

CITY OF SMYRNA COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT MEMORANDUM

To: License and Variance Board

From: Rusty Martin, AICP, Community Development Director
Caitlin Crowe, Planner I

Date: July 17, 2023

**RE: VARIANCE CASE V23-049
3405 South Cobb Drive – Allow additional accessory structure**

**VARIANCE CASE V23-050
3405 South Cobb Drive – Allow accessory structure size above 25% of the primary structure**

BACKGROUND

The applicant is requesting two variances to build a new car wash facility at 3405 S Cobb Drive to allow for an additional accessory structure and to allow an accessory structure over 25% of the primary structure's total square footage. The accessory structure requirements are regulated by Section 501 of the Zoning Ordinance.

ANALYSIS

The subject parcel is a 1.75-acre lot zoned GC (General Commercial) and is located on the east side of South Cobb Drive; the property is currently occupied by the Sharon Baptist Church (see Figure 1). The adjoining properties to the north and east are zoned R-15 and GC and are occupied by single-family detached homes, a landscape business, and O'Reilly Auto Parts, respectively. The adjacent properties to the west and southwest are zoned GC and are occupied by a daycare, gas station, and tire store.

The subject property is currently occupied by a roughly 11,500 square foot building that serves as the Sharon Baptist Church. The applicant is proposing a complete redevelopment of the property to replace the building with a new 5,315 square foot car wash tunnel and accompanying vacuum stations. Due to these vacuum stations, the applicant is requesting two variances: allow an additional accessory structure and allow the accessory structure to be above 25% of the primary structure's total square footage.

Each vacuum station has a fabric canopy, designed to cover the customer and vehicle while vacuuming and detailing their freshly washed vehicle. Each parking space is 252 square feet (14 feet x 18 feet) for a total of 5,544 square feet covered by the 22 proposed vacuum canopies. Since each vacuum canopy is connected via the vacuum hose holders, the canopies are counted as one overall accessory structure (see Figure 3). Since the total square footage of the

VARIANCE CASE V23-049-050

July 17, 2023

Page 2 of 6

vacuum stations exceeds that of the car wash tunnel building, the second variance for an accessory structure above 25% of the primary building is merited.

The canopies over each vacuum station and the dumpster enclosure are both separated from the main car wash structure. This means that there are two accessory structures on the parcel, which is not permissible under Section 501.11 of the Zoning Ordinance. However, both the canopies and dumpster are essential for the business operation and have little to no effect on the surrounding parcels.

Community Development believes the variances requested are the minimum variances needed to build a new car wash facility on the subject property. Strict application of the ordinance would require all vacuum canopies be removed, which would limit the business operations. Community Development does not foresee any negative impacts to adjacent properties should the variances be approved since the majority of the surrounding businesses are also vehicle related. At the time of this report, Community Development has not received any calls in opposition to these requests.

STAFF COMMENTS

The applicant has requested variances to allow an additional accessory structure and allow the accessory structure to be above 25% of the primary structure's total square footage for the construction of a new car wash facility. According to Section 1403 of the Zoning Ordinance, variances must be reviewed under the following standards: (1) Whether there are unique and special or extraordinary circumstances applying to the property; (2) Whether any alleged hardship is self-created by any person having an interest in the property; (3) Whether strict application of the relevant provisions of the code would deprive the applicant of reasonable use of the property; and (4) Whether the variance proposed is the minimum variance needed. After a review of the standards above, Community Development believes that the variances will not adversely affect surrounding properties; therefore, staff recommends **approval** of the requested variances with the following condition:

1. Approval of the requested variances shall be conditioned upon the development of the property in substantial compliance with the site plan and elevations submitted with the variance application.
2. The developer shall be required to provide a minimum 6-foot-tall privacy fence in addition to the required landscape buffer along the shared property line with the adjacent single-family residential properties.

Figure – 1



Figure – 2 Site Plan

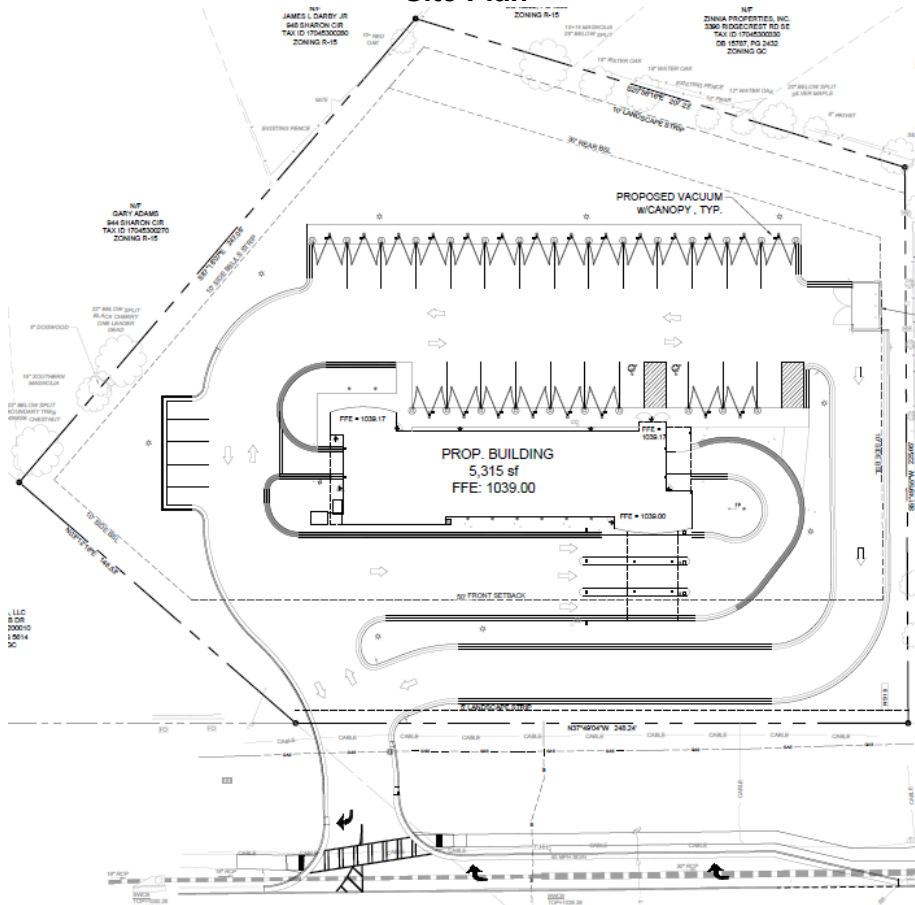


Figure – 3
Proposed Vacuum Canopies



Figure – 4
Subject Property



Figure – 5
Adjacent Properties to the Northwest



Figure – 6
Adjacent Property to the Southeast



Figure – 7
Adjacent Properties across South Cobb Drive

