



ZBOA Agenda Item # 3

FEBRUARY 6, 2018

Variance Request by Deep South Sanitation LLC

File #: APP-2018-02

Deep South Sanitation LLC is requesting Variances to LDR Section 218-13(LLL) as it pertains to an accessory Solid Waste Transfer Station. The subject property consists of 5.44 acres and is the southerly half of a 10.88 acre parcel located at 205 Tucker Road. This is along the west side of the Georgia Southern & Florida railroad, between Tucker Road and Gil Harbin Industrial Blvd. All of this property is currently zoned E-R, and the owner is requesting to rezone this property to M-2 (rezoning file # VA-2018-02). Deep South Sanitation LLC (as a tenant on the property) is also requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Solid Waste hauling operation with an accessory Solid Waste transfer station in M-2 zoning (file # CU-2018-02). Both of these requests will be heard by the Valdosta City Council on Thursday, February 8th.

The property contains an old warehouse building that was previously used by a concrete pipe manufacturing business. The applicant is proposing to use the property as a base of operations for their solid waste hauling business which currently consists of a fleet of 5 garbage trucks. The applicant is also proposing to maintain an accessory solid waste transfer station facility (already permitted by Georgia EPD) in the form of an in-ground concrete truck loading bay whereby waste is transferred from the garbage collection trucks to a larger truck/trailer for transportation to a solid waste landfill. This transfer facility would be used only by the applicant and there would be no solid waste deposited or maintained on the premises. As part of their operation, the applicant is also proposing to have a small temporary outdoor stockpile of collected natural vegetation yard debris that would be periodically removed from the site by another business for conversion to mulch or bio fuel. It should be noted that the applicant had previously been operating from a site in unincorporated Lowndes County, but relocated much of their business to the subject property last year – not fully aware of all the zoning and permitting requirements. Code enforcement action is pending the outcome of all these public hearings.

It should be noted that solid waste transfer stations normally trigger a Development of Regional Impact (DRI) review in accordance with State law. and the applicant's land use proposal was submitted to Regional and State authorities for their consideration. However, in this case it was officially determined by these authorities that the proposed transfer station does "not" trigger a DRI due to its limited size and scope of operation. This is despite the fact that the use was still required to obtain a Georgia EPD permit. Because of the EPD permit, and the use's integral nature as part of the solid waste hauling operation, planning staff determined that the transfer station still triggered the need for CUP approval under the City's LDR requirements, as well as the need for certain Variances from the City's supplemental standards for such use.

The subject property is located within a very well-established industrial area along the Tucker Road and Gil Harbin Industrial Blvd corridors. This property was originally developed in unincorporated Lowndes County as a concrete pipe manufacturing facility (Miller Concrete Pipe Co.) in the 1950's, which operated for more than 50 years. The property was annexed into the City as part of the "Islands Annexation" in 2006, but by this time the concrete manufacturing business had ceased operations. The remaining stockpiles of concrete pipe are still located on the unleased portion of the owner's property to the north. Most of the surrounding parcels are zoned M-2 (the few others are M-1) and they are dominated by heavy industrial uses. Of particular note is the large property to the west which contains the Lowndes County public works center and contains very large stockpiles of outdoor materials. Other nearby property uses include a small concrete batch mixing site (Reames Concrete) to the east, and the Lowndes County recycling collection center to the south.

The applicant's proposed operations have more than enough room on the subject property and constitute very little physical change from what started on the site more than 60 years ago. There are no issues or concerns with the primary solid waste "hauling operation" use of the property – since it functions mainly as a base of operations and the existing warehouse is essentially used as a large garage for the trucks. The transfer station, as an accessory use to the primary hauling operation, is very small in comparison to a typical solid waste transfer station that operates as its own separate business. There are currently no such facilities in Lowndes County. These have the potential to be very large facilities that resemble an "indoor landfill", and generate lots of truck traffic and negative impacts on surrounding properties. In this case, the applicant's proposal is nowhere near this scale or level of impact.