

NEW BUSINESS CALENDAR

DOWNTOWN REVIEW BOARD AGENDA
SEPTEMBER 4, 2019

STAFF: MATTHEW FITZSIMMONS

FILE NO:
CPC DP 19-00077 – QUASI-JUDICIAL

PROJECT: 522 E. PIKES PEAK

APPLICANT: BOBBY HILL

OWNER: OGC RE3, LLC



PROJECT SUMMARY:

1. Project Description: This proposal is to convert 5,945 square feet of an existing distribution warehouse building to an office building. The proposed office use has a higher parking requirement than the previous tenant, and due to limited on-site parking, the project requires a parking warrant. The site, located at 522 E. Pikes Peak Avenue, is zoned FBZ-T2A (Form-Based Zone – Transition Sector 2A), and is located on the north side of E. Pikes Peak Avenue, just east of N. Corona and west of Shooks Run.
2. Applicant's Project Statement: **(FIGURE 1)**
3. Planning & Development Department's Recommendation: **Approval of the application with technical modifications.**

BACKGROUND:

1. Site Addresses: 522 E. Pikes Peak Avenue
2. Existing Zoning/Land Use: FBZ-T2A (Form-Based Zone – Transition Sector 2A) / The site was developed as a single-tenant distribution warehouse **(FIGURE 2)**
3. Plan COS Vision: Downtown **(FIGURE 3)**
4. Surrounding Zoning/Land Use:
North: C-6 (General Business) / Residential and Commercial uses
South: FBZ-T1 (Form-Based Zone – Transition Sector 1) / Commercial/Office – Catalyst Campus
East: FBZ-T2A (Form-Based Zone – Transition Sector 2A) / Auto Repair
West: FBZ-T2A (Form-Based Zone – Transition Sector 2A) / Distillery, Vacant Lot, MMJ (center, grow and an extraction operation), Office
5. Annexation: Town of Colorado Springs, 1872
6. Master Plan/Designated Master Plan Land Use: Experience Downtown Master Plan (2016) / Activity Center Mixed-Use
7. Subdivisions: R.A. Edgerton's, Block 244, Addition No. 1, Colorado Springs (1875)
8. Zoning Enforcement Action: None
9. Physical Characteristics: The site is level in the front and drops off at an 11.5% slope in the rear parking area. It is currently a single-tenant, one-story commercial building

STAKEHOLDER PROCESS AND INVOLVEMENT:

Two hundred and forty-seven post cards were sent to the surrounding property owners to notify them of the proposal shortly after the application was submitted. That notification provided information regarding the proposed project and instructions for how to submit comments. Staff received two formal comments, one expressing support from the Downtown Partnership and one expressing opposition because of the parking request of the original submittal **(FIGURE 4)**. The original submittal doubled the size of the building and parking demand. The current iteration of the plan eliminated the addition and therefore reduced the parking demand. All applicable City agencies and departments were asked to review and comment. Most of their concerns and comments have already been incorporated into the plan or are listed in the technical modifications section at the conclusion of this report. The site will be posted and notices will be sent announcing the public hearing prior to the Downtown Review Board meeting.

ANALYSIS OF REVIEW CRITERIA AND MAJOR ISSUES

The proposed project is located on the north side of E. Pikes Peak Avenue, just east of N. Corona Street and west of Shooks Run. This section of E. Pikes Peak Avenue is considered a frontage road because Colorado Avenue turns into E. Pikes Peak at N. Corona Street. On E. Pikes Peak Avenue Frontage the surrounding land uses are primarily commercial, a distillery/tasting room, a vacant lot, an auto repair shop, and a mixed use building on the northeast corner of N. Corona Street. The properties to the north of the subject property, which front Kiowa Street and are zoned C-6, are mostly single-family and multi-family residential with one commercial property on the eastern edge of the block.

The proposed plan **(FIGURE 5)** illustrates exterior changes to the façade of the building, which faces Pikes Peak Avenue. These changes include removing the copper façade on the upper portion of the

building and mimicking the look of many of the main historic buildings found at the Catalyst Campus, which is located to the south on E. Pikes Peak Ave. This includes red brick with a white capstone over each window. The proposed new office tenant to this space will be the Catalyst Campus' accounting department. Catalyst Campus is under contract to purchase the Auto Smith property directly adjacent to the subject property. These two properties will be incorporated into the greater campus.

As stated above, this project proposes to convert 5,945 square feet of an existing distribution warehouse building to an office building. Even though it is not on a main pedestrian thoroughfare, the proposed office building will need to conform to the principles set out in the Form-Based Code. Since the developer is not changing the footprint of the structure and they are only refurbishing the interior and rehabbing the façade, the Form-Based Code only requires a minor improvement plan to document this development. The minor improvement plan will also document the change of use from a distribution warehouse building to an office.

Staff supports the change of use and all of the renovations to the building, inside and out. Due to the limited changes to the façade, Staff is not requiring the rehabilitation of the building add new windows to meet the 60% glazing requirement. The current calculation for a façade in that area between 18 inches high and 10 feet high is approximately 40%.

The more intensive use of an office building will increase the parking demand beyond the original use of a warehouse, which is 1 space per 1,000 square feet of building space. The office parking ratio is twice that at 1 parking space per 500 square feet, creating a demand for 12 parking spaces. Since the site only has room for 4 parking spaces in the rear of the building, the applicant needs a parking warrant to allow 4 parking spaces where 12 are required.

In an attempt to be more efficient and streamlined, the Form-Based Code allows all required warrants to be incorporated into any development plan. They are not considered a separate application with associated fees. Therefore, the parking warrant has been incorporated into the minor improvement plan and should be considered one application.

Staff supports the minor improvement plan's associate parking warrant for the following reasons:

- There is a capacity of about 23-26 off street parking spaces on the E. Pikes Peak Ave. Frontage road (between N. Corona and the cul-de-sac). This section is mostly free of vehicles during the day. This may be due to lack of demand and because most businesses have sufficient parking on their property **(Figure 5)**.
- 13/50 Distilling (520 E. Pikes Peak Ave.) is located next door and their hours are only during the evening, when most of the other businesses on the street have closed for the day. They were awarded a parking warrant (which was associated with their conditional use for a bar) by the Downtown Review Board in 2017 for 9 spaces where 15 were required.
- The MMJ facility (center, grow and an extraction operation), located just two properties to the west of the subject property at 510 and 516 E. Pikes Peak Ave Frontage, has a very low parking demand. There is a large parking lot (516) next to them that may be available to lease if additional parking is required.
- The Catalyst Campus is under contract to purchase the Auto Smith property, which is the last property on the east side of the frontage road. The Catalyst Campus owning the last two properties on this road should reduce any possible conflict with the neighbors.
- The cycle-track (two-way) bike path that connects the Shooks Run trail with downtown along Pikes Peak Ave. is located on the sidewalk in front of the building. This gives employees and customers the opportunity to comfortably and safely ride their bike to this location from the north, south and west sides. This path has the potential to alleviate parking demand for this location and all the businesses along this street.
- Bike parking is essential to allow cyclists a safe and convenient place to lock up. 522 E. Pikes Peak does not have the room to supply bike racks in the front of the building, but the next door neighbor to the west (13/50 Distilling) does and has made it available to the subject property.

- Additional street parking along west of N. Corona Street along the E. Pikes Peak corridor is in abundance and is underutilized.
- Mountain Metro Transit has a transit line (#7) that runs on Pikes Peak Ave and directly east to the Citadel Mall. This will allow employees to leave their cars at home and take the bus to work.
- The Catalyst Campus' parking lot, which will be available for all employees to use, is located across Pikes Peak Ave. and will be a place to park if street parking is unavailable.
- The 4 parking spaces that are provided in the rear of the property will be for employees due to the fact that they are only accessed through the alleyway and that the slope for the parking lot is about 11.5%. These four spaces reduce the parking warrant's request from 12 to 8 spaces.
- The required ADA parking space and access aisle are not able to be accommodated in the rear or the front of the building; nor can they be located across the street because the curb can't accommodate an ADA-compliant ramp. 13/50 Distilling (520 E. Pikes Peak Ave.) has agreed to allow the use of their one ADA space in the front of their building for any qualified user. The Urban Planning Division Staff strongly supports the sharing of this ADA stall because of the proximity to the front doors of the subject property and the fact that the distillery is not open during the daytime hours. This would dovetail perfectly with the hours of the office.
- The Experience Downtown Colorado Springs Master Plan strongly supports utilizing street parking to satisfy parking needs. The plan discourages the use of any open land for the use of parking in the downtown area. The plan also strongly encourages the use of bicycles and buses as alternative forms of transportation, of which the subject property is able to take advantage because of the bus route that is close and the cycle-track in front of the building (chapter 4).
- Plan COS, the City's comprehensive plan, also strongly supports utilizing street parking and reducing land dedicated to parking. To do that it promotes pedestrian accessibility, mass transit, cycling, locating close to the City center and street parking. This project promotes all of these items. Strategies and policies that support this redevelopment: Strategy LU 302a, Policy LU 303, Strategy LU 303a, Policy LU 702, Strategy LU 702c, Policy LU 703.

Any project that requires relief from a standard must gain approval of a warrant by the Downtown Review Board. Warrants are reviewed using the five criteria found in Section 5.4 of the Form-Based Code. The criteria are:

1. Is the requested warrant consistent with the intent of the form-based code?
2. Is the requested warrant, as well as the project as a whole, consistent with Section 4 – Design Guidelines of the form-based code?
3. Is the requested warrant reasonable due to the proposed project's exceptional civic or environmental design?
4. Is the requested warrant consistent with the Experience Downtown Colorado Springs Master Plan?
5. Is the requested warrant consistent with Plan COS, the City's Comprehensive Plan?

After careful consideration, Staff has determined that the required criteria for the minor improvement plan and the associated warrant have been met and once the technical modifications described below are addressed, the plan can be approved.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

CPC DP 19-00077 – 522 E. PIKES PEAK

Approve the proposed minor improvement plan and associated parking warrant based on the findings that the plan complies with the code standards and the warrant criteria found in Section 5.4.3 of the Form-Based Code will be substantially met once the following technical modifications are made:

Technical Modifications:

1. Indicate width of rear parking lot on the plan.
2. Add the glazing percentage of the façade of the building between 18 inches and 10 feet.

3. Add a note that 'no parking' signs will be placed along the north side of E. Pikes Peak Ave. Frontage to the east of the diagonal parking spaces near N. Corona St.
4. Label all utility improvements