



ITEM 3: 202006030028 – Mutts & Co (Special Use Permit – Drive-Thru)

Site Location

4170 McDowell Road (Parcels 040-005547)

Proposal

A Special Use Permit for a Drive-Thru

Zoning

C-2 (Retail Commercial)

Future Land Use

Commercial Center

Property Owner

JJR Enterprises LLC

Applicant/Representative

Mark Vitt, Mutts & Co.

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 as Submitted

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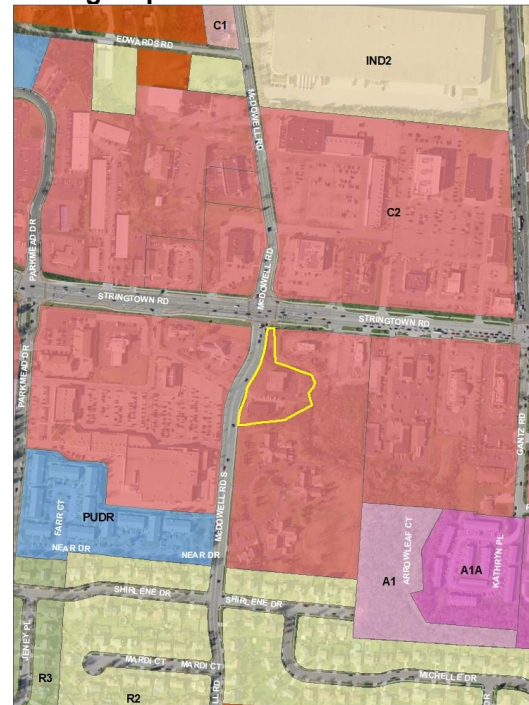
Case Manager

Kendra Spergel, Development Planner
614-277-3019
kspergel@grovecityohio.gov

Summary

The applicant is requesting approval of a Special Use Permit for a drive-thru as part of the retail pet supply business.

Zoning Map

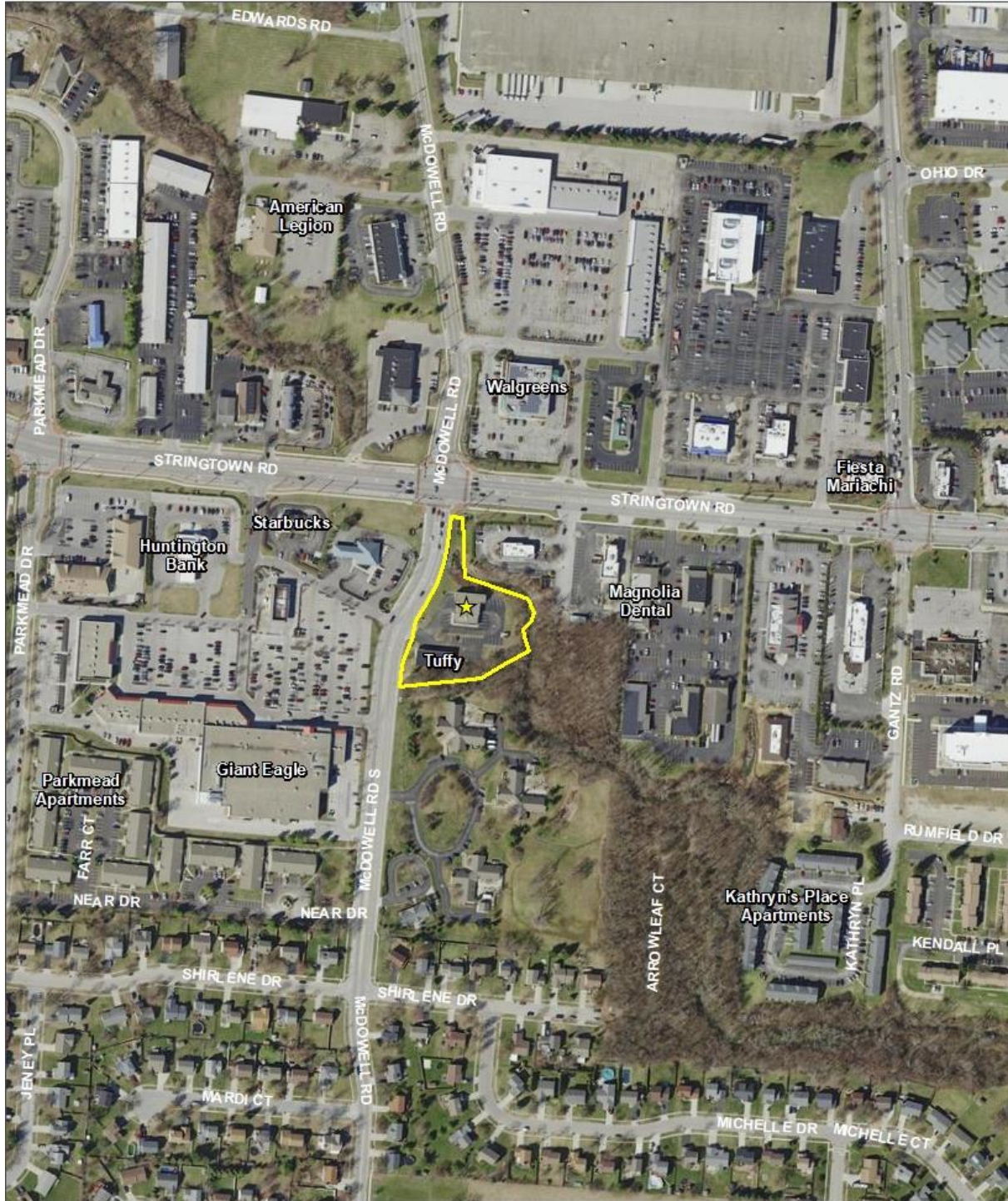


Next Steps

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.

1. Context Map

The property is located at 4170 McDowell Road, in the southeast corner of Stringtown and McDowell Roads (040-005547).



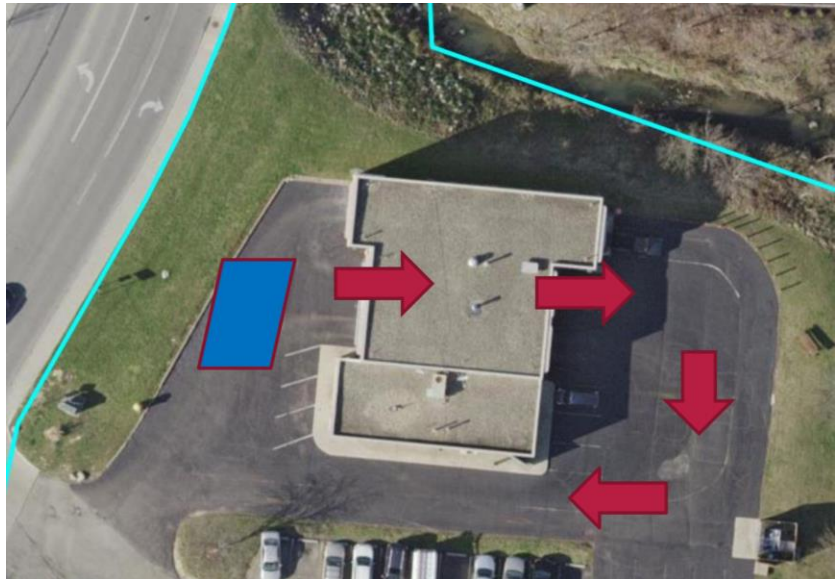
202006030028
Mutts & Co - Special Use Permit Drive-Thru
4170 McDowell Road



2. Analysis

The applicant is requesting approval of a Special Use Permit for a drive-thru located at 4170 McDowell Road. The applicant is proposing to open a Mutts & Co. business on the site, which is the previous Buckeye Beverage Bay building. The Buckeye Beverage Bay received approval of a Special Use Permit in 2011 for a drive-thru; however, the business ceased use of the building and the use of a drive-thru expired after not being re-instated within six months of the use ending. The applicant is proposing to maintain the middle bay for the drive-thru and block off the other two for storage (northernmost bay) and as part of the retail store (southernmost bay). The proposed drive-thru will be one option for the business with an indoor retail store also proposed. A Special Use Permit for dog grooming to operate self-service dog wash stations has also been submitted and will be heard concurrently to this application.

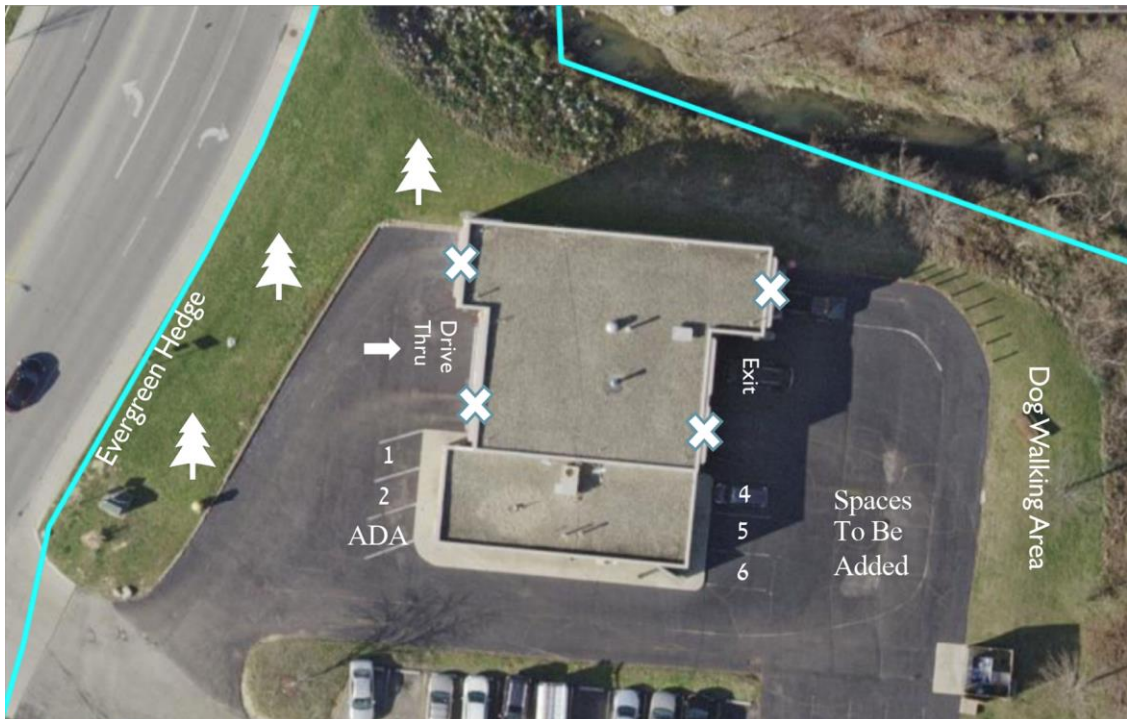
The applicant's other Mutts & Co. locations feature a pre-order curbside pick-up option, and the proposed drive-thru will be used to provide that curbside option, but in a drive-thru approach instead of on the drive next to the building. Additionally, the drive-thru is proposed to take drive-up orders as well, which is a new component to the business. It is anticipated that between eight and 12 vehicles will access the drive-thru per day



with around two vehicles, on average, per hour. Vehicles are to enter the drive-thru from the west/front side and exit on the east/rear side of the building. Plans indicate that if vehicles stack up, another two to three can fit onto the site and will only block one of the parking spaces. There are approximately 100 feet of pavement from the bay door entrance to the curb cut onto the site, which could accommodate another two vehicles if more stacking is to occur, for a total capacity of six to seven vehicles accessing the drive-thru at one time.



The applicant has indicated that numerous site improvements will be occurring including major interior renovations of the building for the retail component and dog wash, painting the building, repaving and restriping of the parking lot, including restriping of the drive-thru and adding some additional landscaping to the site's frontage with McDowell Road. The majority of the site's parking will be located on the east side of the building and will not be inhibited by vehicles stacking to use the drive-thru. Staff is supportive of the site's layout as it will allow customers to park and access the indoor portion of the business without issues with circulation on the site.



Hours of operation will be Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. until 8 p.m., Saturdays from 9 a.m. until 7 p.m., and Sundays from 10 a.m. until 6 p.m., which are the same hours as the indoor retail business.

The surrounding area mostly consists of other commercial uses including a Tuffy Tire and Auto Service Center located adjacent and to the south on the same property as the proposed dog retail business, the Derby Square Shopping Center located to the west containing Giant Eagle as an anchor, Walgreens and CVS to the north and various smaller centers to the east containing a mix of office and commercial uses. The nearest residential use is located approximately 200 feet to the south with the existing Tuffy in between. Additionally, this site has primarily been utilized as a vehicle service or drive-thru since the 1990s. The Tuffy Tire and Auto Service Center operates five different service bays on its portion of the property, and the building that is proposed for Mutts & Co was constructed to be a multi-tenant commercial space with customers having short visits to the site. These uses have included the Buckeye Beverage Bay, a car wash, coffee shop, pizza shop and others. Staff believes that the continued use of a drive-thru on the site is appropriate and in character not only with the surrounding commercial area but also with the history of uses on the property. Furthermore, the GroveCity2050 Future Land Use and Character Map recommends this site be Commercial Center which includes various commercial uses as a primary recommended use, that the proposed drive-thru will also be meeting.

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 is Met: The GroveCity2050 Future Land Use and Character Map recommends this site be used for Commercial Center as one of the properties fronting or near the Stringtown commercial corridor. The applicant is also planning on making several updates on the site including repaving and restriping the parking lot and drive-thru lane and adding landscaping to improve the aesthetics of the site.

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

Standard is Met: The building has previously had multiple businesses operating a drive-thru at one time. The proposal will include utilizing only one of the bays, creating less of an impact than previously approved drive-thru operations on the site. Additionally, the business will close by 9 p.m. at the latest, which is typical of other commercial sites.

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 applicant has indicated that between eight and 12 vehicles are anticipated to access the drive-thru per day, which is lower than other drive-thru facilities including food service and banks. Staff believes that the drive-thru component to the business will add another option for residents to purchase items for their dogs without having to interact with others and be able to maintain a safe distance.

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 that are already available on the site. The existing paved area on the site will be utilized for the drive-thru and will be repaved.

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 site can accommodate up to seven vehicles being stacked in the drive-thru before impacting the adjacent Tuffy Tire and Auto Service Center. It is possible that three spaces in the front of the site could become blocked if more than two or three vehicles are queued up in the drive-thru; however, the majority of the spaces on the site will be located to the rear of the building and will be unaffected.

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 that meets Code requirements for this use, and staff believes the proposed use meets the intent of the Zoning Code and Land Use Plan for the area. The GroveCity2050 Future Land Use and Character Map recommends this site be used for Commercial Center that includes various commercial uses.

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

Standard is Met: The proposed drive-thru will comply with applicable Special Use Permit provisions.

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 a drive-thru is 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 submitted a properly completed application.

10. **Loudspeakers shall be located and designed, with volume and hours of operation controlled, in a manner to minimize noise impacts on nearby residential uses.**

Standard is Met: Loudspeakers are not proposed as part of this request. Vehicles will drive-up to either pick-up pre-ordered items or order them once they are in the drive-thru bay within the building.

11. **Lanes required for vehicle access to and waiting for use of a drive-thru facility shall be designed to have sufficient length to accommodate the peak number of vehicles projected to use the facility at any one time, to provide escape/abort lanes for vehicles desiring to leave the stacking lanes or to avoid disabled vehicles, and to minimize impacts on the use of other required parking or drives or on the use of abutting streets and hazards to pedestrians. The applicant shall provide a traffic study which documents to the satisfaction of the Planning Commission the projected vehicular use of the proposed facilities and evidence of compliance with the provisions of this Zoning Ordinance.**

Standard is Met: There is room for vehicles to turn around in the existing drive aisles and parking spaces and exit the drive-thru in the case that a disabled vehicle becomes stuck in the lane. There are three parking spaces along the front/west side of the building that could potentially become blocked if vehicles begin to stack up; however, the majority of the site's parking spaces are in the rear and will be unaffected by the drive-thru.

12. **The Planning Commission may impose restrictions on the hours of operation in order to reduce inappropriate impacts on abutting uses and on street traffic and to ensure compatibility with normal vehicular activity in the district.**

Standard is Met: The business will be open during the day and in the evening, with the latest time being open set at 9 p.m. The hours are typical to other service and retail businesses and will not cause an additional impact on the area. Also, the building has been used previously as a

drive-thru business without causing an inappropriate impact on the area or adding much more to the nearby traffic.

13. **The applicant shall so design the site plan or otherwise provide assurances as to reduce the impacts of lighting, litter, noise, and exhaust resulting from the facility, especially impacts on nearby residential uses.**

Standard is Met: The applicant is proposing to only maintain one of the three bays on the site for the drive-thru and is proposing to have the drive-thru be a component of the larger indoor retail business. Additionally, they are anticipating around eight to 12 vehicles accessing the drive-thru per day, which is much lower than a food service or bank drive-thru.

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 is Met: The proposed business will bring an additional amenity to the community by having an option for dog owners to access multiple options including a drive-thru that offers pre-order curbside pickup and drive-up pickup, as well as an indoor store for purchasing goods for their pets.

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

Finding Can Be Met: The applicant is proposing numerous updates to the site including repaving and restriping the parking lot as well as providing some landscaping along the site's frontage which will update the entry onto the property.

- (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.**

Finding Not Applicable: The proposed drive-thru will not impact the street network or further connectivity in the City; however, an existing sidewalk goes along the site's frontage and connects with the sidewalk network on Stringtown Road, including the bike path. The site is also near existing COTA bus stops allowing customers to more easily travel to the site by public transportation or by bike.

- (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.**

Finding Not Applicable: The proposed use is located in an existing site and will utilize the current building and paved area. The applicant is proposing to add some landscaping between the parking lot and McDowell Road but will otherwise be maintaining their portion of the property as it is currently laid out.

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

Finding is Met: The site is currently vacant and the proposed business will fill the open space providing the City with a net fiscal benefit through additional income taxes, as well as providing a new type of business to the community with more specialized products for pets as well as dog wash stations.

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 as submitted.

6. Detailed History

1979

The property was rezoned from R-2 (Single Family Residential) to C-2 with Ordinance C-1-79.

1994

The current building was constructed to be used as a multi-tenant commercial building.

2011

City Council approved a Special Use Permit for a drive-thru for the Buckeye Beverage Bay & Fine Wine with Ordinance C-04-11.

2018-2019

The Buckeye Beverage Bay ceased use of the site and the building became available for lease.

2020

A Special Use Permit has been submitted for dog grooming to operate two self-service dog wash stations for the proposed Mutts & Co. business. This item will be heard concurrently with the drive-thru Special Use Permit request.