

Commissioner Petit: 2021-9-SPU requested by RNK Construction, LLC to permit automobile fleet services in a C-3 zoning district, 12727 Highway 90, Luling. Council District 7.

Mr. Welker: This is a request to permit a construction company with a fleet of 11 heavy vehicles, dump trucks and delivery trucks. This is the first such request after the Parish Council adopted Ordinance 21-11-7 which requires automobile fleet services to obtain a special permit to operate in a C-3 district. At the time of this writing staff are requesting additional information from the applicant in order to consider all the criteria for a complete special permit review. Since that was done we have received some more information from the applicant on how they intend to operate there and addressing some of the site plan concerns, things that were raised in this report. So just want to go over those shortly after recapping some of our findings. Some of the main concerns that we had was the heavy vehicles that would be associated with the business and the travel lane that they would be using to get to Hwy. 90 going through the commercial strip mall along with the residents to the rear. So a lot of what we requested from the applicant was done to try to mitigate any impacts that they would have. The department does recommend conditional approval based on some conditions and expectations we have from the site plan. I will go over how those have been resolved since then with the applicant.

We did need some more information in order to come to a determination on some of the special use review criteria. One of those was item 6A which was about setbacks. We've sent updated site plan has been received which shows the building clearly meets the required setback so that item now complies. So there was another comment about accessible spaces, the revised site plan does show the 1 requires accessible space so that item complies. They did state that they would use regular roll cans for garbage facilities, there are no dumpsters so we didn't need to see any specific dumpster location or any of that on the site plan, so that item complies as well. There is information about required landscaping, either the required landscaping needs to be shown because of the increased size of the building on a revised site plan or we receive a waiver request from those items, we have since received that waiver request for the required landscaping which is 10% of the site area and 1 tree for every 5000 sq. ft., so they have requested that waiver which is why it is not reflected on the revised site plan. And then the recommendation, we have some items that were mentioned that the first one being –

1. A 20-ft. wide area buffer, which excludes truck parking or servicing should be located where the site abuts residential uses.
2. Heavy vehicles associated with the special permit are restricted to Entrance A, the signalized driveway.
3. Hours of operation should be established to limit interference with adjacent businesses and residences 7am – 5 pm.
4. Pedestrian crosswalks should be installed between the parking lot and existing doors to businesses.
5. A method for controlling sediment from the trucks must be approved by the Planning Commission and documented as part of the application.

6. An updated site plan showing full compliance with any approved conditions or granted waivers is required.

The department does recommend conditional approval with those items being addressed or any items that may be added onto the approval by this board.

Commissioner Petit: Is the applicant here? Please state your name and address for the record.

Robbie Gilbert, 11 Azalea Ct. and owner of RNK.

Commissioner Petit: Anything that you would like to add to the application?

Mr. Gilbert: This is the site I kind of spent a lot of time looking for and it's very convenient to some of my other businesses I have in the parish, I own the country club over there and the apartments at the front of the subdivision, so I spend a lot of time working in that area, big supporter of our parish. The business is going to be run extremely professionally, kept very clean. It's off the beaten path where when you look back there from Hwy. 90 you can't even see it. You guys probably know there's been trucks parked there for a very long time and thought we were just utilizing the concrete space, my goal is to get in there and take care of it and make sure it's ran professional. Most of the traffic and that's one of the things that we should discuss, the timing of it, the trucks leave early in the morning and they'll be back around 3 o'clock or so. So in terms when the pedestrians are at the restaurants or that area there it will be very minimal.

Commissioner Petit: So it sounds like you've already complied with at least a few of these stipulations and you're ok with the proposed stipulations including the pedestrian crosswalk.

Mr. Gilbert: The only issue and the reason for the waiver that I sent in was that it's all concrete so it's tough to plant some trees, but I do have that 20 ft. buffer in the back. All the trucks if you notice on the site plan where the parking spots are formed will be to the front area, the furthest away from the back, so you'll have the buffer plus the trucks will be, there's only 11 of them, so it's almost 2 acres and they'll be away from the buffer.

Commissioner Petit: Now we'll open the public hearing for 2021-9-SPU anyone here to speak for or against?

Good evening my name is Joel Chaisson, 160 Avenue of Oaks. I am the majority owner of St. Charles Plaza who has a purchase agreement with Mr. Gilbert. Part of the department's requirements are for some things on St. Charles Plaza property such as crosswalks and I just want to say that we will comply with these requirements on our property to accommodate Mr. Gilbert's request.

Commissioner Petit: Thank you Mr. Chaisson. Anyone else here to speak for or against? Please state your name and address for the record please.

Walter Durapau, 238 Buras St., Luling. I own the property adjacent to the parking lot that they want to do this activity in and I just have a couple of questions as to what activities that by 5 o'clock that the trucks are in. Already we're hearing internal combustion engines like pressure washers going until 8-9:00 at night. I live right on that corner and my bedroom is the closest to that parking lot and we hear it. There are lots of times the trucks will come in dump something right there in the parking lot and then they're banging the tailgate I guess knocking more stuff out of the bed of the dump truck. Is there any plan of putting some other type of buffer, there used to be a wood fence on part of the property that was taken out with Hurricane Ida, are there any plans to do any additional, put more fence back there as a buffer from the subdivision? What is the purpose? I know you're parking trucks, are they also cleaning trucks there?

Commissioner Petit: Mr. Durapau just state your questions and we'll ask Mr. Gilbert to come back after that. The buffer and the hours of operation.

Mr. Durapau: I would like to understand more of what the activities are going to be and what hours. Thank you.

Commissioner Petit: Thank you. Anyone else here to speak for or against? Mr. Gilbert if you can come back up.

Mr. Gilbert: The fence is going to go back up. The biggest problem and the things that we're hearing right now with the pressure washer, I understand that completely. I'll make sure those activities are done by 6:00 in the afternoon to be finished with any cleaning that we got so we're not disturbing them. We don't have any power over at that building that's there right now and so we're having to run a generator when we need power and that's probably a lot of the noise that yall are hearing and obviously that will go away once we have power.

Commissioner Petit: Thank you. Anyone else here to speak for or against for 2021-10-SPU? If no we'll close the public hearing. Any questions for Mr. Gilbert from the Commissioner's?

Commissioner Keen: So you're doing power washing from an environmental standpoint, do you have a plan for drain off for this, I mean water separation and the like associated with this or it's just going to be soil? Everything drains and goes into the bayou

Mr. Gilbert: Sure

Commissioner Keen: We want to make sure that we're being conservative in this effort.

Mr. Gilbert: Sure.

Commissioner Keen: Do you have any type of water separation unit or any other plans for the mitigation of that in the future?

Mr. Gilbert: We're basically just using the pressure washer to knock the dirt off of them, anything to keep them looking clean. So I haven't had any of that. There is a drain in the back of the property, I've looked to that and it's kind of overgrown there in the beginning and I've cleaned that up so it will flow real well, but I haven't looked at that.

Commissioner Keen: I would highly suggest it, personally I own a demolition company myself and I wash my vehicles and you have to have a separation unit to make sure you're not putting that straight into the bayou.

Mr. Gilbert: Ok.

Commissioner Petit: Any other questions or comments from the Commissioners? Thank you. Do I have a motion to approve 2021-10-SPU with the 6 stipulations listed in the application?

Commissioner Galliano moved to approve with the 6 stipulations second by Commissioner Keen.

Mr. Albert: Mr. Chairman is there a specific set of hours of operation that you set as part of this? We didn't know what those would be and what would be appropriate.

Commissioner Petit: You would like us to set those hours of operation?

Mr. Albert: In discussion with the applicant, yes.

Commissioner Petit: Commissioner Keen is recommending 7 am to 6 pm. for hours of operation.

Mr. Gilbert: So if we can let's talk back and forth on that to make sure I'm getting it right. The vehicles a lot of time will leave early in the morning, they're going to head out to the job site, depending on where that job site might be early in the morning before 7:00. There's not a lot of work done there during the day, I have a small office that's going to have 1 employee that will be in there taking care of tickets and that kind of stuff. In the evenings if we have something it will be on the inside of that building that will be enclosed inside of it, we might be working on a truck, it won't be outside, it will be inside the building, so that may happen. In terms of the trucks coming and going though and we can also make sure that any kind of combustible engines that would be for a generator or pressure washer, we can set a time to eliminate that. It may be that we have to work on the truck or something in the evening.

Commissioner Petit: So you said before 7, what would be the earliest? 6 or you think even earlier than that?

Mr. Gilbert: They leave out, there's nothing really done other than crank the truck and go to the jobsite, but they might leave out at 4:00 in the morning sometimes.

Commissioner Keen: That's only to transport

Mr. Gilbert: That's correct.

Commissioner Petit: Any recommendations from the Planning Department? Is there anything in place for other businesses?

Mr. Albert: That's your choice in terms of the approval. In terms of the hours of operations it may be more towards when the maintenance can be done and they're actually working, rather than the vehicles coming in and going. I would probably look more towards the night time.

Commissioner Keen: No later than 8pm?

Mr. Gilbert: That would work fine for me and I can agree to that. I also don't have a problem with the mitigation in the back. If we thought we'd put an 8 ft. fence up instead of a 6 ft. fence I have no problem with that whatsoever. I want to make sure that. The back is designed on the back to be a wood fence vs. chain link fence.

Commissioner Petit: These hours of operation, we can adjust those down the road if they became a nuisance?

Mr. Albert: I think they would have to come back here to change that.

Commissioner Petit: So if we were to do 5 am to 8 pm for normal operations and 7 am to 6 pm for any maintenance and cleaning plus an 8 ft. fence across the back, are you comfortable with those?

Mr. Gilbert: The 8 ft. fence definitely, 5-8 in terms of the normal business hours.

Commissioner Petit: I understand that you may have a broken vehicle come in later but you won't have trucks going in and out at 3:40. So starting anywhere after 5 and before 8 to cover daylight hours.

Mr. Gilbert: The trucks leave out earlier, I want to make sure that we know that, the trucks leave earlier in the morning and they get most of their work done and they're back by 3 and I found it kind of a real positive for the area that we're in just because we won't be in the traffic associated with the other commercial businesses that are in that area; we'll be gone before they get there and we'll be back and it's not dinner time. I understand we have the 2 houses and we want to be good neighbors there. The 8 ft. fence and any other sound buffering that we can do I want to make sure that it takes place. The biggest thing they're probably hearing are those combustible engines, generators, in the back next to where to the power line is. So once that's done, once we have electricity that problem goes away. In terms of the trucks leaving in the mornings, they're not lifting beds, they're cranking the truck and they're all new trucks so they sound like your F-

250, they crank the truck and they leave. If we can make that exception and there is no other work than trucks leaving at that time I would be perfectly fine with that.

Commissioner Petit: Do I have a motion to approve with the 6 stipulations with the additional of an 8 ft. wooden fence across the back, noise abatement and then no cleaning or maintenance on the vehicles outside of 7am – 6 pm. Do I have a motion to approve?

Motion by Commissioner Galliano, second by Commissioner Keen.

YEAS: Petit, Keen, Price, Galliano

NAYS: None

ABSENT: Ross, Schexnaydre, Frangella

Commissioner Petit: That passes unanimously and will go to the Council.