

**AGENDA REPORT
PLANNING AND ZONING COMMISSION MEETING
March 7, 2024**

SUMMARY

A request by Crockett Engineering (agent), on behalf of TKG Storage Mart Partners Portfolio, LLC (owners), seeking approval of a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) to allow a self-service storage facility over 14-feet in height, located at 3412 I-70 Drive SE. **(Case #31-2024)**

This request was tabled at the December 21, 2023 and January 18, 2024 Planning Commission meetings to permit revisions to the request in regards to the Design Standards and Guidelines of Section 29-4.6(c) and the Use-specific Standards of Section 29-3.3(w) of the UDC.

DISCUSSION

The applicant is seeking approval of a conditional use permit (CUP) to allow a self-service storage facility to exceed 14-feet in height, pursuant to the provisions of Section 29-3.3(w) (Use-Specific Standards) of the UDC. In addition to complying with the requirements of Section 29-3.3(w) any development upon the site will be subject to the provisions of Section 29-4.6(c) (Design Guidelines and Standards). The site is currently improved with an existing storage facility located south of I-70 Drive SE. The attached site plan shows one additional building being constructed on the site, expanding the existing storage facility into an under-utilized area of the subject property. The proposed structure is intended to be 3-stories in height.

Use-specific Standards [Sec. 29-3.3(w)]

The subject property is zoned M-C (Mixed-Use Corridor). This classification allows self-service storage facilities provided the use complies with the use-specific standards of Section 29-3.3(w), which are intended to limit potential negative impacts of storage facilities on adjacent properties; especially those residentially zoned. These provisions generally restrict certain operational characteristics of such facilities by prohibiting storage of hazardous materials, retail sales, and the service or repair of vehicles, appliances and equipment. Furthermore, the use-specific standards limit building height to 14-feet unless separate dimensional and appearance standards are met which include, among other standards, a minimum 100' setback from any residential zone or use, restrictions on construction materials and colors, and additional screening and street tree standards.

Section 29-3.3(w)(2) requires approval of a conditional use permit for any storage building located in the M-C district that is proposed to be over 14-feet in height. The section details the procedural steps for approval of the CUP and permits the Commission to consider contextual uses and building forms when evaluating the request. This section also authorizes the Commission to impose any additional conditions or restrictions that would assure compatibility. The general design criteria provided in Section 29-3.3(w)(1)(vi) may be used as a baseline regardless of building height, or waived if the applicant shows special circumstances unique to the property.

The applicants revised submission indicates general compliance with these criteria, with the exception of 29-3.3(w)(vi)(B). This provision states that, "The exterior of the building shall be constructed entirely of brick, stone, precast concrete panels that include a masonry façade or other architectural elements, such as split face block or other similar high-quality materials. Prefabricated metal panels and smooth-faced concrete block shall be prohibited." The applicants note in their revised request letter that the existing structures on their property are primarily one-story, pre-engineered metal buildings. The office functions of the storage facility are located near the I-70 Drive frontage on the northern property boundary, within a multi-story, metal-skinned building with EIFS accents. The applicants contend that the proposed structure will have limited visibility from any nearby roadways, except at the northwest corner of

the proposed building. As such, the applicants have included a full masonry façade in this location and indicate landscaping will be provided in this location as well to screen the building from the nearby right-of-way. The intended level of transparency of this screening was not specified on the site plan.

Pursuant to the use-specific standards of Section 29-3.3(w), a request to authorize construction of a self-service storage facility greater than 14-feet in height must be evaluated by the Planning and Zoning Commission subject to the following six criteria identified in Section 29-6.4(m)(2) of the UDC. Following a recommendation by the Commission, the City Council may approve the CUP with any conditions deemed necessary to carry out the provisions and intent of the UDC. Below is staff's summary of the application's compliance with the six CUP criteria:

1. The proposed conditional use complies with all standards and provisions in this chapter applicable to the base and overlay zone district where the property is located.

The proposed storage facility is a permitted use in the M-C district. The submitted site plan illustrates compliance with the dimensional requirements for the district as it relates to structure placement. The proposed building is adjacent to an existing communications tower on the subject site and is heavily screened from the parking lot to the south by vegetation. Architectural compliance with the provisions of the UDC and any additional conditions set by the Planning Commission will be reviewed prior to the issuance of a building permit for site improvements as is standard city practice.

2. The proposed conditional use is consistent with the city's adopted comprehensive plan.

The subject site is identified as being located within a Commercial District per the Columbia Imagined Future Land Use Plan. The Commercial District is intended for a variety of local and regional retail and personal services uses, as well as offices, businesses, and high-density residential. The subject parcel is surrounded on all sides by commercial or office uses ranging from a hotel and a grocery store to a number of medical offices. The property does not lie within 100 feet of any residential property. While self-storage facilities are categorized within the 'personal services' land use category in the UDC, such uses are typically considered more intrusive and industrial in nature. However; they are an acceptable use within the Commercial District when negative impacts can be mitigated. The UDC's use-specific and general design standards and guidelines were developed to address their possible negative impacts and the CUP process was created to allow review of site-specific conditions affording an applicant/property owner the opportunity to seek greater height.

Staff believes, the proposed expansion of the facility affords the opportunity to increase the level of service provided on-site while remaining consistent with the surrounding land use environment and general objectives of the Comprehensive Plan.

3. The proposed conditional use will be in conformance with the character of the adjacent area, within the same zoning district, in which it is located. In making such a determination, consideration may be given to the location, type and height of buildings or structures, and the type and extent of landscaping and screening on the site.

The proposed 3-story building is generally consistent with other nearby structures, which range from 1 to 3 stories, with the Motel 6 and Burrell Health buildings being 3 stories each. These two reference properties lie immediately to the north and south of the proposed storage building. The proposed building will also be screened from other properties and nearby roadways by existing nearby structures, landscaping, and existing vegetation.

4. Adequate access is provided and is designed to prevent traffic hazards and minimize traffic congestion.

Access is provided from the I-70 Drive SE frontage, and expansion of the existing self-service storage facility will generate relatively little additional traffic. I-70 Drive SE is classified as a major collector roadway by the CATSO Major Roadway Plan; therefore, it is designed to serve significantly higher levels of traffic than would be expected for storage facilities. Also, recent roadway improvements, such as the traffic circle at Keene Street and I-70 Drive SE, have improved the level of service to the contextual traffic network.

5. Sufficient infrastructure and services exist to support the proposed use, including, but not limited to, adequate utilities, storm drainage, water, sanitary sewer, electricity, and other infrastructure facilities are provided.

The site is served by all City utilities and the request was reviewed by various utility staff. There were no concerns expressed with the proposed use or approval of the conditional use permit. The proposed use will have very little demand for utilities.

6. The proposed variance will not cause significant adverse impacts to surrounding properties.

No significant impacts are anticipated.

Design Standards & Guidelines [Sec. 29-4.6(c)]

As noted above, construction of the proposed facility would also be subject to the UDC's general design standards and guidelines articulated in Section 29-4.6(c). These standards were created to address "bulk" and "appearance" matters of new construction within any zoning district subject to several minor exceptions. It should be noted that granting of relief from the provisions of Section 29-4.6(c) is a matter outside the purview of the Planning Commission. If relief is to be sought, it would require approval of a "variance" by the Board of Adjustment.

Prior to initial consideration of this request by the Planning Commission the applicants had not indicated they were seeking relief from either the use-specific standards of 29-3.3(w) or the design guidelines of 29-4.6(c). Upon review of the proposed site plan and architectural elevations, staff noted a number of deficiencies in regards to the provisions of Section 29-4.6(c). Staff shared concerns with the applicants in regards to subsections (1) through (4), which address entries, transparency, wall plane articulation, and roof shape, respectively.

The applicants have submitted revised site plans and elevations that show general compliance with 29-4.6(c). Subsection (1) requires that all principal buildings have one or more operating entry doors facing and visible from the adjacent public street. Subsection (2) requires a minimum of 20% transparency of each façade facing a public street. These provisions are typically addressed during staff review of architectural plans during the building permitting process.

After preliminary review of the proposed building design and location, staff has determined that while the proposed building would be considered a "principal" structure on the site its location is secluded from its adjacent public roadway and is visually screened from that roadway's frontage. As such, compliance with subsection 1 of sec. 29-4.6(c) appears to have limited value and is not believed necessary. In regards to transparency, sec. 29-4.6(2)(iii) permits the Director the authority to waive this requirement if it is determined, "...that transparent materials are not practical for security reasons or based on the nature of the permitted ground floor use," provided that an alternative treatment is provided to reach a similar visual interest. In light of this provision and after evaluating other recent self-storage applications, this waiver has been granted due to potential security risks and negative aesthetics associated with windowed storage units.

RECOMMENDATION

Approve the requested conditional use permit for the construction of a self-service storage facility greater than 14-feet in height on the property addressed 3412 I-70 Drive SE.

ATTACHMENTS

- Locator maps
- Preliminary site plan
- Preliminary architectural elevations
- Section 29-3.3(w) - Use-specific Standards
- Section 29-6.4(c) – Design Standards and Guidelines

HISTORY

Annexation date	1964
Zoning District	M-C (Mixed-Use Corridor District)
Land Use Plan designation	Commercial District
Previous Subdivision/Legal Lot Status	Lot 1AB, Zwonitzer Subdivision, Plat No. 2

SITE CHARACTERISTICS

Area (acres)	4.62 acres
Topography	Generally flat
Vegetation/Landscaping	Existing storage facility outdoor parking area, gravel
Watershed/Drainage	Perche Creek
Existing structures	Storage buildings, communications tower

UTILITIES & SERVICES

All utilities and services provided by the City of Columbia

ACCESS

I-70 Drive SE	
Location	Along northern edge of property
Major Roadway Plan	Major Collector
CIP projects	N/A
Sidewalk	Required

PARKS & RECREATION

Neighborhood Parks	N/A
Trails Plan	N/A
Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan	N/A

PUBLIC NOTIFICATION

All property owners within 200 feet and City-recognized neighborhood associations within 1,000 feet of the boundaries of the subject property were notified via an advanced notification postcard which was mailed on November 16, 2023. Property owner letters were also sent to the same 15 property owners, and an ad was placed in the Tribune on December 5, 2023. After the tabling the case was re-advertised on February 20, 2024.

Public Notification Responses	N/A
Notified neighborhood association(s)	N/A
Correspondence received	N/A

Report prepared by Rusty Palmer

Approved by Patrick Zenner