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TO: City Planning Commission

FROM: Christopher Gulock, AICP, Staff

RE: **Request from PrimeSpace Capital LLC to rezone 15401 West Grand River from a B3 (Shopping District) zoning classification to a B4 (General Business District) zoning classification in order to allow for the existing building to be redeveloped as a public storage facility**

DATE: July 27, 2020

On August 6, 2020, the City Planning Commission (CPC) is scheduled to hold a public hearing on the request of PrimeSpace Capital LLC to amend Article XVII, District Map No. 68 of the 2019 Detroit City Code, Chapter 50, Zoning, by showing a B4 zoning classification where a B3 zoning classification currently exists on property at 15401 West Grand River Avenue, generally located at the southeast corner of West Grand River and Greenfield Road. Please see the attached rezoning application and public hearing notice which includes a map of the subject location. The change in zoning is being requested in order to allow the existing building at the site to be redeveloped as a public storage facility.

EXISTING USE AND PROPOSAL

The subject property is irregular in shape and contains 1.2 acres. The site contains a vacant two-story commercial building with a taller clock tower at the corner of West Grand River and Greenfield Road. Each floor of the existing building contains about 43,000 square feet. The existing building covers the entire 1.2 acres except for a small part of the rear driveway off of Greenfield Road at the rear of the site. The City owns a large surface parking lot south of the building.

CPC staff understands the site was originally built as a Federal's Department Store (circa 1940's) and closed in 1980. Attached to this report is a photo of the original building. After Federal's closed, it appears the store became a Kingsway department store that closed in 1990, and then the Mammoth Mall which closed in 2005.

The site is presently owned by local businessman, Herb Strather of Strather and Associates. PrimeSpace Capital (PSC), based out of New York, has signed a purchase agreement with Mr. Strather to redevelop the building. PSC is proposing to redevelop the existing building into a

Class A self-storage facility under the brand name, Cube Smart Self Storage. Cube Smart would manage the building for PSC. Also, two small retail units along West Grand River Avenue near the existing bus stop would be included

PSC indicates the renovation would include the basement, first floor, and second floor. There would be 800 to 900 storage units in the building ranging from five-by-five square feet to ten-by-thirty square feet. Loading and unloading would be from the rear of the building, off of Greenfield Road. PSC would need to use a small portion of the rear parking lot for parking and is also exploring whether to purchase the entire city-owned lot south of the building.

PSC indicates it plans to keep the historical aspects of the building, including restoring the existing façade panels and the front clock. The exterior material colors and signage would reflect the company's logo and branding. Below is a proposed rendering of the corner façade - please see the set of additional plans for reference.



PSC indicates self-storage, which used to be more industrial, has evolved in recent years into more of a retail-type business, with better buildings, climate control, and 24-access. PSC states that it's focus is to redevelop former retail buildings, such as the Mammoth Building, which are difficult to fill with traditional retail uses.

PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS

Surrounding Zoning and Land Use

The zoning classification and land uses surrounding the subject area are as follows:

- | | |
|--------|--|
| North: | B3; developed with the Town Center Mall building across West Grand River (connected by closed skywalk) |
| East: | B3; developed with AT&T/telephone exchange building and church beyond |
| South: | B3; surface parking lot owned by the City of Detroit |
| West: | B3; developed with parking lot for Advanced Auto Parts store and retail strip center |

Zoning Analysis

The subject site is presently zoned B3, which does not allow public storage facilities. The Zoning Ordinance first allows public storage houses as conditional in B4 and B5 and by-right in

M1 through M5. If the subject rezoning request were approved, the petitioner would then need to apply for conditional land use approval.

Master Plan Consistency

The subject site is located within the Cervený/Grandmont area of Neighborhood Cluster 9 of the Detroit Master Plan of Policies. The Future Land Use map for this area shows MTC Mixed-Town Center for the subject block. CPC staff has requested the Planning and Development Department (P&DD) comment regarding the consistency of this proposal with the City's Master Plan.

Historic Aspects

The building is not in a historic district, but is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. The developer has the option to apply for Federal historic tax credits, but has not yet indicated that they would do so. The developer would need to work with the State Historic Preservation Office if pursuing these credits.

Community Input

The proposed rezoning is located within City Council District 1, and CPC staff has forwarded the request to Council Member James Tate's office. CPC staff has also forwarded the request to the Department of Neighborhoods District 1 for dissemination. CPC staff is not aware of the developer meeting with any area community groups, but they indicate that they have reached out to Neighborhood District 1 and that Herb Strather has extensive contacts within the surrounding area.

Attachments: public hearing notice and application for zoning change

Cc: Katie Trudeau, Deputy Director P&DD
Karen Gage, P&DD
Esther Yang, P&DD
Greg Moots, P&DD
Lawrence Garcia, Corp. Counsel
Arthur Jemison, Chief of Services and Infrastructure



ARCHITECT ON RECORD Charles N. Agree, Inc.
DESIGNER Charles N. Agree
PROJECT Major Branch Department Store
DATE 1949
AUTHORSHIP: Largely Responsible for Design