

TOWN OF VIENNA

MEMORANDUM

TO: Town Council

FROM: Patrick J. Mulhern, AICP, Director of Planning & Zoning

DATE: May 9, 2016

SUBJECT: Staff Report for the Public Hearing of May 9, 2016
Flagship Carwash Center Rezoning, Site Plan

ITEM NO. 2:

Introductory Comments / Characteristics of the Existing Property/ The Current Proposal:

This staff report describes a proposed rezoning and site plan for Flagship Carwash, a 1.19 acre parcel located at 540 Maple Avenue West, in the C-1 Local Commercial, C-2 General Commercial and RS-16 Single Family Detached Residential zones. (Requested zoning is MAC Maple Avenue Commercial). Application filed by Sarah E. Hall of Blankingship & Keith, P.C. on behalf of Vienna Car Wash LLC, owner.

The approximately 1.19 acre property is located at the western end of Maple Avenue within the Town. The site is presently developed as an open-air carwash. An access drive is located along the front of the property. An office building (with beauty school) is located immediately to the east, and a McDonald's restaurant with drive-through is located to the west. The "Townes of Vienna IV" townhome development is located to the south of the carwash and is separated by a solid masonry wall. A gas and automobile service station is located immediately across Maple Avenue. Staff notes that the subject property was boundary-adjusted into the Town in 1993 with proffers. The 1993 proffers have no implication on this rezoning proposal.

The applicant seeks to redevelop the property as a two-story commercial use development. The ground floor will include a Chick-fil-A restaurant with drive-through, and an enclosed carwash on the second floor. A conditional use permit has been approved for both drive-through uses, and the rezoning request is being considered concurrently with the site plan. The property will be accessed from the existing service drive to the west, or directly from Maple Avenue. The two drive-through components of the proposal operate independently, however one entrance/exit is shared by both facilities. The restaurant includes one dedicated exit. Parking is located within the building on three levels, with one level being located underground.

Staff Review and Comments:

Town staff held several formal plan reviews and has met with the applicant regarding the proposal multiple times and most major comments have been addressed, including elimination of front driveway. The Board of Architectural Review and Planning Commission have also held work sessions to review the proposed building design and site plan. In general, they indicated the building massing and architectural elements were consistent with the design standards set forth in the MAC ordinance.

Planning & Zoning Staff Report to the Town Council
Public Hearing of May 9, 2016
Page 2 of 4

MAC Analysis:

The Vision

1. Compact, pedestrian-oriented and human-scaled development- *No but much improved*
2. Mixed-use and destination retail-style development- *No but an improvement over the existing use*
3. Promote a wider variety of housing options in Town- *No*
4. Enhance Town's economic vitality- *Yes*
5. Maintain and promote eclectic character and visual interest of building design and site configuration- *Yes*
6. High quality and compatible development with adjacent neighborhoods- *Yes*
7. Improve environmental quality- *Yes*

1. Compact, pedestrian-oriented and human-scaled development- *No but much improved*

The MAC promotes multiple stories and this proposal has only two stories and does not utilize the development potential allowed in the MAC. Additionally, both proposed uses have a drive-through component and are primarily auto oriented. Initially, a one-way driveway across the front of the property was proposed to serve the drive-through customers and loading. As of April 14, 2016, the applicant revised the design to eliminate the left turn from the drive-through, although the loading function for early morning deliveries is still remaining. Therefore, the front area of the restaurant can be fully utilized by customers and pedestrians during the day and evening. This represents a major improvement in meeting the pedestrian friendly goals of the MAC.

The applicant has also proffered to improve the nearby crosswalk across Maple Avenue by installing a HAWK signal to safely guide anticipated high school and other pedestrian traffic from James Madison Drive to the subject property.

2. Mixed-use and destination retail-style development- *No but an improvement over the existing use*

The applicant states that site constraints and a lack of a market demand for residential or office units above a car wash make a true mixed-use multi-story project impractical. Although it is not a mixed-use building, they are doubling the commercial area and enclosing a loud, somewhat unattractive, outdoor commercial use. In addition, the proposed building is closer to the street than the existing building and an outdoor dining area is proposed, which will help create a livelier, pedestrian-friendly street presence and streetscape.

3. Promote a wider variety of housing options in Town- *No*

There is no housing component in this proposal; therefore the proposal is not contributing to this goal.

4. Enhance Town's economic vitality- *Yes*

The proposed design is an enclosed car wash, which is unique and creative as a car wash space. The property owner is a dedicated car wash business owner who would like to continue his business in the Town of Vienna. While he would like to continue his business in the Town, he is proposing the best car wash design as fully enclosed with first floor retail to activate the street.

5. Maintain and promote eclectic character and visual interest of building design and site configuration- *Yes*

The proposed building will present a more welcoming and attractive gateway to the Town than the current use for those arriving from the southwest. The building will be close to Maple Avenue and not separated from it by any surface parking, but rather will include a plaza-like streetscape. The applicant will underground all existing overhead utilities along the property's Maple Avenue frontage. All parking will be within the building—underground, first floor and second floor. Both the parking and the stacking spaces will be enclosed inside the building.

6. High quality and compatible development with adjacent neighborhoods- *Yes*

The redevelopment will protect the owners of the residential townhouses to the rear of the property by completely enclosing both uses and including an effective landscape buffer.

7. Improve environmental quality- *Yes*

There will be less impervious surface than currently exists on the property with improved landscaping, and a green roof component. Unlike the existing car wash, the new car wash will conserve water to the maximum extent possible with current technology and will achieve up to a 50% reduction in electricity consumption. The development will replace an open air car wash which, with its inevitable noise, light and industrial feel, could remain on the property ad infinitum. The redevelopment will include a car wash which will improve the environmental and visual quality.

Other Items:

1. Fence/Wall Height Modification

Per the following zoning code, Section 18-95.18 and 18-17, only a six foot high fence or wall is permitted. To permit an eight foot high fence or eight foot high wall, as shown on the site plan, the applicant submitted a request for a modification of the requirement. This only requires staff level approval and staff approves this request for modification.

Sec. 18-17. – Fences (MAC fence Section 18-95.18 refers fence regulation in RS-16)

- (a) Any fence from the rear lot line to and including the front line of the building shall be no more than six feet high, except that on a corner lot the fence along the side yard fronting on a street shall be not more than four feet high, and the fence along the rear line, from the front of the adjacent house to its street line shall not exceed four feet in height. Any fence located between the front of the house and the front property line shall be not more than four feet high.

2. Conditional Use Permit for drive-through

On April 20, 2016, the Board of Zoning Appeals approved a Conditional Use Permit allowing two drive-through lanes, contingent upon the rezoning and site plan approvals from the Town Council. The applicant also received a variance from Town Code Section 18-235 which voids a use permit after six months if operation has not commenced. (see below Sec. 18-216) Instead, the applicant was given two years to commence operation.

Sec. 18-216. - Permit void after six months if operation not commenced.

Any use permit shall become void six months after issuance if construction or operation related thereto has not commenced.

3. Parking Spaces Modification

Per the following zoning code, Section 18-128, the required parking space dimension is nine feet wide by twenty feet and the proposed space dimension is nine feet wide by eighteen feet. Therefore, the applicant requested a modification of the requirement. This only requires staff level approval and staff approves this request for modification.

Sec. 18-128. - Area required for one parking space.

For purposes of computation under this chapter, one automobile parking space shall be nine feet wide by 20 feet long, exclusive of adequate interior ingress and egress driveways.

4. Intersection Improvement

The James Madison and Maple Avenue intersection improvement is proffered and upon the approval of the rezoning and site plan, this item will continue through a public improvement process

Required Board Approvals:

Section 18-95.3 describes the process by which existing properties may rezone to the MAC district. Designations may only be approved as a rezoning in accordance with Article 24 of Chapter 18, Zoning. The rezoning application must be accompanied by a site plan prepared per the standards set forth in Article 25, and must include building elevations. The Board of Architectural Review (BAR) shall then review the proposal and make a recommendation regarding its compliance with the requirements of Article 13.1. This recommendation will then accompany the application through the rezoning process, per the requirements of Article 24. Following approval of a rezoning by the Town Council, the proposed development shall still be subject to site plan approval per Article 25.

So far, the project has been reviewed by both the Planning Commission and the Board of Architectural Review and both are recommending approval to Town Council.

Staff Recommendation:

On balance staff believes that the project is a significant improvement to the site and meets the majority of MAC criteria. Staff recommends approval of the rezoning and site plan to Town Council.