

**Town of St. Albans
Development Review Board Meeting Minutes
Thursday, February 8, 2024
6:30 p.m.**

On Thursday, February 8th, 2024 at 6:30 p.m., the Town of St. Albans Development Review Board met at Town Hall for the following hearings.

Present: Chair, Brent Brigham, Clerk, Mike McKennerney, Bruce Thompson, Allison Hickey, Tom Stanhope, Director of Community Development, Megan Sherlund, Administrative Assistant, Kimberly Kissinger

Absent: Zoning Administrator, AJ Johnson, Ellen Baker

Chair, Brent Brigham, called the Development Review Board hearing to order at 6:30 p.m.

New Business:

Application of Marguerite McCracken Irrevocable Trust requesting Conditional Use Approval to convert the building to Business Services and Retail Uses in accordance with Sections 4.7, 4.11, 8.3 of the St. Albans Town Unified Development Bylaws. The property is located at 156 Swanton Road in the Commercial District within a Designated Growth Center overlay and is owned by the Applicant.

The Application was represented by Desiree Baker & Kalie Severy, Lessees. There were no Interested Parties.

The Applicants were sworn in by Clerk, M. McKennerney.

B. Brigham asked if the building was the former Builder's Incorporated building and D. Baker confirmed.

D. Baker began with an introduction with her business partner, K. Severy. They are proposing a non-invasive, more natural approach to aesthetics and skin care through services and retail products from their business, VT Skin Company. Services include items similar to facials and lash services, and retail would include make-up and skin care products. D. Baker stated there seems to be no other businesses in the area offering a one-stop-shop of professional grade skin care and quality make-up. K. Severy added that their aesthetics and skin care is more of a non-invasive and holistic approach.

B. Brigham questioned what changes would occur within the interior of the building. D. Baker stated that two walls will be added to the floorplan to create an additional room. B. Brigham questioned if the upstairs will remain as one big open area. D. Baker confirmed and stated they are proposing to use the upstairs as an open break room area.

B. Thompson asked if the building is currently empty and D. Baker replied yes. B. Brigham confirmed the building has been vacant for quite a while.

B. Brigham explained the six proposed parking spaces on the property are compliant with the Town's Bylaw requirement of four spaces.

B. Thompson asked if the building was being sold. Marguerite McCracken, registered owner, answered no and explained that D. Baker and K. Severy will be leasing the building. B. Thompson asked if there has ever been a permit for the property. M. McCracken stated there must have been a permit at some point for repairs and cosmetic changes to the building. B. Brigham mentioned that Builder's Incorporated probably pre-dated zoning requirements and many of the changes are now grandfathered.

B. Thompson asked if the main parking area was located in the back of the building and M. McCracken confirmed there are no parking spaces in the front or side of the building, only in the back. The property also has existing handicap parking and accessibility.

There were no additional questions.

Application of Klein Family LLC requesting Site Plan Amendment and Conditional Use Approval to add "Rental Vehicle Facility" to an existing multi-use building, to operate a U-Haul Rental Business in accordance with Sections 4.5, 4.8, 8.3 and 8.4 of the St. Albans Town Unified Development Bylaws. The property is located at 650 Industrial Park Road in the Industrial and Residential Districts and is owned by the Applicant.

The Application was represented by Kelly Klein, Applicant and Nathan Strausser, U-Haul Representative. There were no Interested Parties.

The Applicant was sworn in by Clerk, M. McKennerney.

K. Klein began with an explanation that Groennfell Meadery, a producer of wine made from honey, is the main operating company, along with another tenant, in the building where the U-Haul business is being proposed. It is anticipated that the proposed self-service U-Haul business will be conducted primarily outside of the building. Customers will be able to make reservations online or through the U-Haul phone application, with pickup and drop off available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week via a kiosk located outside of the building. A desk with a Groennfell Meadery staff member will be located inside the building for any in-person customer service needs. A trained staff member is required by U-Haul to hook up all U-Haul trailers. B. Brigham asked if there was a hitch setup for those customers that do not have hitches on their vehicles for towing. N. Strausser explained that any customer booking a trailer should either rent a U-Haul truck with an existing hitch or have a hitch installed on their personal vehicle by a professional installer.

B. Brigham asked if a dedicated person will be sitting at the desk at all times. K. Klein answered yes and anticipates the hours of operation to be Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

K. Klein stated there is plenty of parking available for the proposed U-Haul trucks and trailers. There are currently 55 total parking spaces at the location and 16 of those 55 spaces will be dedicated primarily to the U-Haul business. She is anticipating peak business hours to be on Fridays and Saturdays.

B. Thompson questioned if there was adequate exterior lighting in the parking lot for the U-Haul trucks and trailers, since the property is not gated. K. Klein explained that there will not be any infrastructure changes. The existing lighting around the building is very good. All the exterior lighting was upgraded to led timer lights when the property was purchased in 2019. The timer lights can be switched to stay on all the time if needed.

B. Thompson asked if the proposed U-Haul business will include other products, such as blankets and other U-Haul items. N. Strausser stated U-Haul products will include trucks, trailers, dollies, and blankets. It all depends on what the site wants to offer to customers. There is no U-Haul requirement for retail items.

B. Brigham questioned if it is typical for a vehicle rental business to be located in an Industrial Park. N. Strausser commented that it is not a typical location but believes it will be a great addition to this Industrial Park and the surrounding area. Currently, the closest U-Haul locations are South Burlington and Enosburg. He continued to say that there is a volume of callers to the South Burlington location asking for a rental location in the St. Albans area.

B. Brigham mentioned his concern about customers finding the U-Haul staff desk in the building and questioned its location. K. Klein agreed internal signage will be needed to ensure quality in-person customer service. Customers will enter the front door of the building and follow a long hallway to the U-Haul desk. B. Brigham asked which business is currently located at the front of the building. K. Klein explained a tenant currently occupies the space. The U-Haul desk will have its own dedicated space for the U-Haul business. K. Klein believes the proposed desk location will be the most stream-lined and customer friendly. A. Hickey asked if the public will have access to other businesses in the building. K. Klein answered no and all the tenant doors are secured. The current building tenants are aware of and have no concerns regarding the proposed U-Haul business.

B. Brigham asked if there are any other retail businesses in the building. K. Klein said no and that anyone visiting the location would have a specific reason for visiting the building, such as a delivery driver.

B. Brigham asked if the U-Haul trailers would be secured during evening hours. N. Strausser said he has not had any theft issues while employed with U-Haul and he does not foresee a problem in this area. He continued stating that locks can be added to U-Haul equipment should an issue of theft or people occupying the trailers becomes a concern.

B. Thompson questioned if there are security cameras on the property. K. Klein stated there are cameras on the property and she will ensure they are overlooking the U-Haul equipment area.

B. Thompson asked about exterior signage. N. Strausser is proposing a "curb sleeve" sign in the grass area in front of the building. He explained a curb sleeve to be a 4' by 5' sign that stakes directly into the ground. U-Haul also has "feather signs" available. They would propose installing a feather sign at the end of the circle directing people to the U-Haul location. No additional signage would be proposed for Main Street. K. Klein stated they will submit a sign permit if one is required.

There were no additional questions or comments.

Other Business

None.

Deliberative Session

MOTION: B. Brigham made a motion to enter deliberative session at 6:57 p.m. B. Thompson seconded. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

MOTION: B. Brigham made a motion to come out of deliberative session at 7:23 p.m. B. Thompson seconded. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Application of Marguerite McCracken Irrevocable Trust requesting Conditional Use Approval to convert the building to Business Services and Retail Uses.

MOTION: M. McKennerney made a motion to approve the Application of Marguerite McCracken Irrevocable Trust requesting Conditional Use Approval to convert the building to Business Services and Retail Uses in accordance with Sections 4.7, 4.11, 8.3 of the St. Albans Town Unified Development Bylaws. The property is located at 156 Swanton Road in the Commercial District within a Designated Growth Center overlay and is owned by the Applicant, with the following conditions: 1.) All Police and Fire letters shall be forwarded to the Zoning Administrator upon receipt; 2.) Any and all signage to be posted shall be permitted by the Zoning Administrator; 3.) All previous conditions not amended by this decision shall remain in effect; 4.) All State and Federal permits are the owner's responsibility and a copy shall be provided to the Zoning Administrator for the file; 5.) The Board accepts the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law as provided in the Zoning Administrator's staff report dated February 2nd, 2024 with no conditions or changes; and 6.) The Applicant shall agree to and comply with all Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law listed in this decision as well as all conditions of approval. Seconded by A. Hickey. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Application of Klein Family LLC requesting Site Plan Amendment and Conditional Use Approval to add "Rental Vehicle Facility" to an existing multi-use building, to operate a U-Haul Rental Business.

MOTION: B. Thompson made a motion to approve the Application of Klein Family LLC requesting Site Plan Amendment and Conditional Use Approval to add "Rental Vehicle Facility" to an existing multi-use building, to operate a U-Haul Rental Business in accordance with Sections 4.5, 4.8, 8.3 and 8.4 of the St. Albans Town Unified Development Bylaws. The property is located at 650 Industrial Park Road in the Industrial and Residential Districts and is owned by the Applicant, with the following conditions: 1.) The U-Haul business shall not exceed sixteen (16) U-Haul trucks and/or trailers without prior approval; 2.) All previous conditions not amended by this decision shall remain in effect; 3.) All State and Federal permits are the owner's responsibility and a copy shall be provided to the Zoning Administrator for the file; 4.) The Board accepts the Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law as provided in the Zoning Administrator's staff report dated February 2nd, 2024 with no changes; and 5.) The Applicant shall agree to and comply with all Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law listed in this decision as well as all conditions of approval. Seconded by M. McKennerney. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Minutes

MOTION: M. McKennerney made a motion to accept the Minutes from 1/25/2024. Seconded by A. Hickey. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Next Meeting

February 22nd, 2024 at 6:30 p.m.

Adjournment

MOTION: B. Thompson made a motion to adjourn the DRB meeting at 7:45 pm. Seconded by T. Stanhope. All in favor, none opposed, motion carried.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kimberly Kissinger
Administrative Assistant