



City of Coral Gables Planning and Zoning Staff Report

Property: 525 South Dixie Highway
Applicant: City of Coral Gables
Application: Conditional Use Site Plan Review
Public Hearing: Planning and Zoning Board / Local Planning Agency
Date & Time: **February 13, 2019, 6:00 – 9:00 p.m.**
Location: City Commission Chambers, City Hall,
405 Biltmore Way, Coral Gables, Florida, 33134

1. APPLICATION REQUEST

Application request for conditional use with site plan review to allow government use, known as Fire Station No. 2, on property zoned Special Use (S) District. The Resolution under consideration is as follows:

A Resolution of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida granting Conditional Use approval pursuant to Zoning Code Article 3, "Development Review," Division 4, "Conditional Uses," for government use on property zoned Special Use (S), known as Fire Station No. 2, legally described as Lot 1 thru 17, re-subdivision of a portion of Block 36-A, Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 2, (525 S. Dixie Highway), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for a repealer provision, providing for a severability clause, and providing for an effective date.

Conditional Use with Site Plan review requires two public hearings, including review and recommendation by the Planning and Zoning Board, and approval via Resolution by the City Commission.

2. APPLICATION SUMMARY

Project Information

The City previously operated a trolley maintenance and storage facility located at 4133 South Le Jeune Road. On August 4, 2014 the City Commission approved a settlement agreement with Astor Trolley, LLC for the development of this site. The agreement requires that the City vacate the trolley maintenance and storage operation. A new relocation site was proposed at 525 South Dixie Highway where the Fire Station 2 is currently located. It is zoned Special Use (S) District and has been identified as the best available location for the new trolley facility. Title VI equity analysis (required for in any program, service or activity that receives federal financial assistance) was completed for this site with the conclusion that the siting of the trolley facility at this location (525 South Dixie Highway) would not cause a disproportionate impact to a minority population.

Now the City is ready to proceed with the construction of a new Trolley Maintenance Facility including renovations, upgrades, and expansion to the existing Fire Station 2. The application package submitted by City's consultant, Silva Architects, is provided as Attachment A.

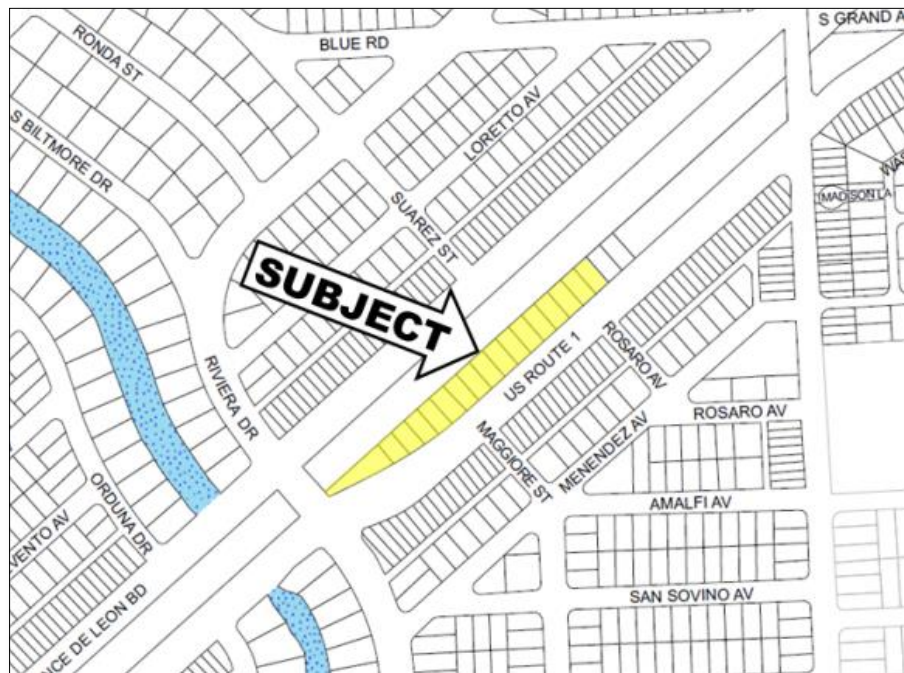
Site Area	Approximately 2 acres (87,096 square feet)
FAR	.45 FAR (41,581 square feet)
Height	48'-8" (top of training tower) 75' (top of communication antenna)
Program	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 8,868 sq. ft. existing fire station• 14,967 sq. ft. fire station addition• 17,746 sq. ft. new trolley facility
Parking	32 spaces

Project Location

Fire Station 2 is located on South Dixie Highway which is an arterial roadway separated from Ponce De Leon Boulevard and residential neighborhood to the north by the Metrorail, a municipal surface parking lot, and the future Underline.

The project site, 525 South Dixie Highway, is an irregular parcel totaling approximately two (2) acres. It has a Land Use Designation of Public Buildings and Grounds (Lots 1-14) and Commercial, Low-Rise Intensity (Lots 15-17). It is currently zoned Special Use (S) District. Location map shown below:

Block, Lot and Section Location Map



The following tables provide the subject property's designations and surrounding land uses:

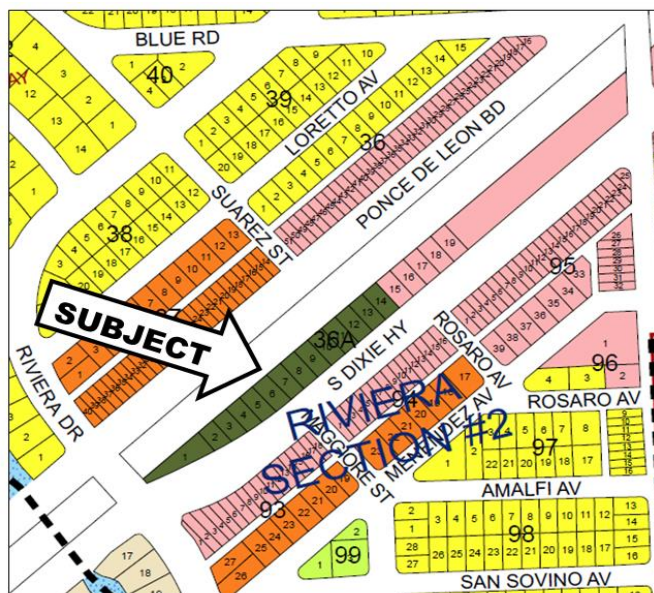
Existing Property Designations

Comprehensive Plan Map designation	Public Buildings and Grounds (Lots 1-14) Commercial, Low-Rise Intensity (Lots 15-17)
Zoning Map designation	Special Use (S) District
Within a designated Mixed-Use Overlay District (MXOD)	No
Mediterranean Architectural District (citywide)	N/A
Within Coral Gables Redevelopment Infill District (GRID)	Yes

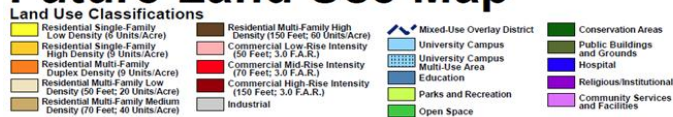
Surrounding Land Uses

Location	Existing Land Uses	CP Designations	Zoning Designations
North	Multi-Family building, Commercial building	Duplex Density (Multi-Family) Commercial, Low-Rise Intensity	MF1-Multi-Family Duplex
South	Dixie Hwy/US1 Office Building	Commercial Low-Rise Intensity	Commercial
East	Parking Lot Commercial Building	Commercial, Low-Rise Intensity	Special Use Commercial
West	Metro rail (right-of-way)	n/a	n/a

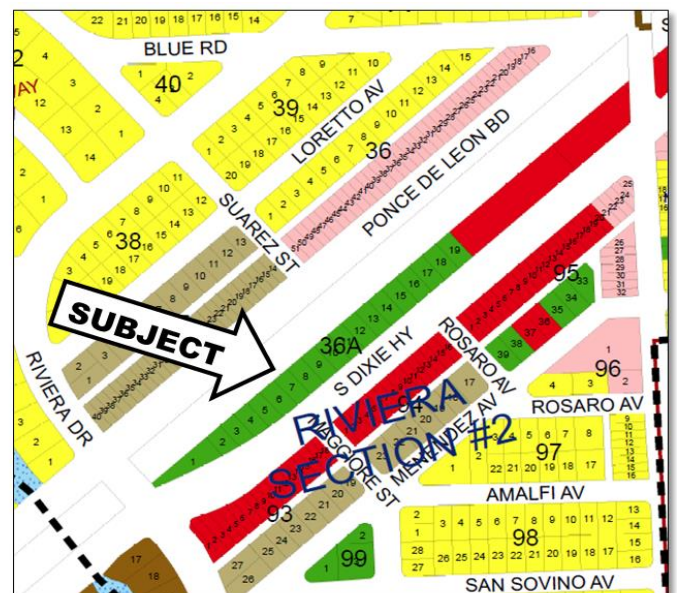
Existing Future Land Use Map



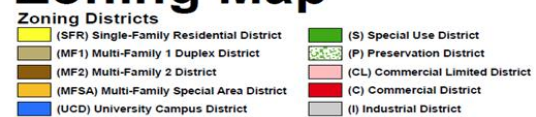
Future Land Use Map



Existing Zoning Map



Zoning Map



3. REVIEW TIMELINE / PUBLIC NOTICE

City Review Timeline

The submitted applications have undergone the following City reviews:

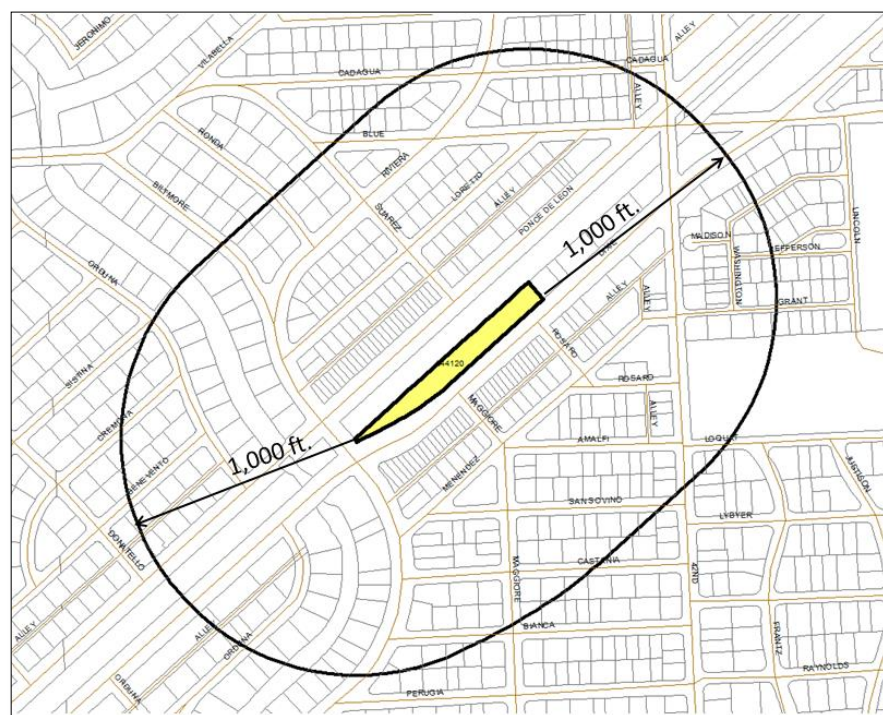
REVIEW COMMITTEES AND BOARDS	DATE
Board of Architects	05.01.14
Planning and Zoning Board	02.13.19
City Commission	TBD

Public Notification and Comments

The Applicant held a neighborhood meeting on February 9, 2014 as part of the Title VI analysis for the siting of a trolley facility at this location. On February 24, 2015 staff conducted a second public meeting on the project and presented several design options of the project.

The Zoning Code requires that a courtesy notification be provided to all property owners within 1,000 feet of the property. The notification was sent on February 1, 2019. The notice indicates the following: applications filed; public hearing dates/time/location; where the application files can be reviewed and provides for an opportunity to submit comments. Approximately 446 notices were mailed. A copy of the legal advertisement and courtesy notice are provided as Attachments B. A map of the notice radius is provided below.

Courtesy Notification Radius Map



The following has been completed to solicit input and provide notice of the Application:

PUBLIC NOTICE	DATE
Neighborhood meeting	December 9, 2014
Neighborhood meeting	February 24, 2015
Courtesy notification	February 1, 2019
Sign posting of property	February 1, 2019
Legal advertisement	February 1, 2019
Posted agenda on City web page/City Hall	February 4, 2019
Posted Staff report on City web page	February 4, 2019

Conditional Use with Site Plan Review

The City of Coral Gables (hereinafter referred to as “the City”) submitted an application (hereinafter referred to as the “Application”) for lots 1-17, Block 36-A, Riviera Section Part 2 (525 South Dixie Highway), commonly known as Fire Station 2. The Application is for conditional use with site plan review for government use. The scope of work includes renovations, upgrades, and expansion to the existing Fire Station 2; and construction of a new Trolley Maintenance Facility. Government uses are a conditional use when proposed in a Special Use (S) District, which is the zoning designation for this site.

The existing Fire Station was originally constructed in the 1960s and predates the existing regulation for Special Use District regarding setback, landscape, parking, and height. The site is a long and narrow shaped parcel that runs parallel to the Metrorail. Although zero setback is provided on the rear, it is abutting a 200-foot wide right-of-way including the Metrorail, the future Underline, and parking lot that is operated and maintained by the City along Ponce de Leon Boulevard.

Standard	Currently Permitted/Required	Proposed
Off-Street Parking Spaces	83	32
Building height	45 feet max	48’-8” (top of training tower) 75 ft. (top of communication antenna)
Landscape Open space	35% (30,484 square feet)	14% (13,016 square feet)
<i>Setbacks</i>		
Front (Dixie Highway)	25 feet	12 feet
Rear (Fronting Metrorail)	5 feet	0 feet
Side Street (Riviera Dr.)	15 feet	342 feet
Interior Side (east)	20 feet	102 feet

4. FINDINGS OF FACT

This section of the report presents City Staff's evaluation of the Application and Findings of Facts. The City's responsibility is to review the Application for consistency with the City's Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives and Policies and compliance with the Zoning Code and City Code.

To provide an overview of the purpose and intent of the Conditional Use provisions, Zoning Code Article 3, "Development Review," Division 4, "Conditional Uses," Section 3-401, "Purpose and Applicability" provides for the following:

"The purpose of providing for conditional uses within each zoning district is to recognize that there are uses which may have beneficial effects and serve important public interests, but which may, but not necessarily, have adverse effects on the environment, particularly residential areas, overburden public services, or change the desired character of an area. Individualized review of these uses is necessary due to the potential individual or cumulative impacts that they may have on the surrounding area or neighborhood. The review process allows the imposition of conditions to mitigate identified concerns or to deny the use if concerns cannot be resolved."

Staff's Findings: Based upon the Findings of Facts provided herein, Staff finds the Application satisfies the provisions of the Zoning Code for the Conditional Use Site Plan Review. The existing Fire Station 2 is in need of renovations, upgrades, and expansion in order to most efficiently meet the current and future needs of the community. This location for the new Trolley Maintenance Facility is located ¼ mile from the Ponce de Leon trolley route thereby increases efficiency in operations in order to provide consistent, high quality and efficient transit service to our constituents.

Staff review finds that the proposed plans and Staff's recommended conditions of approval incorporate measures to mitigate potentially negative impacts that could have adverse effects on neighboring properties.

Staff's responsibility is to review the application in accordance with the criteria provided in Zoning Code Article 3, "Development Review", Division 4, "Conditional Uses", Section 3-408, "Standards for review" and provide Findings of Fact regarding the proposed application. Staff has compared the Applicant's proposal with the review criteria set out in Zoning Code Section 3-408, and found that the application complies with the following standards and criteria:

A Conditional Use site plan review must comply with Zoning Code Section 3-408, "Standards for Review" as follows:

STANDARD	STAFF EVALUATION
1. The proposed conditional use is consistent with and furthers the goals, objectives and policies of the Comprehensive Land Use Plan and furthers the purposes	Yes. As concluded in this report, this Application is "consistent" with the CP's Goals, Objectives and Policies with the recommended conditions of approval and site plan provisions which address the City's objectives of improving city facilities to maintain the "City Beautiful" standards as well as to improve the quality of life for City residents,

STANDARD	STAFF EVALUATION
of these regulations and other City ordinances and actions designed to implement the Plan.	visitors and employees.
2. The available use to which the property may be put is appropriate to the property that is subject to the proposed conditional use and compatible with existing and planned uses in the area.	Yes. The proposal of a Fire Station and Trolley Maintenance Facility (government uses) is consistent with the current zoning designation of the property and is allowed under Conditional Use approval by the Zoning Code in Special Use (S) District.
3. The proposed conditional use does not conflict with the needs and character of the neighborhood and the City	Yes. The Fire Station 2 is an existing building on site constructed in the early 1960s and needs renovations and upgrades. Improving this facility fulfills the objectives of the City to provide better service citywide especially the adjacent neighborhoods.
4. The proposed conditional use will not adversely or unreasonably affect the use of other property in the area.	Yes. The proposal of a Fire Station and Trolley Maintenance Facility (government uses) is consistent with the current zoning designation of the property and is allowed under Conditional Use approval by the Zoning Code in Special Use (S) District. It will not adversely or unreasonably affect the use of other adjoining, adjacent and contiguous properties in the area. Conditions of approval are recommended that mitigate potential negative impacts created during construction, and after the project has been completed. These include conditions that regulate the closure of streets around the project site during construction, designation of a construction information/contact person, restrictions on illuminated signage and exterior building lighting, and the provision of public realm/landscaping improvements, streetscape improvements and other off-site improvements that would otherwise not have been realized.
5. The proposed use is compatible with the nature, condition and development of adjacent uses, buildings and structures and will not adversely affect the adjacent uses, buildings or structures	Yes. Fire Station 2 is an existing building on site that is in need of renovations and upgrades. The trolley facility will provide a permanent location for the City's Trolley system in order to increase efficiency in operations.
6. The parcel proposed for development is adequate in size and shape to accommodate all development features.	Yes. The parcel is approximately 2 acres (87,096 square feet) in size which accommodates all development features.
7. The nature of the proposed development is not detrimental to the health, safety and general welfare of the community.	Yes. Renovation to the existing Fire Station is a much needed improvement for this site. The addition of the Trolley Maintenance Facility is not detrimental to the health, safety and general welfare of the community as it aims to provide better service to the community.
8. The design of the proposed driveways, circulation patterns and parking is well defined to	Yes. Vehicular parking for the project is provided on site. No new curb cuts are being proposed, it utilizes the circulation layout.

STANDARD	STAFF EVALUATION
promote vehicular and pedestrian circulation.	
9. The proposed conditional use satisfies the concurrency standards of Article 3, Division 13 and will not adversely burden public facilities, including the traffic-carrying capacities of streets, in an unreasonable or disproportionate manner.	Yes. The proposed project satisfies the concurrency standards. It was found that there is adequate infrastructure including water, sewer, open space, parks and recreation facilities available to support the project.

Consistency Evaluation of the Comprehensive Plan (CP) Goals, Objectives and Policies

This section provides those CP Goals, Objectives and Policies applicable to the Application and the determination of consistency:

REF. NO.	COMPREHENSIVE PLAN GOAL, OBJECTIVE AND POLICY	STAFF REVIEW
1	Goal FLU-1. Protect, strengthen, and enhance the City of Coral Gables as a vibrant community ensuring that its neighborhoods, business opportunities, shopping, employment centers, cultural activities, historic value, desirable housing, open spaces, and natural resources make the City a very desirable place to work, live and play.	Complies
2	Objective FLU-1.1. Preserve Coral Gables as a “placemaker” where the balance of existing and future uses is maintained to achieve a high quality living environment by encouraging compatible land uses, restoring and protecting the natural environment, and providing facilities and services which meet or exceed the minimum Level of Service (LOS) standards and meet the social and economic needs of the community through the Comprehensive Plan and Future Land Use Classifications and Map (see FLU-1: Future Land Use Map).	Complies
3	Policy FLU-1.1.1. The City’s Future Land Use Classifications and Map shall describe, assign, and depict the future land uses found to be in the public interest and to be the basis for regulations, programs, actions and rules of the City and other affected agencies.	Complies
4	Policy MOB-1.1.5. Improve amenities within public spaces, streets, alleys and parks to include the following improvements: seating; art; architectural elements (at street level); lighting; bicycle parking; street trees; improved pedestrian crossing with bulb-outs, small curb radii, on-street parking along sidewalks, pedestrian paths and bicycle paths to encourage walking and cycling with the intent of enhancing the feeling of safety.	Complies
5	Goal SAF-1. The City of Coral Gables’ shall continue to maintain and enhance high level safety and security for residents and visitors due to the City’s excellent police and fire protection services, medical and healthcare services and facilities, and emergency preparedness, response, and recovery plans.	Complies
6	Objective CIE-1.1. Maintain and enhance public facilities and delivery of services for both existing and future residents and property owners. The City shall	Complies

Staff Comments: Staff's determination that this application is consistent with the CP Goals, Objectives and Policies that are identified is based upon compliance with conditions of approval recommended by Staff. It meets the city's objectives of improving city facilities to maintain the "City Beautiful" standards as well as to improve the quality of life for City residents, visitors and employees.

5 . STAFF RECOMMENDATION AND CONDITIONS OF APPROVAL

Based upon the complete Findings of Fact contained within this report, staff recommends the following:

A Resolution of the City Commission of Coral Gables, Florida granting conditional use approval pursuant to Zoning Code Article 3, "Development Review," Division 4, "Conditional Uses," for government use on property zoned Special Use (S), known as Fire Station No. 2, legally described as Lot 1 thru 17, re-subdivision of a portion of Block 36-A, Coral Gables Riviera Section Part 2, (525 S. Dixie Highway), Coral Gables, Florida; including required conditions; providing for a repealer provision, providing for a severability clause, and providing for an effective date.

Staff recommends **Approval, with conditions**. Please refer to the Conditions of Approval on the proceeding pages.

Summary of the Basis for Approval

As enumerated in the Findings of Fact contained herein, Staff finds the Application is in compliance with the Comprehensive Plan, Zoning Code, and other applicable City Codes, subject to the identified conditions of approval.

Conditions of Approval

In furtherance of the Comprehensive Plan's Goals, Objectives and Policies, and all other applicable Zoning Code and City Code provisions, the recommendation for approval of the proposed project is subject to all of the following conditions of approval. Additional conditions of approval may be added to this list prior to Commission review.

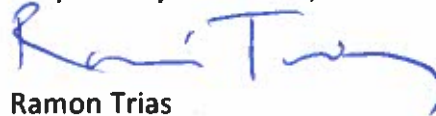
1. Application/supporting documentation. Construction of the proposed project shall be in substantial conformance with the following:
 - a. Applicant's Plan Submittal Package dated 12.07.18 prepared by Silva Architects with setbacks, parking, building height, and landscape open space as shown.
 - b. Right-of-way and public realm improvement. Install all right-of-way improvements and all landscaping, public realm and streetscape improvements subject to review and approval by the Directors of Public Works, Landscape Services, Planning and Zoning, and Parking.
 - c. Maintain US-1 and M-Path sidewalks open during construction.

6. ATTACHMENTS

- A. Applicant's submittal package dated December 7, 2018.
- B. 02.01.19 Legal Ad and Courtesy notice

Please visit the City's webpage at www.coralgables.com to view all Application materials, notices, applicable public comments, minutes, etc. The complete Application and all background information also is on file and available for examination during business hours at the Planning and Zoning Division, 427 Biltmore Way, Suite 201, Coral Gables, Florida, 33134.

Respectfully submitted,



Ramon Trias
Assistant Director of Development Services
for Planning and Zoning
City of Coral Gables, Florida