

Commercial Pre-Application Meeting March 19, 2025

Note: These are PRELIMINARY inquiries which are of interest to the Coalition, but many of which do not move forward. Public participation is welcomed at both the Planning & Zoning Board meetings and the City Commission meetings where variances and development agreements must be approved.

736 and 738 Canal St. (corner of Myrtle, one lot previously being a coffee shop/bakery outlet) The owner/applicant presented a rough Concept Plan for an approximately 8000SF building. Proposed were eight units: four retail/commercial and four garage/warehouses for small business owners who may need a place to store vehicles or inventory. The applicant asked what businesses would be allowed in this Mixed Use (MU) zone; the number of parking spaces needed; buffer sizes, and stormwater needs. The building that held a former coffee shop will remain basically the same but will be updated to bring it to code. Some comments/concerns discussed follow:

Planning

- Mixed use is fairly open sans medical services that offer anesthesia like a dentist.
- Staff must know the project's use before providing parking estimates. The property is located within a Special Parking District, so half the number of zoned parking spaces will be required. The applicant thinks there is enough room for 10 spaces in the back and one in the front.
- Five-foot landscape buffers are needed.
- The applicant stated that CRA funds are available, so he may ask residents what they would like to see there.

Engineering

- The applicant was thinking of bringing traffic from Myrtle and asked about the Canal curb cut. He will need to contact FDOT as Canal St. is not a city street. If the apron is no longer used, he may be able to gain two more parking spaces.
- The applicant can only spend 50% of the building's value on remodeling.
- There are new stormwater regulations the applicant must follow. An underground exfiltration is allowed but will be challenging given the property's elevation. Engineering will work with the applicant.
- Applicant will need a Geotech to get a soil sample.
- Redevelopment is desirable in this area. The Applicant will request a new streetlight.

Fire

- The property will need a wide and long enough driveway for fire trucks for warehouse space.
- If the businesses are going to be different, a 2hr firewall must go between them. A sprinkler system was suggested.
- Garages would each need a swinging door for emergency exits.

Building

- The more adaptable the project is, the easier it will be.
- Flex-space requires fire-rated walls.
- If it is a café/restaurant, do plumbing first along with the grease interceptors. If two eateries side by side, they can be shared.

Next Steps: Applicant will need to decide how he specifically wants to develop this property and submit a full Site Plan for review. He will also need to get the Geotech soil sample, contact FDOT, meet with Engineering, and contact Utilities regarding the questions he had.