business/professional office use would bring the use of the property closer to compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, further promoting this area for Planned Business.

Staff recommends approval of the special use permit request with the following condition:

- The parking area in front of the existing building shall be striped as angled parking facing west.

**Environmental Impact:**

N/A

**Fiscal Impact:**

N/A

**Prior Actions:**

N/A

**Alternatives:**

Rather than approving the special use permit request as applied for herein, denial of the application would otherwise require the applicant to utilize the property as permitted by right in the M-1, district.

**Community Engagement:**

As required, the request was published in the local newspaper twice advertising for City Council's public hearing for the special use permit. The advertisement was published as shown below:

*Special Use Permit – 40 W. Washington Street (Section 10-3-97(3) to Allow Business and Professional Offices)*

Public hearing to consider a request from Girl Power, LLC with property representative Ashley Swartz for a special use permit per section 10-3-97(3) of the M-1, General Industrial District to allow for Business and Professional Offices. The 0.45 +/- acre property is located at 40 West Washington Street and is identified as tax map parcel 40-N-27.

In addition, adjoining property owners were notified of the public hearing; the property was posted with signage advertising the request; and a notice was provided on the City's website at <https://www.harrisonburgva.gov/public-hearings>.

**Recommendation:**

Staff supports the applicant's request for a special use permit per Section 10-3-97 (3) of the Zoning Ordinance to allow business and professional offices in the M-1, General Industrial District, with the following condition:

- The parking area in front of the existing building shall be striped as angled parking facing west.

**Attachments:**

1. Site maps (3)
2. Extract (3)
3. Application, applicant letter, and supporting documents (8)

**Review:**

Planning Commission recommended approval (6-0) for the special use permit per Section 10-3-97 (3) to allow business and professional offices in the M-1 district at 40 West Washington Street with the following condition:

- The parking area in front of the existing building shall be striped as angled parking facing west.