

**REQUEST FOR CITY COUNCIL CONSIDERATION**

Meeting Date: August 21, 2023

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| Agenda Item: 7I   | Prepared by:<br>L. Suzanne Pritchard, PLA, AICP, CFM |
| Agenda Section:<br>New Business: Ordinance. First Reading   | Date: August 16, 2023                                |
| Subject: Amendments to Chapter 23, Zoning, of the Code of Ordinances of North Myrtle Beach, South Carolina revising the site location standards for mini-warehouse and climate-controlled storage facilities [ZTX-23-3] | Division: Planning and Development                   |

**Proposal:**

Staff is proposing a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance revising the locations where mini-warehouses are allowed to be located within the City. Although storage facilities may be needed by some City residents, their location may be problematic for several reasons:

- Aesthetics and streetscape impact: Facilities often consist of large, utilitarian buildings that may not contribute positively to a community’s visual appeal. If not designed and maintained carefully, these facilities can detract from the overall aesthetics and character of the street, potentially diminishing its appeal and affecting the perception of the surrounding area. Currently, the City of North Myrtle Beach has no mechanism to regulate architectural standards.
- Economic impact on local businesses: Mini-storage facilities may not complement the surrounding businesses or retail establishments, as they fit in more with light industrial or transitional zoning uses. These facilities could divert attention away from local commerce or discourage potential customers from stopping and exploring nearby shops and services.
- Traffic congestion: Customers accessing storage units can increase traffic, especially during peak travel hours. The presence of additional vehicles (including heavy trucks and large vehicles) maneuvering in and out of mini-storage facilities can create safety risks, particularly if the entrances and exits are located near intersections or heavily traveled areas. This can increase the likelihood of accidents and pose a danger to pedestrians, cyclists, and other motorists.

A proposed ordinance has been attached for Council’s review.

**Planning Commission Action:**

The Planning Commission conducted a public hearing on July 18,2023 and voted unanimously to recommend approval to City Council as submitted. There was no public comment.

**Recommended Action:**

Approve or deny the proposed ordinance on first reading

|                           |                          |                           |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|
| Reviewed by Division Head | Reviewed by City Manager | Reviewed by City Attorney |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|

Council Action:  
Motion By \_\_\_\_\_ 2<sup>nd</sup> By \_\_\_\_\_ To \_\_\_\_\_

## ORDINANCE

**AN ORDINANCE OF THE CITY OF NORTH MYRTLE BEACH  
PROVIDING THAT THE CODE OF ORDINANCES, CITY OF  
NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA, BE AMENDED  
BY REVISING CHAPTER 23, ZONING, ARTICLE II–ZONING  
DISTRICTS AND DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS, §23-26–HC  
HIGHWAY COMMERCIAL, SUBSECTION (4), SPECIAL  
EXCEPTIONS, OF SAID CODE.**

**BE IT ORDAINED BY THE MAYOR AND COUNCIL OF THE  
CITY OF NORTH MYRTLE BEACH, SOUTH CAROLINA, IN  
COUNCIL DULY ASSEMBLED, THAT:**

**Section 1:**

*That Section 23-26. – HC Highway Commercial. Subsection (4) Special exceptions, Subsection (e) Mini-warehouse facilities, be amended to read as follows (new matter underlined, deleted matter struck-through):*

**Sec. 23-26.(4)(e) Mini-warehouses facilities, not climate controlled:** The board of zoning appeals may approve mini warehouse facilities subject to the following minimum development regulations and site location standards:

1. Minimum development regulations:
  - a. Each storage space shall not exceed three hundred (300) square feet with an exterior entrance under the control of the tenant.
  - b. Overall development size shall be limited to a maximum of three (3) acres.
  - c. Use standards shall prohibit:
    - i. Any other business activity, other than the rental of storage units on the premise.
    - ii. Outside storage.
    - iii. The servicing, repair or fabrication of motor vehicles, boats, trailers, lawn mowers, appliances or similar equipment.
    - iv. The operation of power tools, spray painting equipment, table saws, lathes, compressors, welding equipment, kilns or other similar equipment.
    - v. The establishment of a transfer and storage business.
  - d. Where determined necessary by the board of zoning appeals, a screening barrier around the perimeter of the development shall be required. Such barrier may be a solid or semi-solid fence, but woven wire is expressly prohibited.
  - e. Storage structures shall be limited to one (1) story or twelve (12) feet in height.

2. Site location standards:
  - a. The special exception will not abut Highway 17, Main Street or Sea Mountain Highway, or be located between Highway 17 and the Atlantic Ocean.
  - b. The special exception will not be injurious to adjoining property.
  - c. The special exception will be in substantial harmony with the area in which it is to be located.
  - d. The special exception will not discourage or negate the use of surrounding property for use(s) permitted by right.
3. Legislative intent: Recognizing that mini warehouse facilities are permitted by right in the Limited Industrial Districts, it is council's intent that the zoning board of appeals exercise its discretion gingerly in approving site locations for mini warehouse facilities in the Highway Commercial District. It is council's further intent that in granting the special exception, the board of zoning appeals impose such reasonable and additional stipulations, conditions, and/or safeguards as, in its judgement, will enhance the siting and aesthetic quality of the special exception.

**Section 2:**

That *Section 23-26. – HC Highway Commercial. Subsection (4) Special exceptions, Subsection (f) Mini-warehouse, climate controlled*, be amended to read as follows (*new matter underlined, deleted matter struck-through*):

**Sec. 23-26.(4)(f)** Mini-warehouse facilities, climate controlled: The board of zoning appeals may approve climate controlled mini-warehouse facilities subject to the following minimum development regulations and site location standards:

1. Minimum development regulations:
  - a. Each individual storage unit shall meet the definition of mini-warehouse.
  - b. No individual storage unit shall have a door that opens to the exterior of the building.
  - c. The exterior of the building shall consist of a finished surface such as brick, vinyl, plaster (synthetic or nonsynthetic), wood, mortar (stucco or ~~drivet~~ synthetic stucco), or any other material approved by the zoning administrator, covering at least seventy-five (75) percent of the outer walls of the building.
2. Site location standards:
  - a. The special exception will not abut Highway 17, Main Street or Sea Mountain Highway, or be located between Highway 17 and the Atlantic Ocean.
  - b. The special exception will not be injurious to adjoining property.
  - c. The special exception will be in substantial harmony with the area in which it is to be located.
  - d. The special exception will not discourage or negate the use of surrounding property for use(s) permitted by right.

e. Where determined necessary by the board of zoning appeals, additional screening may be required over and above that required by the landscape regulations.

**Section 3:**

That the North Myrtle Beach Planning Commission has provided the required public notice of this request and has held the necessary public hearings in accordance with applicable State Statutes and City Ordinances.

DONE, RATIFIED AND PASSED, THIS \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 2023.

ATTEST:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Mayor Marilyn Hatley

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Attorney

FIRST READING: 8.21.2023  
SECOND READING: \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWED:

\_\_\_\_\_  
City Manager

ORDINANCE: \_\_\_\_\_

**6H. ZONING ORDINANCE TEXT AMENDMENT ZTX-23-3:** City staff has initiated an amendment to the zoning ordinance revising the site location standards for mini-warehouse and climate-controlled storage facilities.

**Proposed Changes**

Staff is proposing a text amendment to the Zoning Ordinance revising the locations where mini-warehouses are allowed to be located within the City. Although storage facilities may be needed by some City residents, their location may be problematic for several reasons:

- **Aesthetics and streetscape impact:** Facilities often consist of large, utilitarian buildings that may not contribute positively to a community’s visual appeal. If not designed and maintained carefully, these facilities can detract from the overall aesthetics and character of the street, potentially diminishing its appeal and affecting the perception of the surrounding area. Currently the City of North Myrtle Beach has no mechanism to regulate architectural standards.
- **Economic impact on local businesses:** Mini-storage facilities may not complement the surrounding businesses or retail establishments, as they fit in more with light industrial or transitional zoning uses. These facilities could divert attention away from local commerce or discourage potential customers from stopping and exploring nearby shops and services.
- **Traffic congestion:** Customers accessing storage units can increase traffic, especially during peak travel hours. The presence of additional vehicles (including heavy trucks and large vehicles) maneuvering in and out of mini-storage facilities can create safety risks, particularly if the entrances and exits are located near intersections or heavily traveled areas. This can increase the likelihood of accidents and pose a danger to pedestrians, cyclists, and other motorists.

The proposed amendment addresses two existing sections in *Chapter 23, Zoning*, and would appear in the Ordinance as follows (new matter underlined, deleted matter struck).

**Sec. 23-26.(4)(e)** Mini-warehouses facilities: The board of zoning appeals may approve mini warehouse facilities subject to the following minimum development regulations and site location standards:

1. Minimum development regulations:
  - a. Each storage space shall not exceed three hundred (300) square feet with an exterior entrance under the control of the tenant.
  - b. Overall development size shall be limited to a maximum of three (3) acres.
  - c. Use standards shall prohibit:
    - i. Any other business activity, other than the rental of storage units on the premise.
    - ii. Outside storage.
    - iii. The servicing, repair or fabrication of motor vehicles, boats, trailers, lawn mowers, appliances or similar equipment.
    - iv. The operation of power tools, spray painting equipment, table saws, lathes, compressors, welding equipment, kilns or other similar equipment.
    - v. The establishment of a transfer and storage business.

- d. Where determined necessary by the board of zoning appeals, a screening barrier around the perimeter of the development shall be required. Such barrier may be a solid or semi-solid fence, but woven wire is expressly prohibited.
  - e. Storage structures shall be limited to one (1) story or twelve (12) feet in height.
2. Site location standards:
- a. The special exception will not abut Highway 17, Main Street or Sea Mountain Highway, or be located between Highway 17 and the Atlantic Ocean.
  - b. The special exception will not be injurious to adjoining property.
  - c. The special exception will be in substantial harmony with the area in which it is to be located.
  - d. The special exception will not discourage or negate the use of surrounding property for use(s) permitted by right.
3. Legislative intent: Recognizing that mini warehouse facilities are permitted by right in the Limited Industrial Districts, it is council's intent that the zoning board of appeals exercise its discretion gingerly in approving site locations for mini warehouse facilities in the Highway Commercial District. It is council's further intent that in granting the special exception, the board of zoning appeals impose such reasonable and additional stipulations, conditions, and/or safeguards as, in its judgement, will enhance the siting and aesthetic quality of the special exception.

**Sec. 23-26.(4)(f)** Mini-warehouse, climate controlled: The board of zoning appeals may approve climate controlled mini-warehouse facilities subject to the following minimum development regulations and site location standards:

1. Minimum development regulations:
  - a. Each individual storage unit shall meet the definition of mini-warehouse.
  - b. No individual storage unit shall have a door that opens to the exterior of the building.
  - c. The exterior of the building shall consist of a finished surface such as brick, vinyl, plaster (synthetic or nonsynthetic), wood, mortar (stucco or ~~drive~~ synthetic stucco), or any other material approved by the zoning administrator, covering at least seventy-five (75) percent of the outer walls of the building.
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  - a. The special exception will not abut Highway 17, Main Street or Sea Mountain Highway, or be located between Highway 17 and the Atlantic Ocean.
  - b. The special exception will not be injurious to adjoining property.
  - c. The special exception will be in substantial harmony with the area in which it is to be located.
  - d. The special exception will not discourage or negate the use of surrounding property for use(s) permitted by right.
  - e. Where determined necessary by the board of zoning appeals, additional screening may be required over and above that required by the landscape regulations.

According to § 23-4, *Amendments*, of the Zoning Ordinance, the advertisement requirement for Zoning Ordinance amendments is 15 days, and that advertisement notice has been met. The amendment is presented to the Planning Commission for a recommendation that will be forwarded to City Council at their next meeting scheduled for August 21, 2023.

**Planning Commission Action:**

The Planning Commission may recommend approval, recommend approval with modifications and/or conditions, or recommend denial of the proposal as submitted.

*Alternative Motions*

- 1) I move that the Planning Commission forward the Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment [ZTX-23-3] to the Mayor and City Council with a recommendation of approval.

OR

- 2) I move that the Planning Commission forward the Zoning Ordinance Text Amendment [ZTX-23-3] to the Mayor and City Council with a recommendation of denial.

OR

- 3) I move (an alternate motion).