



GLPC AGENDA ITEM # 8

JANUARY 27, 2025

Conditional Use Request by Perma-Fix of South Georgia Inc. File #: CU-2025-02

Perma-Fix of South Georgia, Inc. is requesting a Conditional Use Permit (CUP) for a Solid Waste Transfer Station in a Heavy Industrial (M-2) zoning district. The subject property consists of 3.56 acres located at 1612 James P Rodgers Circle, which is on the north side of the road at the very end of the cul-de-sac. The property contains an existing warehouse and office buildings related to ongoing solid waste transfer operations on a portion of the property. The applicant recently received approval from Georgia EPD to resume hazardous waste "10-day Transfer" operations which had been discontinued about 7 years ago. They are now proposing to have assistance from a 3rd party vendor, and they are seeking City approval in order to complete their overall approval process. Please refer to Letter of Intent for more details.

The subject property is located within an **Industrial Activity Center (IAC)** Character Area on the Future Development Map of the Comprehensive Plan. The property is also located within the middle of the very well-established "Azalea City Industrial Park" which contains a wide variety of heavy industrial uses.

As described in the applicant's letter of intent, this property has a long history of operating as a trucking terminal for solid waste transfer as well as other similar industrial activities, including uses that involve the handling of hazardous wastes. Before 2009, all of this was considered a "permitted use" under the City's M-2 zoning regulations. With the adoption of the LDR in 2009, a new line item for "Solid Waste Transfer Station" was added to the zoning Use Table, which requires this use to have CUP approval in M-2. As a result, the existing transfer station use of the property became a "*grandfathered legal non-conforming use*" in 2009. Then in 2013 the site suffered a tragic fire which caused the immediate closure of part of the facility, with environmental cleanup and monitoring activities being triggered. The burned portion of the facility was permanently removed. However, the other transfer operations on site still continued, including the 10-Day solid waste transfer operation, which was voluntarily terminated by the applicant in 2018. As a result, the grandfathering of that portion of the operation expires a year later in 2019. Now, the applicant is proposing to resume such operations under a new State permit, and this is triggering the need for CUP approval.

About a year ago, the applicant received approval from Georgia EPD to resume the short-term storage (10 days max.) and transfer operations of hazardous waste at this site. The applicant is proposing to lease the property to Veolia as a tenant for this operation. Many years ago, this site received hazardous waste in separate containers, whereby some were opened so that the contents could be consolidated (mixed) together before shipment to their final destination. (this part of the operation is what triggered the tragic fire in 2013) Now, the applicant is proposing to receive containers and leave them unopened, and then simply have them sorted for re-transfer via truck to their final destination, with the mandate that they be stored on site no more than 10 days. Final destinations include disposal sites in other states – depending on the specific type of material. Again, please refer to Letter of Intent for further details.

This property has a long history of industrial uses, including solid waste transfer and related operations. If it were not for the adoption of the LDR regulations in 2009, the applicant could fully re-institute this prior use of the property as an ongoing Permitted Use. However, this change of regulations is a good thing so that the City can re-evaluate the potential impacts of what could otherwise be an unfettered intensive industrial use with unlimited scale, or perhaps located in an inappropriate location. In this particular case, the overall scope of the use is relatively small and the size of the property is somewhat limiting --- to no greater than what has existed on the property in the past. The location of the property deep within a heavy industrial area is as ideal a location as could be expected, and the proposal does not represent a change to what has existed on this site for many years in the past. The transfer and handling of hazardous wastes is strictly regulated and monitored by the State, as it should be, and the applicant (and its vendor) are well-accustomed to these regulations and State oversight. Staff is supportive of the applicant's proposed use so long as the hazardous waste containers remain unopened and all State permitting regulations and procedures are followed.