



Planning Commission Staff Report

December 9, 2015

Item 5.c.

SUBJECT: P15-0626

APPLICANT: Christine Darrah, Room By Room

PROPERTY OWNER: Anne Simpson

PURPOSE: Application for a Conditional Use Permit to use the tenant space as a warehouse for furniture storage.

GENERAL PLAN: General and Limited Industrial

ZONING: I-P (Industrial-Park) District.

LOCATION: 5671 Sonoma Drive, Suite C

EXHIBITS:

- A. [Draft Conditions of Approval](#)
- B. [Narrative, Floor and Site Plans dated "Received November 6, 2015"](#)
- C. [Location and Notification Area Map](#)

BACKGROUND

Christine Darrah, owner of Room By Room, proposes to lease and occupy Suite C, an approximately 1,649 square-foot tenant suite at 5671 Sonoma Drive, to operate her business that specializes in furniture rental for real estate stagers. The subject site is zoned Industrial – Park (I-P) District and requires Conditional Use Permit (CUP) approval for warehouses that don't include the storage of fuel or flammable liquids. Accordingly, the CUP for this application is before the Planning Commission for review and action.

SITE DESCRIPTION AND SURROUNDING USES

The subject site is an approximately 23,747 square-foot parcel that contains an approximately 7,722 square-foot, multi-tenant single-story industrial building with 14 on-site parking spaces. Existing uses in the subject building include Tool Dynamics and Venegas Works Inc., both machine shops. There is one vehicle driveway entrance to the site on the north side of Sonoma Drive.

Properties adjacent to the subject site include single-family homes to the north, apartments to the east, industrial buildings to the west and south, and a condominium

development to the southeast. Figure 1 is an aerial photograph of the project site and its surroundings.

Figure 1: Aerial Image of the Subject Site and Surrounding Properties



PROPOSED PROJECT

The applicant proposes to lease and occupy Suite C of the multi-tenant building to store warehouse furniture that can be used to stage six to eight houses at any one time. Real estate staging businesses would place orders through the applicant's website and the applicant would hire a delivery company to pick-up/drop-off the items two to three times a week. There would be no customer traffic or sales. The hours of operation will be between 8:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m. on days when furniture is being picked-up/dropped-off. The business will be closed when pick-up/drop-off is not occurring. Furniture pick-up will occur between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 10:00 a.m. and furniture drop-off will occur between 10:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m. The applicant will be on-site to assist and oversee with the pick-up/drop-off of furniture. The furniture will be off-site for at least one month. The applicant will not have any employees.

The proposed tenant space is approximately 1,649 square feet in floor area. The space has an office area, bathroom and large warehousing space with a roll-up door located on the east side of the building for truck accessibility. There are no interior or exterior changes proposed to the tenant space or building. Please refer to the floor plan in Exhibit B.

ANALYSIS

Conditional uses are those uses which, by their nature, require special consideration so that they may be located properly with respect to the objectives of the Municipal Code

and with respect to their effects on surrounding properties. In order to achieve these purposes, the Planning Commission is empowered to approve, conditionally approve, or deny applications for CUP's.

Land Use

The Land Use Element of the Pleasanton General Plan designates the site for General and Limited Industrial land uses, which include warehousing. The subject site is zoned I-P District, which allows warehousing with approval of a CUP. The other tenants in the building are tool manufacturers. Given the relatively limited hours of truck pick-up/drop-off, the small number of weekly picks-ups and drop-offs, the small number of on-site employees (one), and the lack of on-site sales, staff considers the proposed business to be compatible with existing on-site and surrounding uses, including the sensitive residential uses in the vicinity of the site.

Staff does not expect that the proposed use would create any adverse impacts on adjacent tenants or the surrounding uses. However, if problems do arise, the application could be brought back to the Planning Commission for additional conditions to mitigate and/or prevent any nuisances that were identified. Therefore, from a land use perspective, staff finds the use to be acceptable, as conditioned.

Noise

Interior activities (primarily consisting of administrative work, and the storage of furniture) would be relatively quiet compared to most industrial activities, and the noise would not be audible to the adjacent businesses. Potential noise from the warehouse area during loading and/or unloading would be infrequent and buffered by the wood fences and concrete masonry (CMU) walls along the east and north property lines, where the residential properties are located. The subject tenant space is also separated from the residential buildings by the building, parking, and/or landscape areas. Given that the proposed business would be limited to online orders with no customer traffic, would have only one person inside the tenant space, and would have limited hours of operation for loading/unloading activities in the warehouse area, staff does not believe that the proposed use would impact residential areas or adjacent tenants due to noise. As conditioned, all doors will remain closed during business hours except during material loading/unloading, limiting potential noise impacts to surrounding properties.

Furthermore, staff has included a standard condition of approval on the project that allows the City to review the project again to add mitigating conditions should any future complaints regarding noise levels occur. Such conditions could include modifying the hours of operation.

Parking

There are 14 shared on-site parking spaces available to tenants and patrons of the approximately 7,722 square-foot building. The parking ratio at the subject site is one space for every 552 square feet of floor area. With the proposed use occupying approximately 1,649 square feet of floor area, three parking spaces would, theoretically, be allocated to the proposed use as there are no assigned parking spaces within the subject site.

The applicant is the only employee, there would be no customer traffic, and a delivery truck would be the only other vehicle associated with the use. Therefore, two parking spaces, one for the applicant and one for the delivery truck, would be needed to accommodate the use. There is adequate space on-site to park one truck when loading and unloading activities occur.

Therefore, based on the above parking analysis and recommended conditions of approval, staff believes that the proposed use would not adversely affect parking at the subject site or surrounding properties and that adequate parking exists on-site to accommodate all existing and proposed uses. However, should parking problems occur, staff has recommended a condition of approval that allows the Director of Community Development to refer the CUP back to the Planning Commission for possible mitigation measures.

Signage

No signage is proposed at this time. Review and approval from the Community Development Department would be required prior to installation of signage.

FINDINGS

The Planning Commission must make the following findings prior to approving the conditional use permit:

A. That the proposed location of the conditional use is in accordance with the objectives of the zoning ordinance and the purpose of the district in which the site is located.

Objectives of the zoning ordinance include protecting existing land uses from inharmonious influences and harmful intrusions; foster harmonious, convenient, workable relationships among land uses; and ensure that public and private lands are ultimately used for the purposes which are most appropriate and beneficial to the City as a whole. The applicant's proposal would be consistent with these objectives of the zoning district. The draft conditions of approval give the City the appropriate controls to ensure that the use would not have any negative impacts on the surrounding businesses and properties.

The subject site is zoned I-P District. One purpose of the I-P District is to provide locations for uses that can operate in close proximity to commercial and residential uses with minimum mutual adverse impact. As conditioned, staff feels the proposed furniture warehouse use would be consistent with the Industrial Park District purpose in that it would be conducted so as to not impact or interfere with the surrounding uses. The proposed business will not generate a substantial amount of traffic as there is only one employee (the applicant) and no customer traffic. Similar warehousing uses currently operate within the area and staff has not received complaints regarding those uses. Noise barriers, such as the existing wood fencing and CMU wall, would reduce noise. Therefore, staff believes that this finding can be made.

B. That the proposed location of the conditional use and the conditions under which it would be operated or maintained will not be detrimental to the public health, safety, or welfare, or materially injurious to the properties or improvements in the vicinity.

The proposed use is not anticipated to generate adverse impacts to the surrounding uses and would not exceed the site's parking supply. Day-to-day administrative office duties would be conducted within the building and loading/unloading operations would be limited. The doors of the tenant space will be kept closed except during furniture loading/unloading. A condition has been included that would require the applicant to mitigate any future nuisances as a result of the proposed use. In summary, staff feels this finding can be made.

C. That the proposed conditional use will comply with each of the applicable provisions of the zoning ordinance.

The site's I-P zoning district conditionally permits warehouses that don't include the storage of fuel or flammable liquids. The proposed use as conditioned would not detrimentally affect surrounding properties. In staff's opinion, granting the CUP to the applicant to operate the proposed business is consistent with the City's ability to regulate land uses per Municipal Code Chapter 18.124. Therefore, staff believes that this finding can be made.

PUBLIC NOTICE

Notices of this application were sent to surrounding property owners and tenants within a 1,000-foot radius of the site. Staff has provided the location and noticing maps as Exhibit C for reference. At the time this report was published, staff had not received any public comment.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

Projects of this nature are categorically exempt (Section 15303, New Construction or Conversion of Small Structures, Class 3) from the requirements of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). Therefore, no environmental document accompanies this report.

CONCLUSION

As proposed, staff believes that Room By Room will be compatible with the surrounding businesses, will not detrimentally affect the surrounding uses, and that the proposed use is appropriate for the subject site. Staff believes that the proposal would not produce any adverse impacts on the adjacent tenants due to noise, parking, traffic, or other objectionable influences. The proposed conditions of approval will ensure that the safety and general welfare of the development and surrounding area is maintained. Staff believes the proposal merits favorable action by the Planning Commission.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve Case P15-0626 by taking the following actions:

1. Make the conditional use findings as listed in the staff report; and
2. Approve Case P15-0626, subject to the conditions listed in Exhibit A.

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Reviewed/Approved By:

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