

DEL RAY CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

www.delraycitizens.org

P.O. Box 2233, Alexandria, VA 22301

Land Use Committee Monthly Meeting Minutes: May 10, 7:00PM

Mount Vernon Recreation Center

LUC Attendees: Kristine Hesse, Danielle Fidler, Sarah Haut, Virginia Amos, Barry Knoll, Lisa Lettieri, Rod Kuckro

Absent: Lisa Quandt, Wolf Ramm, JC Herz

Others Attending: Cathy Puskar, Brendanxxx, Sara Brandt Vogel, Taryn Tamoyo, Mike Anderson

113 E. Custis Ave SUB 2016-003. Subdivision of existing property to construct two single family residences which will require demolition of contributing structure to the Town of Potomac Historic District

This is the first time DRCA has been asked to approve demolition of a contributing structure, as all criteria are met for subdividing the lot. The house was built in 1936 and had a plaque. It was on the home and garden tour years ago. By right, applicant can demolish house and build a new large single family house. LUC doesn't approve of this, but legally they are allowed to do it.

Discussion included how to protect other historic structures from being demolished and if a text amendment could be developed. It was felt establishment of a BAR would not be successful in Del Ray.

The location of the curb cut for the new house was questioned, as it would lead to loss of parking on the street, which is adjacent to the 7-Eleven. A grading plan was not presented as the Owner's rep stated they did not want to produce one until the subdivision was approved. Staff stated T&ES expressed interest in having one curb cut that was shared between the two lots. Kristine stated there is a trend in Del Ray to provide wide curb cuts that allow side by side parking with one car parking in front of part of the house, which is not keeping with the vernacular.

Rod suggested meeting with the developers and discussing with the pattern book.

LUC voted unanimously to oppose the subdivision application because it will be the loss of a contributing historic structure to the Town of Potomac Historic District. However, if the subdivision goes forward, LUC asks that a side by side single-width driveway with shared curb cut and tandem parking be provided. This will minimize the impact to on-street parking. The LUC insists the Del Ray Residential Pattern Book be used as a resource for the design of the new structures so they are compatible with the architecture of the neighborhood.

Rosenthal / Caliber Collision auto body shop –

The former Audi dealership site is leased to Rosenthal until 2026 and they propose to have a joint use of the site with Caliber Collision for repairing mostly Audi vehicles. There will still be Audi cars on the lot along Mt. Vernon to make it appear cars are for sale, but there will not be any sales people on site. Original SUP 333 was approved in 1959, for a car dealership and repair shop but SUPs from then were very general in nature and don't have many conditions applied to them. The SUP limits the hours of operation from 7 am to 6 pm and the business will

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not be open on Sunday (which results in the hours of operation reduced from previous car dealership). The applicant stated that they will serve less than 45 cars per week (previously serviced 30-50 per day), and 40 to 50% of repairs will be Audi vehicles; have less than 25 employees: and reduce the number of lifts from 11 lifts to 4 or 6. There is an existing fenced in area where cars will remain when under repair. The repair is for minor damage ("light weight materials" collision repair) not totaled cars. (totaled car repair is only allowed in an industrial zone - not drivable, would likely not be repaired there). Applicant stated that they will be painting cars and meet all special venting requirements so they are not venting fumes into the air. Applicant will be keeping some vehicles on site to maintain the look of a sales lot with an information kiosk.

Committee members expressed concerns about maintaining the grounds and being a better neighbor and participating in the community. The Audi dealership was not involved, allowed cars parked on the lot to extend over the sidewalk, did not maintain the landscaping and allowed loaner cars to take up street parking.

1504B Mt. Vernon Ave, SUP 2016-0030

Proposal for a Sicilian pizza restaurant. Owner wants pizza delivery with take out available. Available parking will support seating for eight (4 tables and 8 chairs) and two delivery vehicles. There are four parking spaces behind building but they are for the entire building. There is an alley behind the building and the applicant proposes using E. Nelson as the primary access and egress for delivery vehicles and the driveway on the side of the building for public parking access.

Application stated the existing mechanical equipment filters will prevent odors or smells and did not plan on screening any mechanical equipment. Applicant wants to use existing sign, which is internally lighted and is not allowed by the sign ordinance.

Applicant plans to share dumpster with Al's steakhouse. There wasn't a site plan that indicated where the dumpster was to be located, if it was screened, and if it interfered with the parking in anyway, the route for the trash trucks, and the times for the dumpster pickup. There is an apartment building adjacent to the alley.

Committee members expressed concern about using E. Nelson as the access and egress to the alley. There have been numerous accidents at this intersection as it is a blind corner. Many people make u-turns at the intersection and delivery vehicles will make it more dangerous.

LUC Discussion:

Hours of operation should comply with LUC standard hours for restaurants.

Sign to comply with sign ordinance.

All mechanical equipment to be screened from public view.

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Dumpster to be screened. Trash collection hours: after 7 am and before 3 pm.
Install short term parking signs for 15 minutes or less for carry-out pick-up.

Rod made the motion to deny the request - 6 in favor of denial and 1 opposed.

Small Business Zoning Revisions

Mike Anderson spoke in support of the SUP process - thinks the community is better for the process that businesses must go through. However, the process is so rigorous and expensive if it requires a lawyer that it is a hardship on the small business owner and should be easier which will ultimately be better for the community by keeping businesses in Alexandria and not moving to DC.

Discussion included review time for administrative approval (21 days), submitting for building permit at same time as applying for SUP to decrease the amount of time, and have seminars to help small businesses to help navigate the process. Sara stated they held a workshop that people attended and did just that.

One of the major changes is updating the categories for automotive repair use - clarify light auto repair and general auto repair to help with enforcement. Currently only allowed in industrial zones but those zones are being rezoned for redevelopment.

The appeal process will still be in place as the changes will eliminate City Council approval.

There will be an open house scheduled at city all from 4 to 7 Monday, May 23rd to discuss at Sister Cities (1st floor).