



Major Conditional Use Permit (CUP) Staff Report

File Number(s): CUP22-0001, SEP22-0003, VAR22-0007

Project Name: Secure Space Self-Service Storage

Project Address: SW corner of South 204th Street and 28th Avenue South

Parcel Number: 344500-0140

Project Summary: Major conditional use permit (CUP) for the construction of a five-level self-storage facility, approximately 160,000 square feet in size, with 17 surface parking/loading spaces and a caretaker/manager dwelling unit. Engineering variance request to reduce the width of the half-street improvements for 28th Avenue South.

Property Owner: Echo Four, LLC; 600 108th Avenue NE, Suite 340; Bellevue, WA 98004

Applicant: Casey Kispert; Jackson Main Architecture; 311 1st Avenue South; Seattle, WA 98104

I. Background

A. Proposal

The proposal is to build five-story self-service storage facility with approximately 160,000 square feet. The building will include a leasing office and a caretaker/manager dwelling unit. The maximum structure height will be 65 feet. The site will also include 11 parking spaces and 6 loading spaces (Exhibit 3a). The Applicant requested an engineering variance to the half-street improvements for 28th Avenue South from a 12-foot travel lane and a 5-foot bike lane to two 11-foot travel lanes because of the location of the columns supporting Sound Transit's Link light rail aerial guideway (Exhibits 2e and 3e) and because 28th Avenue is a dead-end street.

Due to the major conditional use permit application, the City does not require the separate submittal of a preliminary site plan review application and instead reviews the development proposal for compliance with the zoning code as part of the CUP application (Exhibit 11).

B. Site and Neighborhood

1. Site Description

The 1.8-acre parcel is located at the southwest corner of South 204th Street and 28th Avenue South, approximately 100 feet west of International Boulevard (Exhibit 4a and 4b). The site generally slopes down to the southwest, with an additional downward slope near the center of the property to the south. The site is heavily forested and remained vacant until late 2021 when Sound Transit began construction of the aerial guideway for the Link light rail extension to Federal Way. A permanent easement for the aerial guideway occupies approximately 4,000 square feet of the eastern portion of the parcel, extending 30 feet from the parcel's eastern

boundary on the north end and 20 feet on the south end (Exhibit 3d). A 35-foot temporary construction easement buffers the permanent easement and will remain in place until June 4, 2024.

2. Land Use

The land use for the site and adjacent properties are as follows:

- a. Site: Vacant, Sound Transit aerial guideway
 - b. North: Professional office
 - c. South: Vacant
 - d. East: Vacant
 - e. West: WSDOT right-of-way (SR-509 extension)
3. Zoning (Exhibit 4c)
 - a. Site: RBX (Regional Business Mix)
 - b. North: RBX
 - c. South: MHP (Mobile Home Park)
 - d. East: CB-C (Community Business in Urban Center)
 - e. West: N/A
 4. Comprehensive Plan Designations (Exhibit 4d)
 - a. Site: RBX
 - b. North: RBX
 - c. South: RBX
 - d. East: CH (Commercial High Density)
 - e. West: N/A
 5. Utilities, Services
- The utilities and services for the site are as follows:
- a. Water District: Highline Water District
 - b. Sewer District: Midway Sewer District
 - c. School District: Highline School District
 - d. Fire District: Puget Sound Regional Fire Authority

C. Project Timeline

1. Voluntary Pre-application Meeting: October 8, 2021
2. Mandatory Pre-application Meeting: March 24, 2022
3. CUP Application (Exhibit 2a – 2d) submitted: May 5, 2022
4. Determination of Completeness (DOC) (Exhibit 5) issued: May 10, 2022
5. Notice of Application (NOA) (Exhibit 9b) issued: May 31, 2022
6. Engineering Variance Application (Exhibit 2e): August 23, 2022
7. SEPA determination (Exhibits 6 and 9c) issued: October 5, 2022
8. Public Hearing Notice (Exhibit 9d): October 26, 2022

D. SEPA Review

The City served as SEPA Lead Agency for this proposal and issued a Determination of Nonsignificance (DNS) on October 5, 2022 (Exhibits 6 and 9c). The comment period for the SEPA action expired on October 19, 2022. See Section II.D for public comments.

II. Staff Findings

A. Compliance with Zoning Standards

As part of the Conditional Use Permit review, City staff analyzed the proposal for compliance with the applicable development standards of the zoning code. As the tables below illustrate, the proposal complies with the applicable zoning code regulations.

Dimensional Standards (SMC 15.400.200 for the RBX Zone)

| Standard | Requirement | Proposal | Complies? |
|--------------------------------|----------------------------|----------|-----------|
| Lot area, minimum | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Development site area, minimum | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Setbacks | | | |
| Front, minimum | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Front, maximum | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Rear, minimum | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Side, minimum | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Building lot coverage, maximum | 75% | 42% | Yes |
| Lot width, minimum | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Structure height, minimum | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Structure height, maximum | Limited by FAA regulations | 65 feet | Yes |

Landscaping Standards (SMC.15.445.210 for Self Service Storage)

| Standard | Requirement | Proposal | Complies? |
|---|--|--|-----------|
| Street frontage | 10 feet, Type III | 10 feet, Type III | Yes |
| Building façade | 5 feet, Type V | 5 feet, Type V | Yes |
| Side/rear yards | 5 feet, Type II | 5 feet, Type II | Yes |
| Side/rear yards for non-compatible uses | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| Parking lot | 5 feet of Type III for the perimeter of the parking lot. At least one landscape island is required for every 7 parking spaces. | 5 feet of Type II perimeter landscaping. At least one landscape island for every 7 spaces. | Yes |

Parking Standards (SMC 15.455 for Self Service Storage)

| Standard | Requirement | Proposal | Complies? |
|------------------------------------|-------------|----------|-----------|
| Off-street parking spaces, minimum | 6 | 17 | Yes |
| Off-street parking spaces, maximum | N/A | N/A | N/A |

| | | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----|
| Parking space dimension | 8.5 feet by 18 feet | 8.5 feet by 18 feet | Yes |
|-------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----|

B. Conditional Use Permit Criteria

Decision criteria for conditional use permits are found under SMC 15.115.020(D). The Applicant’s and Staff’s responses to the criteria are provided below.

1. The proposed use is listed as a conditional use under SMC 15.205.040, Use Chart.
 - a. *Applicant Comment:* Per Table 15.205.040 Use Chart, Storage, Self-Service is listed as a conditional use in the Regional Business Mix (RBX) zone.
 - b. *Staff Findings:* Self-service storage is a conditional use in the RBX zone and caretaker/manager dwelling unit is a permitted use in the RBX zone per SMC 15.205.040.

2. The site is adequate in size and shape for the proposed project and the use conforms to the general character of the neighborhood.
 - a. *Applicant Comment:* The project site is an approximately 71,134 sf rectangular parcel located along the International Boulevard commercial corridor. The property is the ideal shape and size for self-storage because it will allow for a consolidated footprint with multiple points of entry to the building. Additionally, the self-service storage facility will enhance the commercial character of the neighborhood without impacting adjacent properties.
 - b. *Staff Findings:* As stated above, the parcel is approximately 1.8 acres. The building lot coverage will be 42%, well under the maximum permitted of 75% in the RBX zone. The building will have generous building setbacks of approximately 90 feet from the western property line and 75 feet from the eastern property line. The setbacks from the northern and southern property lines are 15 feet and 11 feet, respectively. Due to the parcel’s topography and the proposed landscaping, views of the building will be limited from the east and northeast. The purpose of the RBX zone is to provide “areas for the compatible development of heavy commercial uses such as warehouse/distribution, light assembly and service commercial in tandem with people-intensive commercial uses, such as office and related retail uses”. Therefore, a self-service storage facility conforms with the high-intensity commercial Comprehensive Plan designations of the neighborhood.

3. The unique character of topography, arterial streets and adjacent land use complement the proposed conditional use.
 - a. *Applicant Comment:* Factors such as grade, access and regional transit play a large role in shaping the development opportunities for the subject parcel. With more than sixty feet of elevation change from east to west, topography is a significant factor in determining the feasibility of uses onsite. The proposed storage facility contains minimal parking and take advantage of the topography by creating multiple levels of access. The building can terrace into the grade to reduce the height and scale of the development without sacrificing interior space. Additionally, the site has limited access ability due to the dead-end condition of 204th Street. More intense commercial developments would require significant improvements to both 204th and 28th Ave. Finally, the Sound Transit light rail crosses along the eastern edge of

- the property. The proximity of the rail and associated easements prevent the site area from being maximized.
- b. *Staff Findings:* The parcel's sloping topography, proximity to International Boulevard, South 200th Street, and SR-509, and adjacent land uses complement the proposed use. As the Applicant described above, the parcel's elevation change allows for multiple levels of access to the building, and the generally rectangular shape of the parcel allows for a consolidated building design. International Boulevard, the City's main north-south principal arterial, is approximately 100 feet to the east of the site. South 200th Street, another principal arterial, is approximately 1,300 feet to the north. The access to the SR-509 extension that is expected to be completed in 2025 will be accessed off 26th Avenue South via South 200th Street. The surrounding land uses of professional office and WSDOT right-of-way for SR-509 complement a self-service storage facility.
4. The conditional use would not be detrimental to surrounding land use.
 - a. *Applicant Comment:* The proposed self-service storage facility is a relatively low traffic use that can provide an added benefit to local business and residents needing valuable secure storage space. The project is not anticipated to cause detriment to any surrounding uses.
 - b. *Staff Findings:* Staff agrees with the Applicant that the proposed use will not be detrimental to surrounding land uses. Self-service storage facilities do not generate significant numbers of vehicle trips, noise, air pollution, or other negative externalities that can impact adjacent land uses. Exterior lighting will be designed to reduce glare and light trespass per Chapter 15.460, Performance Standards, and SMC Title 17, Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.
 5. Modifications to standards are limited to those which will mitigate impacts in a manner equal to or greater than the standards of this code.
 - a. *Applicant Comment:* The proposed project is not seeking modification to any local standards.
 - b. *Staff Findings:* No modifications to the standards are proposed.
 6. The conditional use is such that pedestrian and vehicular traffic associated with the use will not be hazardous or conflict with existing and anticipated traffic in the neighborhood.
 - a. *Applicant Comment:* The proposed self-service storage facility is a relatively low traffic use generating approximately 24 peak PM trips. This limited increase the traffic in the area does not present a hazard to the current pedestrian and vehicle traffic in the neighborhood.
 - b. *Staff Findings:* Staff concurs that the proposed use will not create a hazard to the existing and anticipated pedestrian and vehicle traffic in the neighborhood. South 204th Street to the west of 28th Avenue South is a dead-end street that only serves the subject parcel and a parcel to the north occupied by a professional office building. 28th Avenue South to the south of South 204th Street is also a dead-end street that only serves the subject parcel and two vacant parcels that the Applicant has under contract to purchase from the Port of Seattle for expansion of the self-service storage facility. The proposed project will improve pedestrian and vehicle traffic by adding a sidewalk, landscaping zone, and on-street parking to the south

side of South 204th Street, a sidewalk and landscaping zone to the west side of 28th Avenue South and widening the travel lanes of 28th Avenue South from 8 feet to 11 feet.

7. The conditional use will be supported by adequate public facilities or services and will not adversely affect public services to the surrounding area unless conditions can be established to mitigate adverse impacts.
 - a. *Applicant Comment:* The development will have very low impact on public utilities such as water and sewer. The building generated very little waste, utilizes minimal water, and will manage stormwater onsite. Additionally, the proposed storage facility will be constructed to all current building code standards related to fire and should have a minimal impact on the current emergency services in the area.
 - b. *Staff Findings:* Adequate public facilities and services are available to the site. Water utilities are provided by the Highline District, sewer utilities are provided by the Midway District, and emergency services are provided by the Puget Sound Regional Fire Authority. Vehicle and pedestrian access to the site is via South 204th Street and 28th Avenue South, both of which are local roads. South 204th Street connects to International Boulevard, the City's main north-south principal arterial, approximately 100 feet to the east of the site. 28th Avenue South connects to South 200th Street, a principal arterial, approximately 1,300 feet to the north.

C. Engineering Variance

The Applicant requested a deviation to the half-street improvements for 28th Avenue South because of the location of the columns supporting Sound Transit's Link light rail aerial guideway (Exhibit 3d) and because 28th Avenue is a dead-end street that only serves four parcels (Exhibit 4c).

28th Avenue South is classified as a local road and requires at least 60 feet of right-of-way (ROW) for the standard improvements (for this location, the improvements would include 11-foot travel lanes, 5-foot bicycle lanes, 4-foot landscaping zones, and 6-foot sidewalks). The existing ROW is only 40 feet wide with a 20-foot asphalt drive that was reconstructed by Sound Transit as part of the Link extension and meanders around the columns. The northernmost column along this stretch of 28th Avenue South (south of South 204th Street) is located 12 feet outside of the existing ROW and on the Applicant's parcel; the second column straddles the ROW and the parcel to the west; and the third column is located fully within the ROW. Although the first column can likely be incorporated into a widened landscaping zone, the second and third columns are in locations that would interfere with the vehicle and bicycle lanes, thus preventing the construction of the standard local road improvements centered in the ROW. The Applicant, in consultation with the City, is proposing to widen the existing 20-foot drive by two feet, thereby creating two 11-foot travel lanes, and install an expanded landscaping zone to incorporate the northernmost column and a 6-foot sidewalk on the west side of 28th Avenue South.

The stretch of 28th Avenue South that is south of South 204th Street is a dead-end street approximately 400 feet long. The road serves three parcels on the west side, the Applicant's parcel and two owned by the Port of Seattle, and one parcel on the east side, owned by the City. As mentioned under II.B.6.b, the Applicant is in negotiations with the Port of Seattle to purchase its parcels for future expansion of the self-service storage facility. The City's parcel, which also has

access from International Boulevard, is a narrow triangle that has limited development potential because of steep terrain and its odd shape.

City Staff supports the deviation request because of the physical limitations created by the aerial guideway's support columns, and because the proposed ROW improvements will still provide adequate pedestrian and vehicular access to the two parcels that are located to the south of the project site if the parcels are not incorporated into the Applicant's project in the future.

D. Public Comments

1. The NOA was published in the Seattle Times on May 31, 2022 (Exhibit 9b). The NOA was also posted on the site and mailed to property owners within 500 feet of the site. Public comments (Exhibit 10a) were received from the following individuals/organizations:
 - a. The Department of Ecology recommended that the City of SeaTac include conditions of approval for soil sampling and cleanup related to the Tacoma Smelter Plume.
Staff response: The City notified the Applicant of the concerns related to the Tacoma Smelter Plume.
2. The DNS was published in the Seattle Times and posted on the site on October 5, 2022. Public comments (Exhibit 10b) were received from the following individuals/organizations:
 - a. Sound Transit stated that the SEPA checklist did not identify the Link light rail guideway as being located on the parcel. The agency plans to maintain permanent property rights and restrictions on the parcel that may restrict other development on the site. Sound Transit also pointed out that the proposed completion of the Secure Storage project (Spring 2024) conflicts with the temporary construction easement on the property for the aerial guideway (expires June 4, 2024).
Staff response: The City provided Sound Transit a site plan that shows that the proposed building is set back 10 feet from the temporary easement and 45 feet from the permanent easement (Exhibit 3d). Sound Transit staff met on October 26, 2022, to discuss the Secure Space project and determined that it would not interfere with Sound Transit's easements (Exhibit 10b).

III. Staff Conclusions and Recommendation

Staff concludes that the proposed major conditional use permit and development proposal complies with the applicable development standards and criteria for approval if conditions below are met.

Staff recommends approval of the major conditional use permit subject to the following conditions:

A. Planning Division

1. The Conditional Use Permit approval shall be valid for a period of two (2) years. If a building permit application is not made before the expiration of that period, a new Conditional Use Permit application will be required.
2. Site and building development shall substantially conform to the submitted site plan and building elevations.

3. The landscaping details (e.g. species, location, number, size, spacing, legend, notes) and irrigation have not been reviewed with the CUP and will be reviewed at the time of building permit. Only the landscaping widths and types were reviewed.
4. A landscaping maintenance bond will be required before the issuance of a certificate of occupancy.
5. The parking spaces for employees and the caretaker/manager shall be designated as such with signage.

B. Engineering Division

1. The Applicant shall submit an STE Permit Application to comply with King County Surface Water Design Manual, King County Road Design and Construction Standards, and the City of SeaTac Addendum to King County Surface Water Design Manual, latest editions. It should include:
 - a. Technical Information Report,
 - b. Traffic Impact Analysis (updated for final unit counts and including appendices with Synchro information, particularly for the accesses),
 - c. Geotechnical Information Report,
 - d. Bond Quantity Worksheet (For On-Site & Right-Of-Way Work),
 - e. Recorded Documents (i.e., Easements, Utility Availability, Access, ROW Dedication documentation, etc.),
 - f. Declaration of Covenant for all Stormwater Facilities,
 - g. Frontage improvements as in Exhibit 8,
 - h. Traffic Control Plans to meet the minimum requirements of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, the latest edition.
2. The Applicant shall submit a Right-Of-Way Permit Application complying with the latest edition of the King County Road Design and Construction Standards for all work performed within the City's Right-of-Way.

Prepared by: Dennis Hartwick, *Senior Planner*

Prepared on: 11/08/2022

Exhibits

1. Staff Report, dated November 8, 2022
2. Application Materials
 - a. Master Land Use Application, submitted May 5, 2022
 - b. Conditional Use Permit Checklist, May 5, 2022
 - c. Multimodal Transportation Concurrency, submitted May 5, 2022
 - d. SEPA checklist, submitted May 5, 2022
 - e. Variance Application, submitted August 23, 2022
3. Plans, submitted
 - a. Site plan, dated October 12, 2022
 - b. Landscaping plan, dated October 21, 2022
 - c. Building elevations, renderings, dated October 12, 2022
 - d. Sound Transit easements, dated October 12, 2022
 - e. 28th Avenue South plans and section, dated September 28, 2022
4. Maps
 - a. Vicinity map
 - b. Aerial photo
 - c. Zoning map
 - d. Comprehensive Plan map
5. Determination of Completeness (DOC), issued May 10, 2022
6. Final Staff Evaluation (FSE) for Environmental Checklist, dated September 28, 2022
7. Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA), dated April 2022
8. Public Works Memorandum, dated November 8, 2022
9. Public Notices
 - a. Certification form, dated November 4, 2022
 - b. Notice of Application (NOA), issued May 31, 2022
 - c. SEPA determination, issued October 5, 2022
 - d. Public hearing notice, issued October 26, 2022
10. Public Comments
 - a. Department of Ecology, Comments on the NOA, dated June 14, 2022
 - b. Sound Transit, Comments on the SEPA determination, dated October 19, 2022 and May 26, 2022
11. Policy CED-503, effective March 23, 2018