

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division
Conditional Use Permit, Site Plan Review
BZZ-3187

Date: September 18, 2006

Applicant: St. Cloud Industrial Products

Address of Property: 732 30th Ave SE

Project Name: SCUPI - Minneapolis

Contact Person and Phone: Vern Broll, (320) 286-6661

Planning Staff and Phone: Tara Beard, (612) 673-2351

Date Application Deemed Complete: August 8, 2006

End of 60-Day Decision Period: October 7, 2006

End of 120-Day Decision Period: Not applicable

Ward: 2 **Neighborhood Organization:** Southeast Como Improvement Association

Existing Zoning: I2 Medium Industrial District

Zoning Plate Number: 16

Lot area: 158,692 square feet

Proposed Use: Auto Parts Wholesale Distributor and minor automobile repair

Concurrent Review:

- Conditional Use Permit to allow minor automobile repair
- Site Plan Review

Applicable zoning code provisions: Chapter 525: Article VII Conditional Use Permits - Chapter 530: Site Plan Review – Chapter 550 Industrial Districts

Background: Vern Broll, on behalf of St. Cloud Industrial Products, has submitted multiple land use applications to add a minor automobile repair use at 732 30th Ave SE. The minor automobile repair use requires a Conditional Use Permit and a Site Plan Review. There are no proposed changes to the building's exterior or size. Two occupants are proposed for the building; an automotive parts and accessories wholesale distributor and service and maintenance for van type buses (minor auto repair). The proposed occupants are Parts Midwest, the automotive parts distributor, and St. Cloud Industrial Services, the bus service and maintenance provider.

Staff has not received any written correspondence from SECIA at the time of the printing of this report.

CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT -

Required Findings for the Conditional Use Permit to allow minor automobile repair:

- 1. Will not be detrimental to or endanger the public health, safety, comfort or general welfare.**

All of the automobile repair will take place inside the existing building. The site is surrounded by industrial zoned districts and uses.

- 2. Will not be injurious to the use and enjoyment of other property in the vicinity and will not impede the normal or orderly development and improvement of surrounding property for uses permitted in the district.**

Adjacent properties are industrial and should not be negatively impacted by the proposed use. The property abuts St. Paul city limits to the east; these uses are industrial in nature as well.

- 3. Adequate utilities, access roads, drainage, necessary facilities or other measures, have been or will be provided.**

The site has adequate utilities and access. Drainage on the site is largely directed toward on site filtration.

- 4. Adequate measures have been or will be provided to minimize traffic congestion in the public streets.**

All parking is provided off street and no curb cuts would be added to the site. The site location allows truck traffic to get to a highway without driving through residential areas.

- 5. Is consistent with the applicable policies of the comprehensive plan.**

The Minneapolis Plan shows 732 30th Ave SE as an industrial site surrounded by industrial sites. A specific policy in *The Minneapolis Plan* that applies to this project includes:

The Minneapolis Plan, Chapter 9.15 states: “Minneapolis will protect residential areas from the negative impact of non-residential uses by providing appropriate transitions between different land uses.” Implementation of this section includes promoting “quality design and building orientation of commercial and industrial development that is appropriate with the surrounding neighborhoods.” While this project involves an existing building, the location of a use where residential areas won’t be impacted supports this policy. Furthermore, site improvements proposed improve the quality and design of the site in an area that could use more green space and amenities.

The site is just outside the scope of an approved small area plan, “Southeast Minneapolis Industrial /Bridal Veil Area Master Plan.” The area is located in the Industrial Land Use and Employment Study, which recommends maintaining the industrial districts and uses in this area, although that plan has not yet been adopted.

6. And, does in all other respects conform to the applicable regulations of the district in which it is located upon approval of this conditional use permit.

In addition to a Conditional Use Permit to allow minor automobile repair, a Site Plan Review is required. At the time of the printing of this report, the applicant has not been scheduled for Preliminary Development Review (PDR). PDR must take place before final plans will be accepted.

SITE PLAN REVIEW

Findings as Required By the Minneapolis Zoning for Site Plan Review

Required Findings for Site Plan Review

- a. **The site plan conforms to all applicable standards of Chapter 530, Site Plan Review. (See Section A Below for Evaluation.)**
- b. **The site plan conforms to all applicable regulations of the zoning ordinance and is consistent with applicable policies of the comprehensive plan and applicable small area plans adopted by the city council. (See Section B Below for Evaluation.)**

Section A: Conformance with Chapter 530 of Zoning Code

BUILDING PLACEMENT AND FAÇADE:

- Placement of the building shall reinforce the street wall, maximize natural surveillance and visibility, and facilitate pedestrian access and circulation.
- First floor of the building shall be located not more than eight (8) feet from the front lot line (except in C3S District or where a greater yard is required by the zoning ordinance). If located on corner lot, the building wall abutting each street shall be subject to this requirement.
- The area between the building and the lot line shall include amenities.
- The building shall be oriented so that at least one (1) principal entrance faces the public street. In the case of a corner lot, the principal entrance shall face the front lot line.
- Except in the C3S District, on-site accessory parking facilities shall be located to the rear or interior of the site, within the principal building served, or entirely below grade.
- For new construction, the building walls shall provide architectural detail and shall contain windows as required by Chapter 530 in order to create visual interest and to increase security of adjacent outdoor spaces by maximizing natural surveillance and visibility.
- In larger buildings, architectural elements, including recesses or projections, windows and entries, shall be emphasized to divide the building into smaller identifiable sections.
- Blank, uninterrupted walls that do not include windows, entries, recesses or projections, or other architectural elements, shall not exceed twenty five (25) feet in length.
- Exterior materials shall be durable, including but not limited to masonry, brick, stone, stucco, wood, metal, and glass.
- The exterior materials and appearance of the rear and side walls of any building shall be similar to and compatible with the front of the building.
- The use of plain face concrete block as an exterior material shall be prohibited fronting along a public street, public sidewalk, public pathway, or adjacent to a residence or office residence district.
- Entrances and windows:
 - Residential uses:

Principal entrances shall be clearly defined and emphasized through the use of architectural features such as porches and roofs or other details that express the importance of the entrance. Multiple entrances shall be encouraged. Twenty (20) percent of the walls on the first floor and ten (10) percent of the walls on each floor above the first that face a public street, public sidewalk, public pathway, or on-site parking lot, shall be windows as follows:

 - a. Windows shall be vertical in proportion.
 - b. Windows shall be distributed in a more or less even manner.
 - Nonresidential uses:

Principal entrances shall be clearly defined and emphasized through the use of architectural features such as roofs or other details that express the importance of the entrance. Multiple entrances shall be encouraged. Thirty (30) percent of the walls on the first floor and ten (10) percent of the walls on each floor above the first that face a public street, public sidewalk, public pathway, or on-site parking lot, shall be windows as follows:

 - a. Windows shall be vertical in proportion.
 - b. Windows shall be distributed in a more or less even manner.
 - c. The bottom of any window used to satisfy the ground floor window requirement may not be more than four (4) feet above the adjacent grade.
 - d. First floor or ground floor windows shall have clear or lightly tinted glass with a visible light transmittance ratio of 0.6 or higher.
 - e. First floor or ground floor windows shall allow views into and out of the building at eye level. Shelving, mechanical equipment or other similar fixtures shall not block views into and out of the building in the area between four (4) and seven (7) feet above the adjacent grade. However, window area in excess of the minimum required area shall not be required to allow views into and out of the building.
 - f. Industrial uses in Table 550-1, Principal Industrial Uses in the Industrial Districts, may provide less than thirty (30) percent windows on the walls that face an on-site parking lot,

provided the parking lot is not located between the building and a public street, public sidewalk or public pathway.

Minimum window area shall be measured as indicated in section 530.120 of the zoning code.

- **The form and pitch of roof lines shall be similar to surrounding buildings.**
- **Parking Garages: The exterior design shall ensure that sloped floors do not dominate the appearance of the walls and that vehicles are screened from view. At least thirty (30) percent of the first floor building wall that faces a public street, public sidewalk or public pathway shall be occupied by active uses, or shall be designed with architectural detail or windows, including display windows, that create visual interest.**

Conformance:

- The building placement is existing, and does reinforce the street wall.
- The building is 10 feet from the property line, but this is an existing condition.
- There is landscaping between the building and the property line.
- There is a principal entrance facing a public street (30th Ave SE).
- Parking is located on either side of the building, with a small amount of street frontage. This is an existing condition.
- The building façade has windows (although not 30%) and no blank walls, but other sides of the building do have blank walls. This is an existing condition.
- The existing exterior materials are brick on the façade and concrete block around the sides and rear of the building. Four large openings that appear to have been overhead loading doors have been covered with metal on the east elevation.
- Windows are required on 30% of the first floor of the front and sides of the building (both sides face a surface parking lot). This requirement is not being met by the existing building.
- The windows that do exist are generally vertical in nature and are distributed in a more or less even manner.
- The roof is flat which is consistent with neighboring buildings.

ACCESS AND CIRCULATION:

- **Clear and well-lighted walkways of at least four (4) feet in width shall connect building entrances to the adjacent public sidewalk and to any parking facilities located on the site.**
- **Transit shelters shall be well lighted, weather protected and shall be placed in locations that promote security.**
- **Vehicular access and circulation shall be designed to minimize conflicts with pedestrian traffic and surrounding residential uses.**
- **Traffic shall be directed to minimize impact upon residential properties and shall be subject to section 530.150 (b) related to alley access.**
- **Site plans shall minimize the use of impervious surfaces.**

Conformance:

- The principal entrance is connected to the public street by way of a walkway and steps. There is no sidewalk on this portion of 30th Ave SE. Parking facilities will be set back 6 feet from the building to allow safe walking from the parking lot to the building.

- There are no transit shelters on or adjacent to the site.
- There are no surrounding residential uses. Parking is accessed by two curb cuts off 30th Ave SE; one on either side of the building.
- All areas not needed for buildings, access, parking and loading, or trash and recycling, will be landscaped.

LANDSCAPING AND SCREENING:

- The composition and location of landscaped areas shall complement the scale of the development and its surroundings.
- Not less than twenty (20) percent of the site not occupied by buildings, including all required landscaped yards, shall be landscaped as specified in section 530.160 (a).
- Required screening shall be six (6) feet in height, unless otherwise specified, except in required front yards where such screening shall be three (3) feet in height.
- Except as otherwise provided, required screening shall be at least ninety-five (95) percent opaque throughout the year. Screening shall be satisfied by one or a combination of the following:
 - A decorative fence.
 - A masonry wall.
 - A hedge.
- Parking and loading facilities located along a public street, public sidewalk or public pathway shall comply with section 530.170 (b), including providing landscape yards along a public street, public sidewalk or public pathway and abutting or across an alley from a residence or office residence district, or any permitted or conditional residential use.
- The corners of parking lots where rows of parking spaces leave areas unavailable for parking or vehicular circulation shall be landscaped as specified for a required landscaped yard. Such spaces may include architectural features such as benches, kiosks or bicycle parking.
- In parking lots of ten (10) spaces or more, no parking space shall be located more than fifty (50) feet from the center of an on-site deciduous tree. Tree islands located within the interior of a parking lot shall have a minimum width of seven (7) feet in any direction.
- All other areas not governed by sections 530.160 and 530.170 and not occupied by buildings, parking and loading facilities or driveways, shall be covered with turf grass, native grasses or other perennial flowering plants, vines, mulch, shrubs or trees.
- Installation and maintenance of all landscape materials shall comply with the standards outlined in section 530.210.
- The city planning commission may approve the substitution or reduction of landscaped plant materials, landscaped area or other landscaping or screening standards, subject to section 530.80, as provided in section 530.220.

Conformance:

- The lot area (157,200 sq. ft.) less the building footprint (60,000 sq. ft.) yields a net site of 97,200 sq. ft. The Code requires a minimum of 19,440 sq. ft. of landscaping, 39 trees and 195 shrubs. The total landscaping proposed by the applicant is 50,900 sq. ft. This equals 52% of the net site. The proposed project includes 40 trees and 116 shrubs. Staff is recommending alternative compliance for the number of shrubs because of the excess of landscaping and the fact that the new shrubs that will be planted fill up the new and existing landscaping visible from the right of way significantly. A site visit revealed old tires and a refrigerator with the door attached located on the property. A thorough clean up of the site is recommended by staff as a condition of approval.

- All required screening faces public right of way and will be 3 feet in height.
- Seven feet of landscaping is being provided between both parking lots and the public street.
- One corner of the parking lot is not usable for parking or maneuvering and could be landscaped. Staff recommends requiring the applicant to landscape the area from the southwestern corner of the most southeastern parking space, directly south to the landscaping provided for parking requirements.
- Many parking spaces are not within 50 feet of an on-site tree. However, this is an existing condition that would be extremely disruptive to the site to change. As many parking spaces as possible are within 50 feet of an on-site tree without removing some of the parking lot. Furthermore, the applicant is proposing new trees that will increase the number of parking spaces that are in compliance with this requirement, including in the southwest corner of the site. Due to the excess square footage of landscaping provided by the applicant, staff is recommending alternative compliance for this condition.
- All areas not occupied by buildings, parking and loading facilities or driveways will be covered with turf grass, native grasses, or other perennial flowering plants, vines, mulch, shrubs or trees.

ADDITIONAL STANDARDS:

- All parking lots and driveways shall be designed with wheel stops or discontinuous curbing to provide on-site retention and filtration of stormwater. Where on-site retention and filtration is not practical, the parking lot shall be defined by six (6) inch by six (6) inch continuous concrete curb.
- Lighting shall comply with the requirements of Chapter 535 and Chapter 541. A lighting diagram may be required.
- Parking and loading facilities and all other areas upon which vehicles may be located shall be screened to avoid headlights shining onto residential properties.
- To the extent practical, site plans shall minimize the blocking of views of important elements of the city.
- To the extent practical, buildings shall be located and arranged to minimize shadowing on public spaces and adjacent properties.
- To the extent practical, buildings shall be located and arranged to minimize the generation of wind currents at ground level.
- Site plans shall include crime prevention design elements as specified in section 530.260 related to:
 - Natural surveillance and visibility
 - Lighting levels
 - Territorial reinforcement and space delineation
 - Natural access control
- To the extent practical, site plans shall include the rehabilitation and integration of locally designated historic structures or structures that have been determined to be eligible to be locally designated. Where rehabilitation is not feasible, the development shall include the reuse of significant features of historic buildings.

Conformance:

- Wheel stops are provided on the site. The south parking lot slopes to the south allowing on site filtration into the greenspace area.
- Lighting must comply with Chapter 535 and Chapter 541 of the zoning code.
- Headlights will not cause a problem with any nearby residential uses as there are none.
- The project will not block views of important elements of the city nor create any substantive shadows on adjacent buildings and open spaces.
- The project would not be expected to contribute significantly to ground-level winds.

- The site design and landscape plan allows views from the public street into the site. There is no public sidewalk.

Section B: Conformance with All Applicable Zoning Code Provisions and Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan and Applicable Small Area Plans Adopted by the City Council

Zoning Code: A minor automobile repair use is permitted with a Conditional Use Permit in the I2 District.

Off-Street Parking and Loading: Chapter 541 requires parking based on square footage and service bays for auto repair uses. With 3 service bays and 2,688 sq. ft. of additional service area square footage, the parking requirement is 15 spaces. The parking requirement for the warehouse component of the building is calculated based on the square footage for office and the square footage for storage space. With 6,138 square feet of office space and 46,386 sq. ft. of storage space, the parking requirement is 22 spaces. The total parking requirement for the building, then, is 37 spaces. Forty are provided.

Maximum Floor Area: The permitted Floor Area Ratio (FAR) in the I2 District is 2.7. The proposed building would have an FAR of 0.38.

Building Height: Building height is limited to 4 stories or 56 feet, whichever is less, in the I2 District. The existing building is one floor but considered 2 stories because it is greater than 14 feet (it is 20 feet high).

Minimum Lot Area: There is no minimum lot area in the I2 district for the uses proposed.

Dwelling Units per Acre: Not applicable.

Yard Requirements: There are no setback requirements for this site as it is I2 and not adjacent to any residential districts or uses.

Specific Development Standards: The following specific development standards apply:

- (1) All vehicles waiting for repair or pick-up shall be stored on the site in an enclosed building or in parking spaces in compliance with Chapter 541, Off-Street Parking and Loading.
- (2) Except in the I3 District, all repairs shall be performed within a completely enclosed building.
- (3) All vehicles parked or stored on-site shall display a current license plate with a current license tab. Outdoor storage of automotive parts or storage of junk vehicles is prohibited.
- (4) The sale of vehicles shall be prohibited.
- (5) In the C1, C2 and C3S Districts, all service vehicles associated with the establishment shall be parked or stored in an enclosed structure after business hours.
- (6) The use shall employ best management practices regarding the venting of odors, gas and fumes. Such vents shall be located a minimum of ten (10) feet above grade and shall be directed away from residential uses. All storage tanks shall be equipped with vaportight fittings to preclude the escape of gas vapors from the fill pipes.

- (7) The premises, all adjacent streets, sidewalks and alleys, and all sidewalks and alleys within one hundred (100) feet shall be inspected regularly for purposes of removing any litter found thereon.
- (8) Unattended, automated dispensing of gasoline or other engine fuel shall be prohibited.

Hours of Operation: The applicant is proposing to operate between the hours of 6:30 AM and 6:00 PM Monday through Friday which is within the permitted hours of operation for uses in the I2 district.

Signs: No new signs are proposed at this time. Any signs will require a sign permit and review for compliance with Chapter 543 of the zoning code.

Refuse storage: All storage of refuse and recyclable materials will be located inside the building.

Minneapolis Plan: See finding #5 in the Conditional Use Permit section.

Alternative Compliance: The Planning Commission or zoning administrator may approve alternatives to any site plan review requirement upon finding any of the following:

- The alternative meets the intent of the site plan chapter and the site plan includes amenities or improvements that address any adverse effects of the alternative. Site amenities may include but are not limited to additional open space, additional landscaping and screening, green roof, decorative pavers, ornamental metal fencing, architectural enhancements, transit facilities, bicycle facilities, preservation of natural resources, restoration of previously damaged natural environment, rehabilitation of existing structures that have been locally designated or have been determined to be eligible to be locally designated as historic structures, and design which is similar in form, scale and materials to existing structures on the site and to surrounding development.
- Strict adherence to the requirements is impractical because of site location or conditions and the proposed alternative meets the intent of this chapter.
- The proposed alternative is consistent with applicable development plans or development objectives adopted by the city council and meets the intent of this chapter.

Conformance: Staff is recommending alternative compliance for the requirement that all on site parking be within 50 feet of an onsite tree. Approximately half of the parking spaces do not meet this requirement due to the existing parking layout. New trees are being added and the applicant is providing more than the required amount of landscaping.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Recommendation of the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division for the conditional use permit to allow minor automobile repair at 732 30th Ave SE:

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division recommends that the City Planning Commission adopt the above findings and **approve** the application for a conditional use permit to allow minor automobile repair at 732 30th Ave SE, subject to the following condition:

1. Preliminary Development Review must occur before final plans will be accepted.

2. The specific development standards will be met as required by section 536.20 of the zoning code.

Recommendation of the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division for the Site Plan Review:

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division recommends that the City Planning Commission adopt the above findings and **approve** the application for a Site Plan Review at 732 30th Ave SE subject to the following conditions:

1. All refuse and litter in the yard will be cleaned up and maintained, especially where changes to the landscaping are not proposed.
2. As required by section 530.170 of the zoning code, the applicant will landscape the area from the southwestern corner of the most southeastern parking space, directly south to meet the existing landscaping.
3. Any changes to site plan as a result of Preliminary Development Review may result in another public hearing by the City Planning Commission if the Zoning Administrator deems such changes significant under sections 525.360 and 530.100 of the zoning code.
4. CPED Planning staff review and approval of the final site and landscaping plans.
5. All site improvements shall be completed by September 18, 2007, unless extended by the Zoning Administrator, or the permit may be revoked for noncompliance.

Attachments:

1. Statement of use
2. Findings
3. Correspondence
4. Site Plan, Floor Plans, Elevations, & Zoning map
5. Photos