



ITEM 6: 201905010022 – Grove City Self-Storage Phase II (Special Use Permit – Self-Storage)

Site Location

5965 Haughn Road (Parcel 040-010230)

Proposal

A Special Use Permit for the expansion of a self-storage facility

Zoning

C-2 (Retail Commercial)

Future Land Use

Tech Flex

Property Owner

Grove City Self Storage, LLC

Applicant/Representative

Robert Beiter, Crossing Waters Engineering, Inc.

Applicable Plans, Policies, and Code Section(s)

- Zoning Code Section 1135.09(b)(12)
- GroveCity2050 Community Plan Future Land Use and Character Map

Staff Recommendation

Approval with two stipulations

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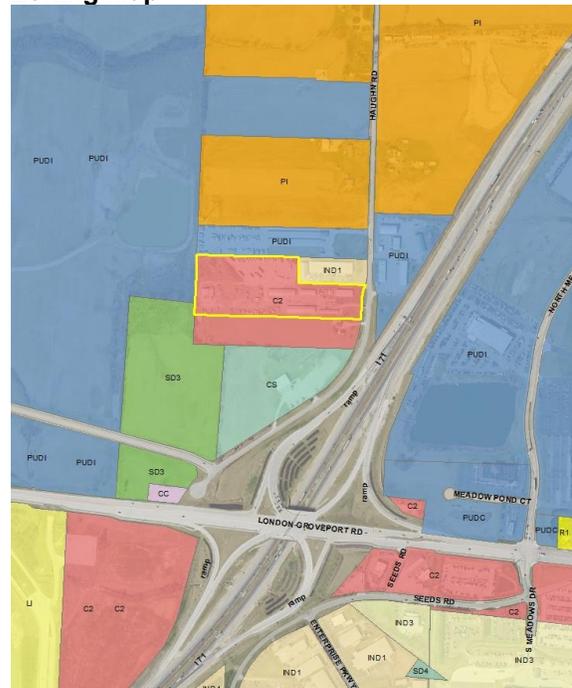
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Summary

The applicant is requesting approval of a Special Use Permit to expand an existing self-storage business. This business began operation when the property was in Jackson Township and was annexed in Grove City without a Special Use Permit.

Zoning Map



Next Steps

Upon recommendation from Planning Commission, the Special Use Permit will move forward to City Council. If City Council approves the application, the special use goes into effect 30 days after Council approval. If the Special Use Permit is approved, the applicant is planning on submitting a development plan for the proposed expansion.

1. Context Map

This property is located at 5965 Haughn Road, approximately 1,300 feet north of London-Groveport Road (040-010230).



201905010022
Grove City Self-Storage - SUP
5965 Haughn Road

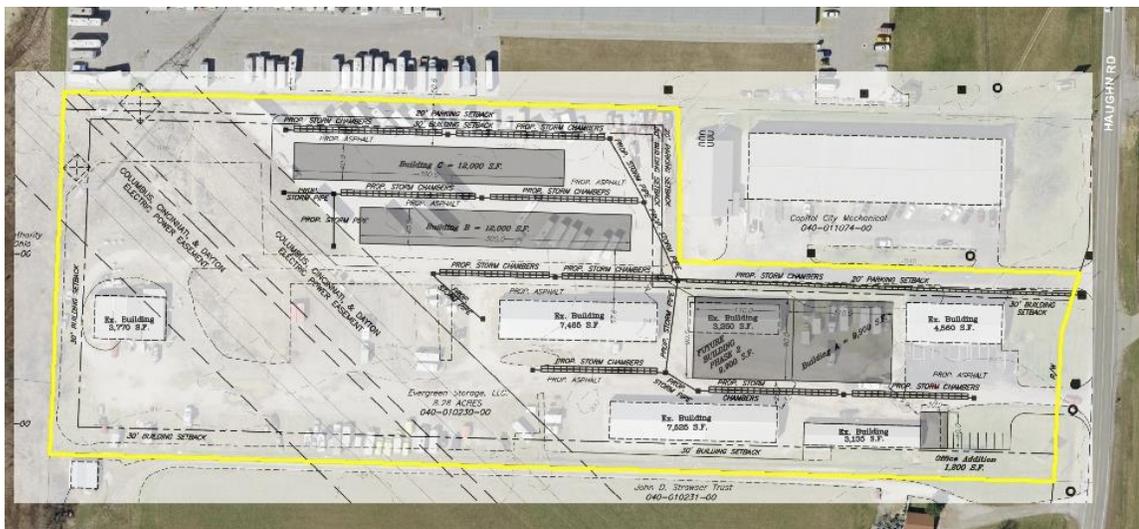
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2. Analysis

The applicant is requesting approval of a special use permit to expand the existing self-storage facility at 5965 Haughn Road. This site previously operated as Evergreen Self-Storage and is currently under new ownership. The first storage building on the site was developed in 1982 and the remaining buildings were constructed between 1985 and 1997 while the property was located in Jackson Township. When the property was annexed in 1999, it was brought into the city with C-2 zoning (Retail Commercial), the most compatible district to the site's Jackson Township zoning. Self-storage uses can be conditionally permitted in the C-2 district with the approval of a special use permit, but a special use permit was never obtained after the site was annexed. The current self-storage use is non-conforming and is permitted to continue as is; however, an expansion of this area requires the approval of a special use permit.

The expansion of the site will primarily be used to provide additional indoor and outdoor storage options. A preliminary plan was provided to show the potential expansions for the site. This plan includes three new buildings and a new office, as well as an expansion of the parking area for vehicles, most of which is proposed to be paved. It should be noted that this plan is not approved as part of the special use permit and any new buildings and/or parking and storage areas on the site will require the approval of a development plan.



In addition to constructing new buildings, the applicant is planning on improving the overall site. The site currently has four storage buildings and an office in the front, with a fifth building located to the rear. This building currently houses a used appliance business with appliances stored outside. The applicant is planning on removing this business on the site and ensuring that all outdoor items be stored in the units. No customer is permitted to operate a business out of a self-storage unit, however, the applicant has indicated that some commercial tenants may be permitted to remain on the site at the front. These businesses will need to be permitted as per the C-2 district requirements or receive approval of a special use permit, if applicable, to operate on the site. The outdoor storage of vehicles on the site is currently located to the rear of the buildings, and the applicant is proposing to continue doing so to minimize the visibility of these vehicles from the street, as well as utilizing landscaping. Furthermore, the electric fencing which is located at the site's front will be removed and replaced with black wrought iron fencing.

Staff is supportive of the proposed expansion as it is in character with existing developments in the surrounding area including another self-storage facility, Capital City Mechanical and the ODOT storage facility to the east, as well as a C-2 zoned site to the south (currently used as residential but could be redeveloped as a commercial use). The new property owner will be

working to make improvements on the site that will bring it further into compliance, including paving the site and landscaping. Lastly, the site is currently being used as a self-storage facility and the overall use of the site will not be changing. GroveCity2050's Land Use Objective LU2 states that priority needs to be placed on developing underutilized land ahead of undeveloped land on the city's edge. The expansion of this site will provide additional storage space on an existing site, in lieu of developing on a new site.

Materials indicate that a U-Haul business is also proposed on the site. This business will require the approval of a separate special use permit for outdoor sales and display, and the review of this use is not included as part of this special use permit.

Current Conditions



3. Special Use Permit Analysis

Per Section 1135.09, Planning Commission is responsible for reviewing Special Use Permit requests and recommending approval, approval with modifications or denial to City Council based on findings of compliance with the standards and requirements of this Code (*see relevant code sections*) and subject to the conditions established by the Planning Commission to ensure compliance with the letter and intent of this Code. The following is the Development Department's evaluation based on code standards and requirements.

1. **The proposed use shall be in harmony with the existing or intended character of the district and nearby affected districts and shall not change the essential character of the districts;**

Standard Can Be Met: The site has been used as a self-storage facility since the 1980s and is located adjacent to another self-storage facility located to the north. Given the site's proximity to land identified in GroveCity2050 for new development capitalizing on the proximity to Mount Carmel, outstanding issues including the operation of businesses which have an outdoor storage component, scrap items that have been left outdoors and much of the vehicle parking area being located on gravel will need to be addressed to ensure a quality development in harmony with the intended character for this part of the city. The applicant has indicated that all of these items will be improved with any loose materials being discarded or placed inside of units, as well as much of the site being proposed to be paved, placing it closer to compliance with Grove City Code requirements.

2. **The proposed use shall not adversely affect the use of adjacent property;**

Standard Can Be Met: Staff is supportive of the expansion of the self-storage use, as the business is located adjacent to another existing self-storage business and other properties utilizing industrial uses, including an ODOT storage facility and Capital City Mechanical to the east. A single-family home is located to the south, but the site is zoned as C-2 and could be developed into a commercial use. The applicant has indicated that improvements will occur on the site including the paving of much of the storage space, removal of the existing electric fence and removal of tenants who are operating other businesses on site (with the exception of the front commercial tenants). Additionally, the site contains the access drive for Capital City Mechanical, which is proposed to remain as shown on the preliminary plan for the expansion.

3. **The proposed use shall not adversely affect the health, safety, morals or welfare of persons residing or working in the neighborhood;**

Standard is Met: The proposed expansion will be a continuation of the storage uses currently used on the site. The adjacent properties are used as self-storage to the north, residential but zoned C-2 to the south, Capital City Mechanical, a facility for ODOT and a borrow pit to the east, and SWACO's site to the west that is currently zoned IND-1. The self-storage use is not out of character or more intense of a use than the surrounding properties. Further review of the design of the site will occur during the final development plan phase.

4. **The proposed use shall be served adequately by public facilities and services such as, but not limited to, roads, police and fire protection, storm water facilities, water, sanitary sewer and school;**

Standard is Met: The proposed use will be adequately serviced by public facilities. Further examination of the site's utilities will be conducted with the final development plan.

5. **The proposed use shall not impose a traffic impact upon the public right-of-way significantly different from that anticipated from permitted uses of the district;**

Standard is Met: The project's narrative indicates that there are 10 to 15 customers anticipated on the site daily, not impacting the traffic along Haughn Road or other area roadways.

6. **The proposed use shall be in accord with the general and specific objectives, and the purpose and intent of this Zoning Code and the Land Use Plan and any other plans and ordinances of the City;**

Standard is Met: The applicant has provided information to meet Code requirements for this use to be located in the city, and staff believes the proposed use meets the intent of the Zoning Code and Land Use Plan for the area, providing that quality development practices are utilized

including landscaping and enhanced architecture that meets the expectations for high quality development.

7. **The proposed use complies with the applicable specific provisions and standards of this Code;**

Standard Can Be Met: There are some issues on the property including the electric fence, expansive gravel used throughout the site and commercial businesses storing goods outdoors; however, the new property owner for the site has indicated that the self-storage facility will comply with applicable special use permit provisions and will work to bring the site more into compliance with Grove City Code.

8. **The proposed use shall be found to meet the definition and intent of a use specifically listed as a special use in the district in which it is proposed to be located;**

Standard is Met: The site is located in the C-2 district, in which self-storage facilities are permitted with a Special Use Permit.

9. **A completed application indicating the Specific Special Use permit activity intended by the applicant shall be submitted to the Department of Development by the Council approved submittal dates;**

Standard is Met: The applicant properly submitted a completed application.

10. **All storage shall be within an enclosed building unless the nature and location of outdoor storage has been specifically approved by Council in conformance with the supplementary regulations for outdoor sales, storage, or display;**

Standard Can Be Met: The site has outdoor and indoor storage. This area is currently located behind the buildings but will need to be relocated to accommodate the new buildings for indoor storage. Staff is supportive of the relocation of the outdoor storage for vehicles, if this area continues to be located to the rear of the buildings and has screening from adjacent properties through the buildings and landscaping. This will be further reviewed during the final development plan phase, as well as on a separate special use permit for the U-Haul business.

11. **Loading and unloading areas shall be paved and shall be located only as approved by Council;**

Standard Can Be Met: Much of the current site is located on gravel. The provided preliminary plan shows that much of the drive aisles and parking areas will be paved as part of the proposed improvements. Graveling of areas has been permitted with the approval of a variance in some cases, including Concord Fabricators on Seeds Road or in areas not visible from a major roadway or nearby development. Staff could be supportive of a variance for any gravel areas on the site if proper screening is provided.

12. **A minimum of five parking spaces shall be provided near the leasing office. Sufficient space shall be provided in the paved lanes serving the storage units to accommodate on-site movement of vehicles and the parking and loading/unloading of the trucks, vans, trailers, and automobiles of persons using the units;**

Standard is Met: At least nine paved parking spaces are provided at the entrance to the site and adjacent to the leasing office.

13. **An on-site leasing office shall be provided;**

Standard is Met: The site currently has a leasing office; however, and a new one is proposed as part of the expansion of the business and will be further reviewed as part of the final development plan process.

14. **Fencing of the perimeter shall be provided as determined by the Planning Commission in a manner which promotes security and presents an appropriate appearance to abutting properties;**

Standard Can Be Met: The site currently is secured with fencing, including an electric fence. The applicant has indicated that this electric fencing will be removed and replaced with black, wrought iron fencing and portions of the chain-link fencing will be replaced. Landscaping is also proposed to provide additional screening. Further review of screening and security will occur with the final development plan.

15. **Storage facilities shall maintain not less than the minimum building, fire, health and safety standards of the State of Ohio and the City and the regulations applicable to such facilities. The facility shall provide an approved emergency alert system with a dedicated telephone line monitored by an independent agency. No storage facility shall be occupied until a certificate of occupancy has been issued by the City. The facility shall be subject to inspection as provided by Section 1511.09 of the Codified Ordinances;**

Standard Can Be Met: As part of the final development plan process, the Building Division, Police Department and Jackson Township Fire Department will review the plans to ensure that all standards have been complied with.

16. **Door openings facing residential areas shall not be permitted unless approved by the Council;**

Standard Can Be Met: Plans for the proposed buildings have not yet been provided and will be reviewed as part of the Final Development Plan to ensure compliance. Additionally, the only adjacent residential site is located to the south, and the property is zoned as C-2, meaning that no residentially zoned areas are adjacent to the site.

17. **Activities on the site shall be limited to the storage of property only. Other activities, such as the operation of tools, rummage sales, temporary residency, shall be prohibited;**

Standard Can Be Met: A number of commercial uses are occurring on the property including a used appliance business. The applicant has indicated that this use will be removed and the only other commercial uses on the site, besides the storage use, will be located in the front. Staff is supportive of additional commercial uses, if they meet the C-2 standards of Grove City Code, including permitted uses, landscaping, parking, etc., or have obtained a special use permit, if needed.

18. **Hours of operation shall only be as approved by the Council, after consideration of the impact of the proposed use upon the character, safety, and tranquility of the neighborhood.**

Standard is Met: The project's narrative indicates that the office on the site will be open from 9:00 am until 6:00 pm on Mondays through Saturdays. Other hours of operation were not indicated; however, the surrounding area contains other self-storage, commercial or industrial uses, with the exception of a residential property located to the south which is on a property zoned as C-2.

4. GroveCity2050 Guiding Principles Analysis

The City of Grove City adopted the GroveCity2050 Community Plan in January 2018 which contains specific goals, objectives and actions to guide growth in the community. Five (5) guiding principles are identified that articulate Grove City's community values and direct the recommendations in the Plan. Applications submitted to Planning Commission are reviewed based on these 5 Guiding Principles:

- (1) **The City's small town character is preserved while continuing to bring additional employment opportunities, residents and amenities to the community.**

Finding Can Be Met: The proposed buildings will be required to utilize enhanced architectural standards, and the site will be required to utilize landscaping for screening of any outdoor storage areas. These will be further reviewed with the final development plan.

- (2) **Quality design is emphasized for all uses to create an attractive and distinctive public and private realm.**

Finding Can Be Met: The applicant has indicated that improvements such as removing the electric fencing and replacing it with black, wrought iron fencing and proposing to pave much of the vehicular areas, will occur on the site. Further details regarding these items and the buildings will be reviewed as part of the final development plan. Due to this site being adjacent to Haughn Road and SWACO's land on the north side of London-Groveport Road, which may be a large development project in the future, any architecture visible from these areas will need to be enhanced and the site be screened with landscaping.

- (3) **Places will be connected to improve the function of the street network and create safe opportunities to walk, bike and access public transportation throughout the community.**

Not Applicable: The site is located off of the southernmost portion of Haughn Road away from the City's public transit lines and does not contain sidewalks. This area is also not included for future bikeways as per the GroveCity2050 Transportation Improvements Map. Additionally, staff is supportive of not installing sidewalks along the Haughn Road right-of-way, as the character of the area currently is more rural in nature and is fairly disconnected from the larger development that may occur further to the west and north, not necessarily warranting improvements to the pedestrian network at this time.

- (4) **Future development that will preserve, protect and enhance the City's natural and built character through sustainable practices, prioritizing parks and open space and emphasizing historic preservation.**

Not Applicable: The project narrative indicates that improvements will be made on the site including paving, decorative fencing, and landscaping. Staff is supportive of these changes and will further review them and the building architecture during the final development plan process. However, due to the nature of self-storage sites, typically parks and open space are not included as part of the design for the site, as the site is not meant to be a space to recreate. As part of the expansion, the site will be required to provide some greenspace and utilize current stormwater management practices to ensure that water quality and stormwater is effectively managed on the site.

- (5) **Development provides the City with a net fiscal benefit.**

Finding is Not Met: Although self-storage facilities are needed, they do not provide many employment opportunities or an overall fiscal benefit to the City. GroveCity2050's Future Land Use and Character Map recommends this site be used for Tech Flex, which has recommended uses including research and development, light industrial, and office space, which provide

considerably more employment opportunities and typically provide higher wages. However, given that the use is existing on the site and the site will likely be effectively disconnected from the larger redevelopment of the area, staff is supportive of the request to expand the existing use on the property.

5. Recommendation

After review and consideration, the Development Department recommends Planning Commission make a recommendation of approval to City Council for the special use permit with the following stipulations.

1. A separate special use permit for outdoor sales and display shall be obtained prior to the operation of any vehicle or trailer rental business, including U-Haul.
2. All outdoor storage on the site shall be located to the rear of the buildings and shall be screened with landscaping as to not be visible from roadways.

6. Detailed History

1952

The Columbus and Southern Ohio Electric Company easement was approved on the site to place overhead electrical lines through it. This easement restricts any structure under it to be no taller than 10 feet in height.

1982 through 1997

The site's current buildings and configuration were constructed and the self-storage use on the site began.

1999

The property is annexed into Grove City as part of the Gateway Business Park with Ordinance C-61-99. It was zoned, upon annexation, to C-2 to most closely match the CS zoning (Community Service) it held in Jackson Township with Ordinance C-9-99.

A sanitary easement was approved on the site, going under the existing overhead electrical lines, further restricting development in this area.

2019

The owner for Evergreen Self-Storage sold the property to Grove City Self Storage, LLC. The new owner began work to improve the site.