
STAFF REPORT

Planning and Zoning:	10/5/2020	Staff Contact:	Ian Beck, Planner I
City Council:	10/27/2020	E-mail:	ianb@pflugervilletx.gov
City Council:	11/10/2020	Phone:	512-990-6303

SUBJECT: To receive public comment and consider an application for a Specific Use Permit for a proposed Office/Warehouse in the Urban Center Corridor Level 5 (CL5) zoning district on an approximate 4.4-acre tract located at the northeast corner of the Impact Way and Helios Way intersection; to be known as the Exaco Warehouse Specific Use Permit (SUP2008-01).

PURPOSE OF SPECIFIC USE PERMIT:

A specific use permit provides for a case-by-case review of the proposed land use to ensure compatibility with the surrounding uses as well as the Unified Development Code (UDC). A specific use permit is similar to a zoning request in that the application is considered at public hearings and allows for the public, Planning and Zoning Commission, and City Council to review and consider the proposed request based on the specific criteria outlined in the UDC.

The Planning and Zoning Commission and City Council shall consider the following criteria in determining the appropriateness of the specific use permit request:

1. Whether the use is harmonious and compatible with its surrounding existing uses or proposed uses;
2. Whether the activities requested by the applicant are normally associated with the requested use;
3. Whether the nature of the use is reasonable; and
4. Whether any adverse impact on the surrounding area has been mitigated.

In granting a specific use permit, the City Council may impose conditions upon the proposed use.

LOCATION:

The site for the proposed Exaco Warehouse SUP is located generally northeast of the Impact Way and Helios Way intersection. The proposed project is located within vacant lots directly south of the Best Western Plus within the Renewable Energy Park. The proposed Specific Use Permit will apply to a singular tract of land once the vacant lots have gone through the replatting process of Subchapter 15.



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ZONING:

The property is zoned Urban Center Corridor Level 5 (CL5).

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

The applicant has proposed to establish an office/warehouse oriented towards State Highway 130, located to the rear of the existing Best Western Plus located within the Renewable Energy Park. The proposed office/warehouse is anticipated to include a 7,000 square foot showroom and a 30,000 square foot warehouse. The showroom will utilize 4,000 square feet to display Exaco's product line of available of high-end greenhouse kits for purchase while the remaining 3,000 square feet will be utilized for office/support space. The showroom's vision is to create a vibrant area to display available products fully built out in order to help navigate potential questions or concerns for the greenhouse structures. The warehouse will be utilized for importing materials, storage and distribution of purchased greenhouse structures and accessories.

Land Use: According to the Unified Development Code, an office/warehouse is a building or a portion of a building, which is a structurally separate and functionally distinct unit, primarily devoted to storage, warehousing and distribution of goods, merchandise, supplies, and equipment. Accessory uses may include retail and wholesale sales areas, sales office, and display areas for products sold and distributed from the storage and warehousing areas.

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The establishment has proposed the following hours of operation:

- Monday-Friday: 8am to 6pm.
- Saturday/Sunday: Appointment only basis.

Parking: Based on Subchapter 10 Table 10.4.6 of the Unified Development Code, an office warehouse has a required parking standard of 1:300 square feet of office and 1:1000 square feet of warehouse. Per the proposed building footprint, the proposed office/warehouse will need to provide a minimum of 44 parking spaces.

Structural Modifications and Landscaping: The proposed office/warehouse will be reviewed under Subchapter 9 Section 9.5 of the Unified Development Code to ensure the building's design complies with the UDC. The office/warehouse will have a minimum landscape requirement of 15% with 1 tree and 4 shrubs planted per 300 square feet of the lot landscaped, as well as street scape requirements along Helios Way and State Highway 130.

Signage: No signage currently exists on site. The sign requirements of the 2015 International Building Code will apply for any new or additional signage.

LAND USE COMPATIBILITY:

The proposed office/warehouse would be located within the vacant lot to the rear of the existing Best Western Plus. The area is within the Renewable Energy Park of Pflugerville and is surrounded by several commercial/compatible uses including; hotels, professional offices, office/warehouses and distribution/logistics center. As proposed, the office/warehouse will display a variety of greenhouse products along with accessories to beautify/attach to the green house products within the showroom area, while the warehouse will be utilized for importing materials, storage and distribution of purchased greenhouse structures and accessories. The proposed structure will be oriented towards SH 130, similar to structures abutting State Highway 130. Streetscape will be utilized to beautify the site and provide additional screening for the warehouse/distribution area. The proposed structure will not exhibit negative impacts on known historic, cultural or architectural nature of the site or surrounding area.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Located within the Renewable Energy Park of Pflugerville in the Urban Center Level 5 (CL5) zoning district. The proposed office/warehouse is anticipated to offer a unique retail use for local residents and customers nationwide to explore top of the line green houses for purchase. The hours of operation for the office/warehouse will be Monday through Friday from 8am to 6pm and Saturday and Sunday by appointment only. All site development regulations per the Urban Center Level 5 (CL5) zoning district will be applied to the site once submitted for site plan review. Given the hours of operation, noise is not anticipated to be an issue for the surrounding uses. The proposed office/warehouse will bring a unique family owned retail use to the surrounding area; the site will be built to the development regulations of the Unified Development Code and will not negatively affect existing uses. Staff recommends approval of the request with no specific conditions.

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NOTIFICATION:

Notification letters were sent to property owners within 500-ft. of the proposed site. A sign was placed on the property and a public notice appeared in the Pflugerville Pflag newspaper.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Notification Map
- Applicant Project Description
- Proposed Location
- Survey

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NOTIFICATION MAP:



APPLICANT PROJECT DESCRIPTION:



August 31, 2020

City of Pflugerville
Planning Department
P.O. Box 589
Pflugerville, Texas 78691



Attn: Planning Department

Reference: Exaco Warehouse SUP Permit

To Whom It May Concern:



M&S Engineering is pleased to present the Specific Use permit for the Exaco Warehouse located on lots 2E and 2G of the Renewable Energy Park subdivision. The total area within the plat is 4.423-acres and the initial site development will be limited to a vertical building on lot 2G and parking on lot 2E. Future expansion of the business will be on lot 2E and could include an additional building to support the expansion needs of the business. The site is currently located in the City of Pflugerville and within a CL-5 Urban Center Level 5 district. The specific use permit is required because it is within the CL-5 district.

Exaco is a 30-year-old family-owned company, now based in Austin, that imports and distributes fine European greenhouses and gardening products from around the world. Exaco drop ships its composters, rain barrels, planters, sand boxes and greenhouses to the online customers of such retailers as Costco.com, HomeDepot.com, Lowes.com, Amazon.com, Walmart.com, Wayfair.com and a host of major independent websites. Kim and Andrew Cook are the owners and operators of the business and are happy to answer any questions on this development. They can be reached at 512.407.8500 or at Kim.coom@exaco.com

The proposed 30,000 sq ft warehouse and 7,000 sq ft office/showroom will handle growing operations of the business, additional employees and will allow customers to see models of its high-end German and Belgian greenhouses prior to purchase. EXACO, a nationally certified woman-owned business (WBE), is a community-minded company that has participated in the City of Austin composter-rebate program and supported the nonprofit Green Corn Project. Its Exaco USA division has worked for nearly 30 years with a sheltered workshop for adults with mental disabilities, which handles packaging for a product sold in Home Depot stores in Texas.

Water and wastewater service are currently provided by the City of Pflugerville. Stormwater runoff conveyance will be through sub-surface pipe to a previously designed regional detention pond. There will be no adverse impacts to any properties downstream of this development. This project does not require any exemption to the watershed protection regulations. Additionally, there will be no variance requests associated with this site plan request at this time.

APPLICANT PROJECT DESCRIPTION CONT'D.



In addition to this specific use permit, the owner is interested in using alternative building materials for the building façade. The owner requests materials other than masonry or stucco.

The proposed office/showroom/warehouse use will be:

- Harmonious, compatible and adaptable to the buildings on the abutting properties and those in the vicinity of this property. The owners intend to construct sidewalk as required for customers to traverse the property and to enter their building. Off-street parking will be provided and screening as ordinance required. Screening will be similar in nature to that of the surrounding properties.
- Normally associated with a large warehouse type use. Exaco currently operates at 10203-B Metropolitan Drive, Austin, Texas 78758 and plans to construct and operate in a similar, upgraded, structure on this site.
- Reasonable. The neighboring Community Impact Print facility would harmonize this type of business.
- Aware of adverse impacts on any surrounding building or area and will mitigate for those on-site. Lot 2E contains some drainage easements and this development will allow for increased mitigation of these flows and will allow for those flows to be mitigated further in a sub-surface pipe system.
- In conformance with the four guiding principles for the SH-130 and SH-45 corridor.
 - Retail activities are preferred in the SH 130 and Pecan Street area, and this is in conformance.
 - The structure will orient towards SH 130, similar to structures on abutting properties.
 - Streetscape will be retained and beautified as part of this project.
 - This structure will not exhibit negative impacts on known historic, cultural or architectural nature of the site or surrounding area.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact me at 512.350.6228 or at jhenderson@msengr.com.

Sincerely,



Jen Henderson, PE
Land Development Division Manager

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PROPOSED LOCATION



SURVEY:

