



Note: Staff reports can be accessed at www.mncppc.org/pgco/planning/plan.htm.

SPECIAL EXCEPTION

SE-4622

Application	General Data
Project Name: EZ STORAGE (SOUTH BOWIE) Location: South side of Pennsbury Drive between the north and southbound travel lanes of US 301 Applicant/Address: SIENA CORPORATION 8221 SNOWDEN RIVER PARKWAY COLUMBIA, MD 21045	Date Accepted: 1/12/07
	Planning Board Action Limit: NA
	Plan Acreage: 9.46
	Zone: C-M
	Dwelling Units: NA
	Square Footage: 202,194
	Planning Area: 71B
	Tier: Developing
	Council District: 4
	Municipality: Bowie
	200-Scale Base Map: 202NE14

Purpose of Application	Notice Dates
66,000-square-foot addition with 600 storage units to an existing consolidated storage facility	Adjoining Property Owners Previous Parties of Record Registered Associations: 10/31/06 (CB-12-2003)
	Sign(s) Posted on Site and Notice of Hearing Mailed: NA

Staff Recommendation		Staff Reviewer: Laxmi Srinivas	
APPROVAL	APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS	DISAPPROVAL	DISCUSSION
	X		

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY PLANNING BOARD

STAFF REPORT

September 17, 2007

TECHNICAL STAFF REPORT:

TO: The Prince George s County Planning Board

VIA: Jimi Jones, Acting Zoning Supervisor

FROM: Laxmi Srinivas, Senior Planner

SUBJECT: **Special Exception No. 4622**

REQUEST: **Consolidated Storage in the C-M Zone**

RECOMMENDATION: **APPROVAL with Conditions**

NOTE:

This application is on the agenda for the Planning Board to decide whether or not to schedule a public hearing. If the Planning Board decides to hear the application, it will be placed on a future agenda.

Any person may request the Planning Board to schedule a public hearing. The request may be made in writing prior to the agenda date or in person on the agenda date. All requests must specify the reasons for the public hearing. All parties will be notified of the Planning Board's decision.

You are encouraged to become a person of record in this application. The request must be made in writing and sent to the Office of the Zoning Hearing Examiner at the address indicated above. Questions about becoming a person of record should be directed to the Hearing Examiner at 301-952-3644. All other questions should be directed to the Development Review Division at 301-952-3530.

FINDINGS:

- A. **Location and Field Inspection:** The property is located on the south side of Pennsbury Drive, between northbound and southbound Robert S. Crain Highway (US 301). The property comprises a total of 9.46 acres of land and is improved with a consolidated storage facility in a one-story brick and aluminum building with associated parking lots and a stormwater management pond. The property is irregularly shaped and is characterized by topography that is generally level in the center and steeply sloped at its western edge. The property is zoned C-M and has approximately 1,024 feet of frontage on southbound US 301, 718 feet of frontage on northbound US 301, and 381 feet of frontage on Pennsbury Drive. The property is accessed via Pennsbury Drive.

- B. **Development Data Summary:**

	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Zone (s)	C-M	C-M
Use (s)	Consolidated Storage	Consolidated Storage
Acreage	9.46	9.46
Lots	NA	NA
Parcels	1	1
Square footage/GFA	136,194	202,194

- C. **History:** The property was developed with a lumber and hardware store in the early 1980s. The Bowie Branch of the Prince George's County Library was temporarily located there from 1997 to 1999. The building became vacant after the library moved out during the last week of August 1999.

Special Exception SE-4372 was approved in April 2001 to permit the construction of a 1,070-unit consolidated storage facility.

A minor revision to the special exception, ROSP SE-4372/01, a variance, VSE-4372/02, and Alternative Compliance AC-02026 was approved by the Planning Board on October 3, 2002 (PGCPB No. 02-190). The revision included minor changes to the site and landscape plan to accommodate the revised ultimate rights-of-way of north and southbound US 301.

- D. **Master Plan Recommendation:** The application conforms to the land use recommendations of the 2006 Bowie and vicinity master plan for storage warehouse land uses in the US 301/MD 3 medians. The property is located in an area identified in the 2002 General Plan as the Developing Tier. The vision for the Developing Tier is to maintain a pattern of low- to moderate-density suburban residential communities, distinct commercial centers, and employment areas that are increasingly transit serviceable.
- E. **Request:** The applicant is proposing a three-story addition on the north side of the property facing Pennsbury Drive in an area that is developed with 16 existing loading spaces. The parking spaces will be relocated to accommodate the proposed addition. The proposed addition will be 66,000 square feet and will include 600 internally accessed units. It will have EIFS panels to match the existing building and window and door panel units. Some of the existing signage will be relocated to the new building. Minor changes to the parking and landscaping are proposed to accommodate the addition. The applicant is adding 48 percent of the existing gross floor area.

F. **Neighborhood and Surrounding Uses:** The subject property is located in a neighborhood defined by the following boundaries:

- Pointer Ridge Drive to the north
- Northbound lanes of US 301 to the east
- Central Avenue to the south
- Pennsylvania Railroad tracks to the west

The property is surrounded by the following uses:

- North - Pennsbury Drive and wooded parcel in the O-S Zone across Pennsbury Drive
- South - Single-family dwelling in the R-E Zone
- East - Northbound US 301 and grass fields in the C-M Zone across US 301
- West - Southbound US 301 and residential townhouses in the R-M Zone across US 301

G. **Specific Special Exception Requirements:**

Note: Pursuant to Council Bill 29 of 2000 (CB-29), consolidated storage is no longer permitted as a special exception in the C-M Zone. The bill allows special exception applications filed prior to January 1, 2000, to continue through the review and hearing procedures in Part 4 of the ordinance. Moreover, CB-29 also specifies that uses that are approved may continue in effect, may be revised or amended, and shall not be considered nonconforming. The approved special exception that is being revised through the instant application was initially filed on December 2, 1999, and was approved by the District Council in April 2001.

Section 27-344.01 sets forth the specific requirements:

(a) **Consolidated Storage may be permitted, subject to the following:**

(1) **The application shall be accompanied by:**

(A) **An impact statement explaining:**

- (i) **The nature and scope of the operation.**
- (ii) **The type and amount of traffic expected to be generated.**

(B) **A description (graphic and narrative) of the proposed architectural facade of the building.**

The applicant generally complies with these requirements. A statement of justification including an impact statement and a market study were submitted with the original special exception application. The consolidated storage facility has been in operation at this location since 2001. It has continued as a strong and viable business, as evidenced by the need to expand the existing facility. The facility provides convenient, secure, attractive and modern storage facilities to county and area residents. The proposed addition includes 600 internally accessed storage units. The proposed hours of operation for the self-storage units are Sunday through Saturday (seven days), 6:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. The office hours are 9:30 a.m to 6:00 p.m. Monday through Friday and 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday and Sunday, but the facility is closed on five major holidays.

The facility has been operated in a safe manner. The facility grounds are constantly maintained by a landscaping contractor. Access to the site is only allowed through a gated entrance, and the entire facility is protected by a six-foot-high, chain-link fence. The security of the facility is also provided through an alarm system and cameras, and security codes are required to enter the buildings, gated and doors.

Drawings of conceptual elevations for the proposed buildings have been submitted along with the site and landscape plans. However, the applicant has not submitted complete elevations. A condition of approval has been added to require the same.

- (2) The subject property shall have frontage on, and direct vehicular access to, an existing street with sufficient capacity to accommodate the type and amount of traffic expected to be generated by the use.**

The subject property has frontage on Pennsbury Drive. Access to the property is from Pennsbury Drive. Since the subject site is already being used as a consolidated storage facility, the subject expansion would only add 10 AM trips and 17 PM trips. Because there are no recent traffic data available for the intersections, staff is not able to evaluate the existing levels of service or the impact of traffic from the proposed development.

- (3) The use shall be appropriate, given the nature of development in the neighborhood.**

The subject site is already being used as a consolidated storage facility. Expansion of the facility will enhance the existing use of the facility and will help provide convenient, secure, attractive and modern storage facilities to county and area residents.

- (4) The District Council shall find that:**

- (A) There is a need for the public in the surrounding area;**

The consolidated storage facility has been in operation at this location since 2001. It has continued as a strong and viable business, as evidenced by the need to expand the existing facility.

- (5) The exterior and architectural facade of the building shall be compatible with the prevailing architecture and appearance of other development in the surrounding neighborhood.**

The colors, materials, design of the proposed addition will match the colors, materials and design of the existing building. The height, scale and massing of the addition will also complement the height, scale and massing of the existing building. Therefore, the exterior and architectural façade of the proposed addition will be compatible with the prevailing appearance of development in the surrounding neighborhood.

- (6) Beginning June 23, 1988, no entrances to individual consolidated storage units shall be visible from a street or from adjoining land in any Residential or Commercial Zone (or land proposed to be used for residential or commercial**

purposes on an approved Basic Plan for a Comprehensive Design Zone, or any approved Conceptual or Detailed Site Plan).

No entrances for the proposed addition shall be visible from a street or from adjoining land in any residential or commercial zone.

- (7) **Entrances to individual consolidated storage units shall be either oriented toward the interior of the development or completely screened from view by a solid wall, with landscaping along the outside thereof.**

The entrances to the proposed addition will be completely screened from view by the building in front of it.

- (8) **Consolidated storage for which special exceptions were approved prior to the date reflected above, need not meet the provisions set forth in paragraphs 6 and 7, above.**

This section is not applicable to the subject addition or the original special exception.

- (b) **In addition to what is required by Section 27-296(c)(1)(B), the site plan shall show the topography of the subject lot and abutting lots (for a depth of at least fifty (50) feet).**

The site plan for the proposed addition shows the topography of the subject lot and abutting lots.

- H. **Parking Regulations:** Section 27.568(a)(7), Schedule of Parking Spaces, of the Zoning Ordinance requires one parking space for every 50 units having direct access only from within the building, plus four parking spaces for every 1,000 square feet of gross floor area (GFA) of office space and two parking spaces for every 1,000 square feet of gross floor area (GFA).

The applicant is proposing 600 internally accessed units. Six hundred units will require

$$600/50 = 12$$

The total parking required for the existing and proposed development is:

For 985 existing internally accessed storage units at the rate of one space for every 50 units=

$$985/50 = 20$$

For 650 square feet of office at the rate of four spaces for 1,000 square feet =

$$650 \times 4 / 1,000 = 3$$

For the resident manager apartment at the rate of two parking spaces for a residence =

$$2 \text{ parking spaces}$$

For 600 proposed accessed storage units at the rate of one space for every 50 units =

$$600/50= 12$$

The total parking required=37

The applicant has provided 37 parking spaces. At present, there are 53 parking spaces. Sixteen parking spaces will be removed to accommodate the proposed addition.

A condition of approval has been added to require the applicant to provide the above parking and loading schedule on the site plan.

Section 27.582 (a), Schedule of Loading Spaces, of the Zoning Ordinance, requires two loading spaces for the first 10,000 square feet of gross floor area and one for each additional 40,000 square feet of gross floor area or fraction thereafter.

The total number of loading spaces required for the existing and proposed development is:

For the existing 136,194-square-foot building	2 for the first 10,000 square feet= 2 One for each additional 40,000 square feet= 4
For the proposed 66,000-square-foot addition	2
The total loading spaces required	8

The applicant has provided 11 loading spaces.

A condition of approval has been added to require the applicant to provide the above parking and loading schedule on the site plan.

- I. **Landscape Manual Requirements:** Previously, the State Highway Administration has altered the ultimate right-of-way line of US 301. So, a ten-foot building setback was not feasible. The applicant had obtained approval of a variance application (VSE-4372/01) for the ten-foot setback requirement. The applicant had also obtained approval of an alternative compliance application, AC-02026, for the ten-foot wide landscape buffer and landscaping requirements of Section 4.2 of the *Landscape Manual*. A ten-foot-wide landscape strip according to the requirements of Section 4.2 of the *Landscape Manual* is required along the southbound lane of US 301 adjacent to the proposed addition. The State Highway Administration has stated that the ultimate right-of-way line is now located ten feet from the proposed addition according to the mapping from the US 301 Access Control Study. Therefore, landscaping that complies with the requirements of Section 4.2 of the *Landscape Manual* can be provided adjacent to the proposed addition along the southbound lane of US 301. A condition of approval has been added to require the same. With the proposed condition, the proposal will comply with the requirements of the *Landscape Manual*.
- J. **Zone Standards:** With the proposed conditions, the site plan conforms to all other development standards of the C-M Zone.
- K. **Sign Regulations:** ROSP SE-4372/01 required the applicant to relocate the existing freestanding sign to meet the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance or obtain approval of a departure from the sign standards from the City of Bowie prior to the issuance of permits for the freestanding sign. The

applicant has not provided any information on the approvals for the existing freestanding sign. A condition of approval has been added to require the same.

The existing building sign will be relocated to the north side of the proposed addition along Pennsbury Drive. Section 27-613(a) of the Zoning Ordinance requires that the signs be attached to the walls of a building that is located at least ten feet behind a street line. The proposed addition is set back more than 37 feet from the street line and complies with this requirement of the Zoning Ordinance.

L. Referral Comments:

1. The Permit Review Section (memorandum dated January 23, 2007) recommends addition of notes regarding the proposal details, parking and loading schedules, setbacks and signs. Conditions of approval have been added to require these minor changes to the site plan.
2. The Subdivision Section (memorandum dated April 6, 2007) states that the subject property is known as Parcel A of the Lowe's Home Center Subdivision (Plat Book REP 192@85). No preliminary plan of subdivision is required since the existing building was constructed pursuant to a permit issued prior to December 31, 1981, and constituted more than 10 percent of the total land area of the site.
3. The Historic Preservation and Public Facilities Planning Section (memorandum dated January 19, 2007) states that the subject proposal has no effects on historic resources.
4. The Historic Preservation and Public Facilities Planning Section (memorandum dated April 20, 2007) states that the existing engine and paramedic services are adequate and the existing ladder truck service is adequate. In order to alleviate the negative impact on fire and rescue services, the section has recommended an automatic fire suppression system in all new buildings unless the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department determines that an alternative method of fire suppression is appropriate. The existing police facilities will be adequate to serve the proposed use.
5. The Environmental Planning Section (letter of exemption dated November 8, 2006) states that the subject property is exempt from the requirements of the Woodland Conservation Ordinance until such time as the cumulative woodland disturbance exceeds 5,000 square feet during any five-year period or the site is required to go through the subdivision process. If more than 5,000 square feet of woodland is removed, a Type II tree conservation plan shall be prepared.
6. The Urban Design Review Section (memorandum dated August 16, 2007) has required compliance with the *Landscape Manual*.
7. The Community Planning Division (memorandum dated February 8, 2007) states that the property is in the Developing Tier. The vision for the Developing Tier is a pattern of low-to moderate-density suburban residential communities, distinct commercial center, and employment areas that are increasingly transit serviceable. The application conforms to the recommendations of the 2006 Bowie and vicinity master plan for storage warehouse land uses in the US 301/MD 3 medians. The division recommends landscaping/screening to screen the proposed addition.

8. The Transportation Planning Section (memorandum dated February 15, 2007) states that the proposed addition would generate 10 AM trips and 17 PM trips. Because there are no recent traffic data available for the intersections, staff is not able to evaluate the existing levels of service or the impact of traffic from the proposed development. The proposed addition will not conflict with any future road locations.
9. The State Highway Administration (memorandum dated August 21, 2007) states that the proposed development is located within ten feet of the right-of-way needed for the proposed roadway project based on the mapping from the US 301 Access Control Study. SHA further recommends that no permanent structures be built in the ultimate right-of-way area.
10. The Fire Prevention Division (memorandum dated April 2, 2007) states that the proposal creates minimal impact to the fire protection services.
11. The City of Bowie (memorandum dated March 20, 2007) recommends approval of the proposed addition with conditions of approval regarding handicapped parking spaces and outdoor lighting fixtures. The conditions of approval have been added.

M. **Required Findings: Section 27-317(a)** of the Zoning Ordinance provides that a special exception may be approved if:

(1) The proposed use and site plan are in harmony with the purposes of this Subtitle.

The fundamental purposes of the Zoning Ordinance, as found in **Section 27-102**, are to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public and promote compatible relationships between the various types of land uses. Review of the applicant's site plan for conformance with the requirements of the Ordinance indicates no potential for adversely affecting these fundamental purposes. With the recommended conditions, the subject property can project a positive image which is compatible with development guidelines for the immediate neighborhood. The proposed addition will enhance the existing use of the property as a consolidated storage facility.

(2) The proposed use is in conformance with all the applicable requirements and regulations of this Subtitle.

The subject property is located in the C-M Zone, which permits the proposed consolidated storage facility as a special exception. The Permit Review Section has recommended conditions of approval for minor changes to the site plan (memorandum dated January 23, 2007). With the recommended conditions, the use will conform to all applicable requirements and regulations of this Subtitle.

(3) The proposed use will not substantially impair the integrity of any validly approved Master Plan or Functional Master Plan, or in the absence of a Master Plan or Functional Master Plan, the General Plan.

The Community Planning Division stated that the application conforms to the recommendations of the 2006 Bowie and vicinity master plan for storage warehouse land uses in the US 301/MD 3 medians. The division recommends landscaping/screening to

screen the proposed addition. The property is located in the Developing Tier according to the 2002 General Plan Development Pattern policies for the Developing Tier (memorandum dated February 8, 2007).

(4) The proposed use will not adversely affect the health, safety or welfare of residents or workers in the area.

The Transportation Planning Section (memorandum dated February 15, 2007) states that the proposed addition would generate 10 AM trips and 17 PM trips. Because there are no recent traffic data available for the intersections, staff is not able to evaluate the existing levels of service or the impact of traffic from the proposed development. The proposed addition will not conflict with any future road locations (memorandum dated February 15, 2007).

The Historic Preservation and Public Facilities Planning Section has recommended conditions of approval for adequate public facilities (memorandum dated April 20, 2007).

With the proposed conditions, the proposed addition will not adversely affect the health, safety or welfare of residents or workers in the area.

(5) The proposed use will not be detrimental to the use or development of adjacent properties or the general neighborhood.

The proposed addition will not adversely affect the health, safety or welfare of residents or workers in the area nor will it be detrimental to the use or development of adjacent properties or the general neighborhood. The addition is designed in a manner that is compatible with and would complement existing developments in the immediate area. The proposed facility is adequately screened from the nearest residential properties through a combination of architectural, topographical and landscaping features, which at the same time create an aesthetically pleasing environment on the subject property.

Therefore, the proposed addition will not be detrimental to the use or development of adjacent properties or the general neighborhood.

(6) The proposed site plan is in conformance with an approved Tree Conservation Plan.

The Environmental Planning Section states that the subject property is exempt from the requirements of the Woodland Conservation Ordinance until such time as the cumulative woodland disturbance exceeds 5,000 square feet during any five-year period or the site is required to go through the subdivision process. If more than 5,000 square feet of woodland is removed, a Type II tree conservation plan shall be prepared (letter of exemption dated November 8, 2006).

CONCLUSION

The proposed addition will not be detrimental to the use or development of adjacent properties or the general neighborhood. Furthermore, it does not alter any of the Council's findings in the original application. Based on the preceding analysis and findings, it is recommended that SE-4622 be APPROVED, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to the Zoning Hearing Examiner's hearing, the site plan shall be revised to show the following:

- a. The correct height of the proposed addition.
 - b. The correct setbacks for the existing and proposed buildings and existing and proposed ramps.
 - c. Data tables showing the correct setback, heights, existing and proposed building coverage, existing and proposed green area, and existing and proposed total square footage.
 - d. Height and type of existing fencing.
 - e. The correct width of the driveway for the loading spaces between Building #1 and Building #3.
 - f. The number and type of the proposed storage units.
 - g. Parking and Loading Schedule showing the correct number of existing and proposed parking and loading spaces.
 - h. The ultimate right-of-way along northbound and southbound US 301.
 - i. Landscaping that complies with the requirements of Section 4.2 of the *Landscape Manual* adjacent to the proposed addition along the southbound lane of US 301.
 - j. Notes regarding previous approvals for the existing freestanding sign.
 - k. One additional handicapped parking space.
 - l. Outdoor lighting that uses full cut-off fixture that are fully shielded wherever possible to reduce the amount of light needed and to reduce glare. The lighting system shall include timing devices to turn off unneeded lighting.
2. Prior to the issuance of permits, the applicant shall provide an automatic fire suppression system in all new buildings unless the Prince George's County Fire/EMS Department determines that an alternative fire suppression system is appropriate.