



CITY OF WAUKESHA

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Committee: Plan Commission	Date: 9/22/2021
Item Number: PC21-00088	Date: 9/22/2021
Submitted By: Doug Koehler, Principal Planner	City Administrator Approval: Kevin Lahner, City Administrator
Finance Department Review: Bridget Souffrant, Finance Director	City Attorney's Office Review: Brian Running, City Attorney
Subject: Fields Auto Group Car Storage – Conditional Use Permit	

Details: The property behind 1951 E. Main St. is zoned B-5. It has an area of approximately 15,000 square feet and is currently vacant. The applicants, Fields Auto Group, would like to use it as a storage lot for overflow inventory vehicles. Fields Auto Group operates the Jaguar, Volvo, and Land Rover dealership at 1901 E. Moreland Blvd.

1951 E. Main St. is an instant oil change service station. 1947 E. Main St., immediately to the west, is a beauty salon. Both lots have public access via Longview Drive, which is a private road and acts as a frontage road for Main Street. The lot in question does not have any access or visibility from Longview Drive. Instead it is accessible via access easements through 1951 and 1947 E. Main St.

The applicants will repave the lot and add landscaping, significantly improving its appearance. Vehicles may be parked in the designated parking spaces only, so the lot will not look disorderly or overcrowded.

Vehicle storage is permitted as an Accessory Use for car dealerships in the B-5 district, and the applicants have argued that storage in this location is similar to storage on the other dealership lots in the area, including at the main Fields Auto Group dealership. However, when other applicants have requested vehicle storage as a Principal Use for B-5 zoned properties the city's position has always been that it is not similar and not Permitted.

In this case, despite the B-5 zoning, it is highly unlikely that this lot will ever be appropriate for the type of commercial use that is typical in the district. It is too small and too far removed from any public right of way or visibility for an independent business to be viable there. Both of the neighboring properties have adequate parking to meet their needs, so they are unlikely to want it for any overflow from their properties. Storage appears to be the only viable uses for the property, and probably the only way the property will be improved.

Because of these exceptional circumstances staff is in favor of a Conditional Use Permit for vehicle storage in this location. If the Plan Commission chooses to approve the application, it should include a statement in its approval explaining why it doesn't set precedent for other properties in the district.



Options & Alternatives:

Financial Remarks: No Financial impact.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommends approval of a Conditional Use Permit for vehicle storage at the currently vacant property behind 1951 E. Main St. (tax key WAKC1005239) with the following conditions:

- All vehicles must be parked in designated spaces. No parking or storage is permitted in drive lanes or on landscape areas.
- The Plan Commission approval should include a statement for why this does not set a precedent for other properties in the B-5 district.
- All Engineering Department comments will be addressed.