

**SPECIAL USE PERMIT-16-02. Williamsburg Honda
Staff Report for October 8, 2002, Board of Supervisors Public Hearing**

This staff report is prepared by the James City County Planning Division to provide information to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors to assist them in making a recommendation on this application. It may be useful to members of the general public interested in this application.

PUBLIC HEARINGS Building C Board Room; County Government Complex
 Planning Commission: September 9, 2002, 7:00 p.m.
 Board of Supervisors: October 8, 2002, 7:00 p.m.

SUMMARY FACTS

Applicant: Mr. John Dodson
 Land Owner: Williamsburg Auto Group

Proposed Use: To amend the existing special use permit (SUP) conditions to allow trailers to be sold at the Williamsburg Honda Dealership

Location: 7277 Richmond Road

Tax Map and Parcel No.: (23-2)(1-42)

Primary Service Area: Inside

Parcel Size: 3.75± acres

Existing Zoning: B-1, General Business

Comprehensive Plan: Neighborhood Commercial

Surrounding Zoning: North: B-1, General Business; R-2, General Residential
 East: A-1, General Agriculture
 South: B-1, General Business
 West: L-B, Limited Business; R-2, General Residential

Staff Contact: Karen Drake - Phone 253-6685

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Staff believes the proposed amendment to sell and repair utility trailers in addition to selling and repairing autos at the existing Williamsburg Honda Dealership is a valid commercial enterprise and complimentary land use. Staff, however, has aesthetic concerns as well as safety concerns about the displaying of the trailers so close to Richmond Road. Staff believes that through conditions limiting the display of the trailers, the Williamsburg Honda Dealership will retain its current degree of conformity to the Neighborhood Commercial Land Use Designation and compliment the Norge Community Character Area. On September 9, 2002, the Planning Commission recommended by a vote of 7-0 to approve this application. Staff recommends the Board of Supervisors approve this amendment to the existing special use permit with the conditions listed in the staff report on its approval. Note that the special use permit conditions in this case would replace the existing conditions in SUP-02-87 and SUP-31-89.

Project History

In May of 1987, the Board of Supervisors approved James City County (JCC) Case No. SUP-02-87, which granted Mr. John Dodson a special use permit to allow the sale of new and used automobiles and auto repairs at the Williamsburg Honda Dealership on Richmond Road in Norge. Landscaping to buffer the auto dealership from adjacent property and a limit of two entrances were included in the special use permit conditions. In November of 1989, the Board of Supervisors approved JCC Case No. SUP-31-89, which allowed Mr. Dodson to expand the Williamsburg Honda dealership into its present day size of 3.75 acres at 7277 Richmond Road.

Mr. Dodson has now applied to amend the existing special use permit conditions in SUP-02-87 and SUP-31-89 to permit the sale and repair of utility trailers in addition to the sale and repair of cars. Vehicle and trailer sales and services (with major repair limited to a fully enclosed building) is a specially permitted use on property zoned B-1, General Business.

The utility trailers include flatbed trailers used to haul lawn equipment as well as enclosed trailers. Trailers range in length from approximately ten feet up to fifty feet and are usually eight feet in width. One of the existing auto repair bays would be renovated to accommodate trailer repairs. The applicant proposes to display trailers on the front row of parking next to Richmond Road and store additional trailers in the rear of the dealership lot.

Surrounding Zoning and Development

Williamsburg Honda is located in Norge opposite the Hill Pleasant Farm Agricultural and Forestal District, zoned A-1, General Agriculture. To the North is Noah's Ark Veterinary Hospital zoned B-1, General Business, and Norge Elementary School, zoned R-2, General Residential. Directly behind the dealership is undeveloped property zoned LB, Limited Business, and the Kristiansand neighborhood, zoned R-2, General Residential. To the south is the Kristiansand Office Park zoned LB, Limited Business, and the 7-Eleven convenience store, Jimmy's Pizza, and The Shops at Kristiansand, all zoned B-1, General Business.

The Site

The 3.75-acre site is relatively flat. The Williamsburg Honda Dealership has two buildings for car sales and an auto repair bay. There are two entrances from Richmond Road into to the dealership. No additional entrances are being proposed at this time and the condition limiting the Williamsburg Honda dealership to the two existing entrances remains as a condition.

The property is located within the Primary Service Area (PSA) and would be served by public water and sewer. The applicant is aware of the current water supply issue within the County. To help mitigate any negative impact the dealership has upon the public water supply, the applicant is willing to implement water conservation measures with the James City Service Authority (JCSA) for any new landscaping planted and in any future construction. Detailed water conservation standards would be formalized with JCSA at a later date under a proposed new condition.

Comprehensive Plan

The property is designated Neighborhood Commercial on the 1997 Comprehensive Plan Land Use Map. Neighborhood Commercial areas are comprised of limited business activity areas within the PSA, serving residents of the surrounding neighborhoods in the immediate area and having only a limited impact on nearby development. The total building area within any area designated Neighborhood Commercial should be no more than 40,000 square feet. Location criteria for commercial uses are: small sites; access to collector streets, preferably at intersections with local or other collector roads; public water and sewer service; environmental features such as soils and topography suitable for compact development; and adequate buffering by physical features or adjacent uses to protect nearby residential

development and preserve the natural or wooded character of the County. Acceptable uses will have a limited impact on adjacent residential areas especially in terms of lighting, signage, traffic, odor, noise, and hours of operation. Acceptable uses should be compatible with surrounding development in terms of scale, building design, materials, and color.

The Williamsburg Honda Dealership is also located within the Norge Community Character Area. The Norge Community Character Area has a unique history, which should be preserved and protected through the specific design criteria outlined below:

- The architecture, scale, materials, spacing, and color of building should complement the historic character of the area.
- Building setbacks should be consistent with adjacent buildings and structures.
- Where possible, parking should be located to the rear of the buildings. Parking should be screened from roadway and adjacent properties.
- New landscaping should be of a type, size, and scale to complement the historic character of the area.
- Signage should be of scale, size, and color, and materials to complement the historic character of the area.
- Mixed use development which provides residential, commercial, and office uses in close proximity are encouraged.

Neither the existing Dealership nor proposed use is consistent with the Comprehensive Plan; however staff does recognize that the existing Williamsburg Honda Dealership was built prior to the adoption of the 1997 Comprehensive Plan. Staff also acknowledges that the Williamsburg Honda Dealership has significantly landscaped its property which screens the Dealership from the adjacent limited business district, residential, and agriculturally designated land.

Staff is concerned about the presence of the larger enclosed trailers or appearing essentially as a small building located in front of the dealership parking lot so close to Richmond Road. The longer trailers would have a much higher degree of visibility than the automobiles which are currently offered for sale. Consequently, staff believes that these longer trailers would increase the degree of inconsistency of the use with the Comprehensive Plan's goals for the Norge Community Character Area and Neighborhood Commercial Areas. Not only would the larger trailers alter the view of the dealership parking lot from an aesthetic viewpoint, but the trailers could present a traffic hazard for entering and exiting cars as well as being a potential safety issue. Staff believes that limiting the number of trailers on display in the front of the dealership parking lot to no more than seven trailers at a time, with no more than three of the seven trailers being enclosed trailers and none of the seven trailers being larger than twenty feet in length, would help to mitigate the impact of the trailers located in the front of the dealership parking lot. Staff strongly recommends that the applicant work closely with the James City County Police Department and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to design and implement measures so the trailers do not present a potential safety hazard nor are the trailers stolen from the property.

Recommendation

Staff believes the proposed amendment to sell and repair utility trailers in addition to selling and repairing autos at the existing Williamsburg Honda Dealership is a valid commercial enterprise and complimentary land use. Staff, however, has aesthetic concerns as well as safety concerns about the displaying of the trailers so close to Richmond Road. Staff believes that through conditions limiting the display of the trailers, the Williamsburg Honda Dealership will retain its current degree of conformity to the Neighborhood Commercial Land Use Designation and compliment the Norge Community Character Area. On September 9, 2002, the Planning Commission recommended by a vote of 7-0 to approve this application. Staff recommends the Board of Supervisors approve this amendment to the existing special use permit with the conditions listed below. Note

that the special use permit conditions in this case would replace the existing conditions in SUP-02-87 and SUP-31-89:

1. This special use permit shall allow the sale of new and used automobiles and trailers. All automobile and trailer repairs shall take place within an enclosed building. *New Condition.*
2. There shall be no more than seven trailers displayed at any given time in the front row of parking directly adjacent to Richmond Road. All such trailers should be located in the first seven parking spaces closest to the northeast property corner of the site and the trailers shall be parked perpendicular to Richmond Road. All other trailers shall be stored in the parking spaces located adjacent to the north property line with no enclosed trailers located in the first five parking spaces closest to Richmond Road. Of the seven trailers displayed in front of the dealership in the spaces perpendicular to Richmond Road, no more than three shall be an enclosed trailer at any give time and none of the seven trailers on display shall be longer than twenty feet. No signs or banners shall be placed on any trailers. All trailers will be placed on existing paved areas and no additional areas may be paved unless approved by the Planning Director through an approved site plan. *New Condition.*
3. The entire site of the Williamsburg Honda Dealership shall have at least 30 percent of the total lot area as landscaped open space. The landscape plan shall exceed the minimum landscaping requirement as necessary to provide a visual effect so as to make the Williamsburg Honda Dealership compatible with adjacent properties and to provide a reasonable buffer between properties. The Development Review Committee shall review and approve any future changes to the landscaping.
4. Within sixty days of approval of this special use permit, the applicant will arrange a meeting on-site with Planning Division staff to verify that all landscaping on the approved site plan has been planted. Any approved landscaping material that is missing from the site must be planted or bonded within ninety days of approval of this Special Use Permit. The owner shall submit a replacement landscape plan for existing landscape material that is dead or dying prior to final site plan approval for the trailers and said landscape plans shall be approved by the Planning Director prior to final site plan approval for the trailers. *New Condition*
5. The owner shall be responsible for developing and enforcing water conservation standards which shall be submitted to and approved by the James City Service Authority. The standards may include, but shall not be limited to, such water conservation measures as limitations on the installation and use of irrigation systems and irrigation wells; the use of approved landscaping materials, including the use of drought tolerant plants, if and where appropriate; and the use of water-conserving fixtures and appliances to promote water conservation and minimize the use of public water resources. Irrigation wells shall only draw water from the Upper Potomac or Aquia Aquifers. The water conservation standards shall be approved by the James City County Service Authority within three months of adoption of this special use permit and shall apply to any future building construction or renovation and any new landscaping plans. *New Condition.*
6. The Williamsburg Honda Dealership shall be limited to the two existing ingress/egress ways onto Richmond Road. The existing ingress/egress ways may be relocated on the property with an approved site plan.
7. This special use permit is not severable. Invalidation of any word, phrase, clause, sentence, or paragraph shall invalidate the remainder.

Karen Drake

CONCUR:

O. Marvin Sowers, Jr.

KD/adw
sup16-02.wpd

Attachments:

1. Planning Commission Minutes
2. Site Map
3. Site Photographs
4. Enclosed Trailer Information
5. Resolution