



CITY OF HARRISONBURG COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

409 SOUTH MAIN STREET, HARRISONBURG, VA 22801

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To: Eric Campbell, City Manager
From: Adam Fletcher, Director – Department of Community Development and Harrisonburg Planning Commission
Date: January 14, 2020 (Regular Meeting)
Re: Special Use Permit – 1592 CF Pours Drive (To Allow Business and Professional Offices in M-1)

Summary:

Public hearing to consider a request from CFP Partners, LLC 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 +/- 1.1-acre property is addressed as 1592 CF Pours Drive and is identified as tax map parcel 46-D-5.

Background:

The Comprehensive Plan designates this site as Industrial. These areas are composed of land and structures used for light and general manufacturing, wholesaling, warehousing, high-technology, research and development, and related activities. They include the major existing and future employment areas of the City.

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

- Site:** Vacant structure, zoned M-1
North: Dog training/kennel facility and construction companies, zoned M-1
East: Manufacturing, processing and warehousing facilities, zoned M-1
South: Construction company, zoned M-1
West: Construction companies, zoned M-1

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 southern side of Acorn Drive, at its intersection with CF Pours Drive (a private street). Situated on the +/- 1.1-acre site is a vacant +/- 5,170 square foot frame building and a gravel parking area.

If approved, MEI Engineering, Inc. desires to locate its offices within the existing building. The applicant describes its business as engineering consulting services, which design HVAC, plumbing, and electrical systems for permits and “bid” drawings. The applicant’s letter states that most of the client

interaction occurs over email and through conference calls; however, they occasionally have client meetings at their current office.

This portion of the Acorn Drive corridor between North Liberty Street and Red Oak Street, along with the entirety of CF Pours Drive, where the subject parcel is located, is zoned M-1, General Industrial District. There are a mix of M-1 permitted uses in this area that include: vehicle sales/service; small furniture manufacturing; a dog kennel/training facility; contractor offices/material storage; State Police Headquarters; warehousing; and larger scale manufacturing (American Tire Distributors and Ariake). As well, three previous SUPs for business and professional offices, approved in 1997, 2001, and 2015 respectively, are located less than one-half mile from this site.

As noted with previous SUP applications for business and professional offices in the M-1 zoning district, the applicants should be aware that because the property is surrounded by properties zoned M-1, General Industrial District and identified in the City's Land Use Guide for General Industrial uses, intense industrial operations could locate adjacent to or near the site and could create noise, odor, traffic, or other byproducts of industrial operations that may be seen as unpleasant or distracting for the office use, and which they may deem as undesirable neighbors.

Business and professional offices provide services to the general public of either a business nature (i.e. consultants, web designers, tele-marketing, a corporate headquarters, and others) or a professional nature (i.e. lawyers, accountants, architects, doctors, dentists, engineers, insurance agents and others). Therefore, any business or professional office operation would be permitted to locate at this site—it would not only be an engineering/construction-related business office. At this location, staff has concerns with business and professional offices associated with the health and medical field, such as healthcare facilities and doctor's offices. The Institute of Traffic Engineer's (ITE) Trip Generation Manual (a tool used nationally by transportation engineers) estimates that a medical-dental office occupying the existing 5,170 square foot building would generate 19 vehicles per hour during the morning peak hour, compared to 9 vehicles for a single-tenant office building such as engineering consulting services. While this is not an overwhelming amount of traffic during one hour of the day, staff is concerned that additional vehicles in this area from customers throughout the day who may be unfamiliar could be disruptive to trucks and other traffic associated with the surrounding industrial operations. Additionally, a healthcare facility or doctor's office use at this location may discourage future industrial uses from locating within close proximity. Therefore, staff believes such uses should be excluded from the SUP ability.

Given the existing conditions and the varying intensity of the mixture of industrial operations along this corridor, except for healthcare related businesses as suggested to be prohibited in the condition below, staff believes that the proposed SUP is consistent with good zoning practice and will have no more adverse effect on the health, safety, or comfort of persons living and working in the area and will be no more injurious, economically or otherwise, to property or improvements in the surrounding area. Staff recommends approval of the SUP request with the following condition:

- Business and professional offices associated with medical and healthcare facilities and offices (i.e. doctor, dentist, and others) shall be prohibited.

Environmental Impact:

N/A

Fiscal Impact:

N/A

Prior Actions:

N/A

Alternatives:

- (a) Recommend approval of the special use permit request as submitted;
- (b) Recommend approval of the special use permit request with suggested conditions;
- (c) Recommend approval of the special use permit with other conditions(s); or
- (d) Recommend denial.

Community Engagement:

As required, the request was published in the local newspaper twice advertising for Planning Commission’s public hearing and twice advertising City Council’s public hearing. The advertisement was published as shown below:

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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 recommends alternative (b) approval of the special use permit request with the suggested condition.

Attachments:

- 1. Planning Commission Extract
- 2. Site maps
- 3. Application, applicant letter, and supporting documents
- 4. Proposed site development layout

Review:

Planning Commission recommended (6-0, Colman recused) alternative (b) approval of the special use permit request with the suggested condition.