

**Department of Community Development
Staff Report**

PROPERTY OWNER: Historic Auburn LLC

APPLICANT: Historic Auburn LLC

LOCATION: 4485 Old Auburn Road, Catlett, Virginia

DISTRICT: Cedar Run District

PIN(S): 7913-19-2730-000

ACREAGE: 2.59 Acres

ZONING: Rural Residential (RR-2)

LAND USE: Rural

MEETING DATE: November 17, 2016

REQUEST: SPEX-16-006016: The applicant is seeking approval of a Category 7 Special Exception to allow the adaptive use of an existing older structure for residential purposes, in accordance with Sections 5-006 and 5-700 of the Zoning Ordinance.

OUTSTANDING ISSUES: There is one (1) outstanding item that would require a finding from the Board of Supervisors, should the Board wish to approve the application. This item is summarized below with additional information and staff evaluation included within the report.

Section 5-702.6 of the Zoning Ordinance requires that an approval of a Special Exception for an adaptive use only occurs (1) within an area designated as a service district or village in the Comprehensive Plan, or (2) be on a lot having direct access to a road designated as a major collector (or higher) in the Comprehensive Plan, unless the Board of Supervisors finds that the type and amount of traffic generated by the facility is such that it will not cause an undue impact on the neighbors or adversely affect traffic safety. The subject property is not located within an area designated as a service district or village in the Comprehensive Plan and does not have direct access to a major collector. The parcel is located along Old Auburn Road (Route 670), which is designated as a rural minor arterial. However, the proposed low-impact residential use should not generate excessive traffic in the neighborhood or conflict with existing traffic patterns.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff advises the Planning Commission to recommend approval of Special Exception SPEX-16-005332, subject to the staff recommended conditions included in this report. The application satisfies the standards of Zoning Ordinance Sections 5-006 and 5-700.

STAFF RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

Should the Planning Commission wish to recommend approval of the Special Exception, staff recommends approval subject to the following conditions, which supersede previously-adopted conditions for Special Permit SPPT11-CR-016.

1. This Special Exception is granted only for the purpose(s), structure(s) and/or uses indicated on the Special Exception Plat “Historic Auburn LLC Adaptive Use Plat” dated October 17, 2016, and received in the Planning Office on October 17, 2016, as approved with this application and as modified by the associated conditions below.
 2. Both structures on the property shall be used for residential purposes.
 3. No more than three (3) parking spaces shall be provided behind the structure to be adaptively used. The applicant shall screen off-street parking with landscaping or architecturally compatible fencing along the west side of this parking area.
 4. The exteriors of both structures shall retain their character and architectural style. The applicant shall complete the rehabilitation of the smaller building in a manner that conforms to the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation*. If historic weatherboard siding cannot be repurposed, lapped wood siding or concrete fiberboard siding shall be used.
 5. The adaptive use shall require a Site Plan.
 6. All required building and zoning permits shall be obtained.
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Topic Description:

The applicant is requesting a Category 7 Special Exception to allow an adaptive use of an existing historic structure. The proposal consists of the rehabilitation of a 900 square foot building for the purposes of providing a residential use.

This historic vernacular building was stabilized in 2013 with the installation of new concrete footings and a slab on grade foundation. The original weatherboard siding has been removed, and rough-in plumbing has been added. The owner proposes to continue rehabilitation work to provide a one (1) bedroom, 1 ½ bath residence. Although this will require extensive interior and exterior renovation, the overall character of the historic building will be retained, and the work will comply with the *Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation*, as required.

Project History:

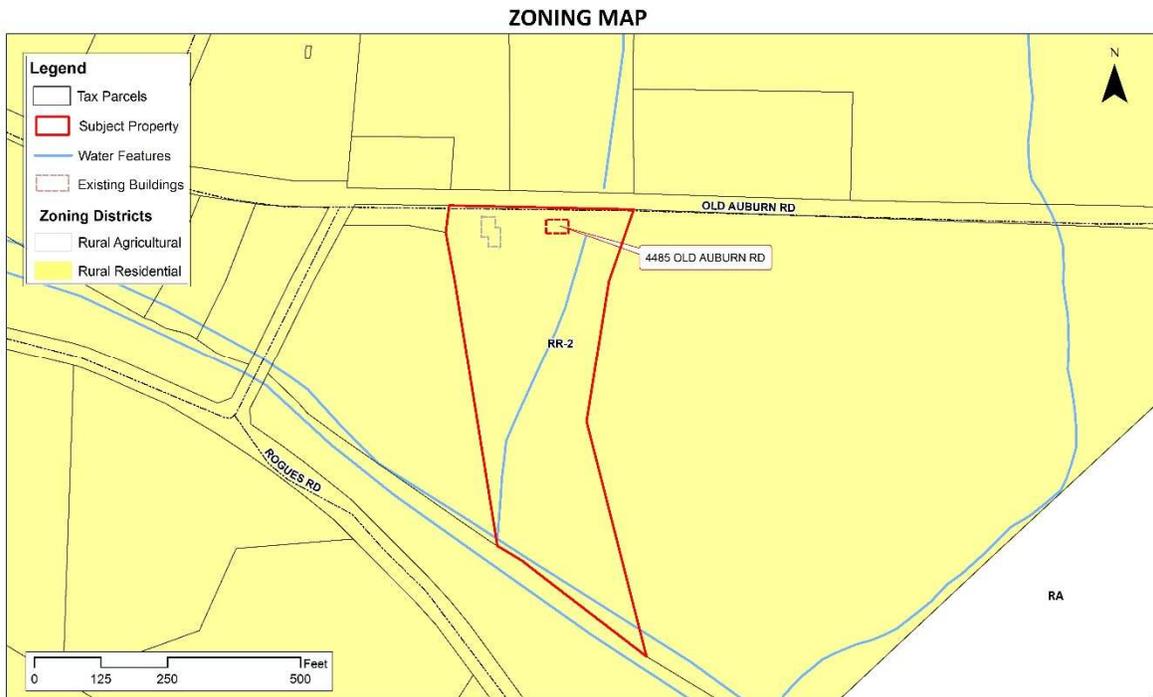
The applicant purchased the subject property in 2010. At that time, two (2) abandoned, late 19th century buildings were on the parcel, and both buildings were in a severe state of neglect and disrepair. The applicant bought the property with the desire of renovating the buildings to improve the overall character of the surrounding neighborhood. The objective was to establish viable uses for the buildings to justify the substantial investment of rehabilitation.

In March 2011, Special Permit SPPT11-CR-016 was approved, which allowed the operation of a business or professional office with six (6) or less employees on the subject property. The approval was subject to a set of conditions, which are attached. In May 2012, Minor Site Plan SPMN-12-CR-008 was approved for the subject property; the Site Plan required one building to be converted into a residence and the other to become a professional office. The first building was renovated in 2013 to provide approximately 1,800 square feet of residential space. It is now occupied and leased.

A building permit application was submitted in July 2016 to renovate the second building into residential space. The approved Site Plan does not allow both buildings to be used for residential purposes, and the Zoning Ordinance standards do not permit the second building to become an accessory building. A Category 7 Special Exception is needed to adaptively use the second building as a residence.

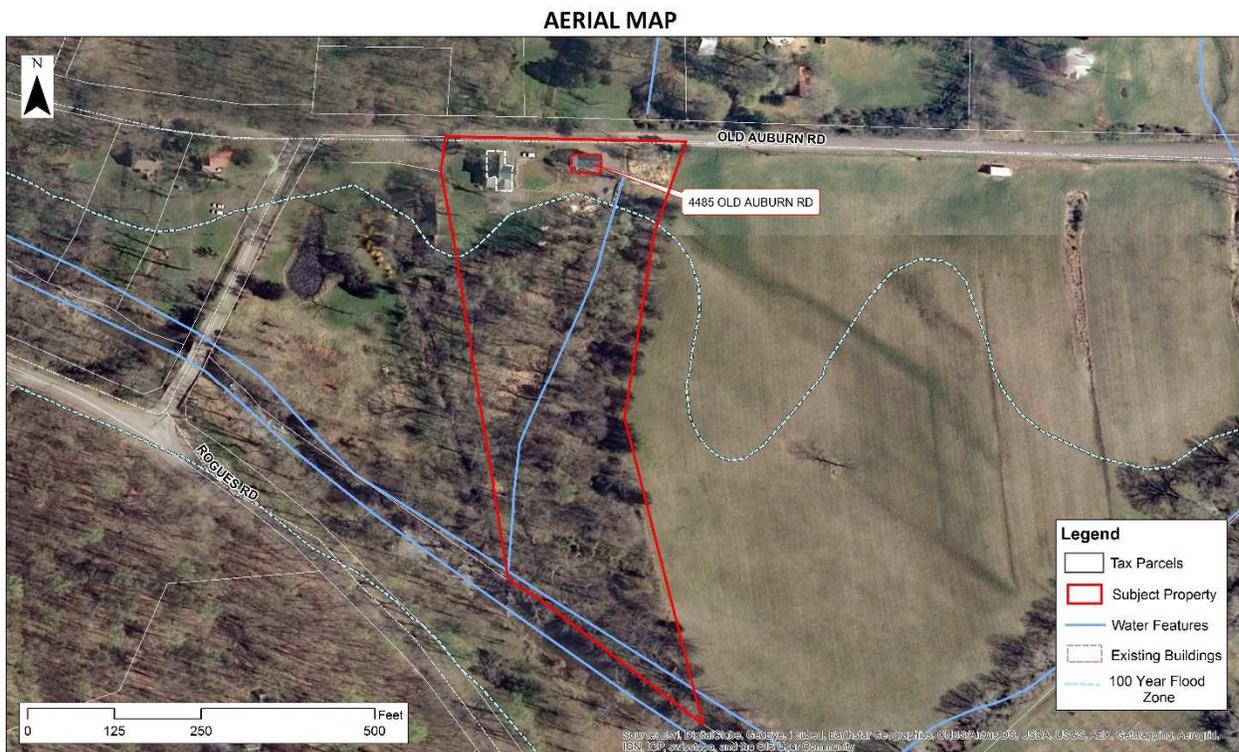
Current Location, Zoning and Land Use:

The subject property is located at 4485 Old Auburn Road (Route 670) in the community of Auburn within Cedar Run District. The parcel is zoned Rural Residential (RR-2) and consists of 2.59 acres. There are two historic buildings located on the north side of the property. The first building (4493 Old Auburn Road) is now rented as a residence. The second (4485 Old Auburn Road) is vacant and is the subject of this application. The southern half of the subject property is densely wooded. Cedar Run abuts the south side of the parcel. For this reason, the majority of the property is within the 100 year FEMA floodplain with the exception of the area where the structures are located.



Neighboring Zoning and Current Land Use:

Neighboring properties are zoned Rural Residential (RR-2) and Agriculture (RA). These properties are used primarily for residential purposes, although the adjacent property to the west currently serves as the applicants’ business, Earth Design Associates.



Comprehensive Plan:

The subject property is designated for rural use. Chapter 8 of the Fauquier County Comprehensive Plan, the *Rural Land Use Plan*, recognizes the importance of the County's traditional agricultural and rural character and encourages agricultural uses and open spaces in the rural areas. This chapter includes policies that promote the protection of scenic viewsheds and vistas, as well as significant historic areas and archeological sites. Chapter 8 encourages the retention of existing buildings and the construction of compatible infill within the rural villages and settlements. The proposal will provide the retention of a historic building and a compatible rehabilitation within the community of Auburn. This application complies with the Comprehensive Plan.

Staff Analysis:

5-006 General Standards for Special Permits and Special Exception Uses

In addition to the special standards set forth hereinafter for specific uses, all special permit and special exception uses shall satisfy the following general standards:

1. The proposed use shall be such that it will not adversely affect the use or development of neighboring properties. It shall be in accordance with the applicable zoning district regulations and the applicable provisions of the adopted Comprehensive Plan. The location, size and height of buildings, structures, walls and fences, and the nature and extent of screening, buffering and landscaping shall be such that the use will not hinder or discourage the appropriate development and/or use of adjacent or nearby land and/or buildings or impair the value thereof.

The proposed use will not adversely affect the use or appropriate development of adjacent or neighboring properties or impair their value. The application is in accordance with Rural Residential (RR-2) zoning district regulations and in conformance with the Comprehensive Plan.

2. The proposed use shall be such that pedestrian and vehicular traffic generated will not be hazardous or conflict with the existing and anticipated traffic in the neighborhood and on the streets serving the site.

The proposed use should not generate excessive traffic in the neighborhood or conflict with existing traffic patterns. A VDOT entrance permit has been issued for this project.

3. In addition to the standards which may be set forth in this Article for a particular category or use, the BZA and Board may require landscaping, screening, yard requirements or other limitations found to be necessary and appropriate to the proposed use and location.

The approved 2012 Site Plan indicates that the parking area, to be installed behind the house, will be screened with landscaping. Section 5-702.5 of the Zoning Ordinance, a standard for adaptive use, requires all off-street parking and loading areas to be substantially screened with landscaping or architecturally compatible fencing. Staff has prepared a condition that reiterates this requirement. Although both buildings on the property are located approximately 15 feet from the front property line along Old Auburn Road, they are legally non-conforming.

4. Open space shall be provided in an amount at least equal to that specified for the zoning district in which the proposed use is located.

Open space is not required for this application.

5. Adequate utility, drainage, parking, loading, and other necessary facilities to serve the proposed use shall be provided. Low impact development techniques are encouraged by the County and shall be incorporated into the site and facility design when deemed appropriate by the applicant after consultation with appropriate county officials. Parking and loading requirements shall be in accordance with the provisions of Article 7.

In comments dated 10/31/2016, the Virginia Department of Health (VDH) states that an Operation Permit has been issued for this property. It allows for the usage capacity of one (1) two-bedroom dwelling (300 gpd) and one (1) one-bedroom dwelling (150 gpd). Sewage disposal for the rehabilitation has been approved by VDH. The approximate location of the drainfield is represented on the Special Exception plat. A separate access drive to the building and small parking area are shown on the approved 2012 Site Plan. Beyond the building rehabilitation, there are no additional improvements or land clearing to be made to the site.

6. Signs shall be regulated by the provisions of Article 8, except as may be qualified in the Parts that follow for a particular category or use. However, the BZA and the Board, under the authority presented in Section 007 below, may impose more strict standards for a given use than those set forth in this Ordinance.

No signs are proposed on the subject property at this time.

7. The future impact of a proposed use will be considered and addressed in establishing a time limit on the permit, if deemed appropriate. Existing and recent development, current zoning and the Comprehensive Plan shall be among the factors used in assessing the future impact of the proposed use and whether reconsideration of the permit after a stated period of time would be necessary and appropriate for the protection of properties in the vicinity and to ensure implementation of the Comprehensive Plan.

The applicant has requested no time limit be placed on the proposed use.

8. The proposed use shall be such that air quality, surface and groundwater quality and quantity, are not degraded or depleted to an extent that would hinder or discourage the appropriate development and/or use of adjacent or nearby land and/or buildings or impair the value thereof.

The proposed use should not affect air quality and surface or groundwater.

9. Except as provided in this Article, all uses shall comply with the lot size, bulk regulations, and performance standards of the zoning district in which located.

The applicant will be required to comply with all applicable zoning district regulations.

5-700 Category 7 Adaptive Uses

In addition to the general standards set forth in Section 006 above, the following standards shall apply:

5-701 Eligibility

Adaptive Re-Uses shall be permitted only in:

1. Structures existing prior to 1940, or are independently listed, or are eligible for listing, on the National Register of Historic Places, subject to the standards set forth in Section 5-702.

The structure was surveyed by an architectural historian in 2011. At that time, it was determined that the building was constructed around 1890. Therefore, this standard is satisfied.

2. For public safety buildings and primary and secondary school buildings, subject to the standards set forth in Section 5-703.

This standard is not applicable.

5-702 Adaptive Uses of Historic Structures

1. The following uses may be approved:
 - A. Retail shops
 - B. Art and Craft galleries, including Photographic Studios
 - C. Offices
 - D. Restaurants
 - E. Receptions
 - F. Tourist homes
 - G. Repair Service Establishments
 - H. Furniture Repair, Cabinet Making, and Upholstery
 - I. Personal Service Establishments such as Barber/Beauty Shops
 - J. Single-Family and Multi-Family Residential Uses
 - K. Scholarly Research Center, but limited to fields of study linked to the property's historic use or by virtue of existing resources or collections found on the property

The applicant is seeking approval to establish a single-family residential use.

2. Adaptive uses shall be permitted only in those instances in which the continuation of the existing use is physically or financially impossible or impractical, where the proposed use is not inconsistent with existing uses in the vicinity, and where the proposed use will not unduly interfere with the appropriate expectations of neighboring property owners based on the underlying zoning of their properties and the property for which the adaptive use is proposed.

The building has been vacant and in a severe state of disrepair for many years, which is physically and financially impractical. The proposed residential use is consistent with other uses in the vicinity, and the rehabilitation will be advantageous for Auburn residents. It will not unduly

interfere with the appropriate expectations of surrounding owners based on the existing underlying zoning of the neighboring properties and subject property.

3. No proposed alteration to a structure or dependency containing an adaptive use shall materially alter the exterior appearance of the structure from its historical appearance.

The proposal will require extensive interior and exterior rehabilitation, but according to the applicant's proposed renovation drawings, the exterior of the building will retain its historical appearance. Staff has prepared a condition that addresses the type of appropriate material to be used for the replacement of the siding.

4. No off-street parking or loading space shall be located in any required side or rear yard that abuts a residentially zoned property. No more than three (3) parking spaces shall be located in any required front yard unless specifically provided for in granting the special exception based on a finding that such parking will not adversely affect the character of the historic structure.

The approved 2012 Site Plan shows parking spaces located behind the house, outside the 100 year FEMA floodplain. Staff has prepared a condition that would require parking to be provided behind the house and to not exceed three (3) spaces.

5. All off-street parking and loading areas shall be substantially screened with landscaping or architecturally compatible fencing, as described in the special exception.

The approved 2012 Site Plan shows the off-street parking area screened by landscaping. Staff has prepared a condition that would require the installation of landscaping or architectural compatible fencing along the west side of the new parking area.

6. The approval by special exception of an adaptive use shall only occur (a) within an area designated as a service district or village in the Comprehensive Plan, or (b) be on a lot having direct access to a road designated as a major collector (or higher) in the Comprehensive Plan, unless the Board of Supervisors finds that the type and amount of traffic generated by the facility is such that it will not cause an undue impact on the neighbors or adversely affect traffic safety.

The subject property is not located within an area designated as a service district or village in the Comprehensive Plan. Old Auburn Road (Route 670) is designated as a rural minor arterial, which is a lower classification than a major collector. Thus, the subject property does not have direct access to a major collector. As previously noted, the proposed residential use should not generate excessive traffic in the neighborhood or conflict with existing traffic patterns. Nonetheless, the Board of Supervisors will ultimately need to decide whether or not the amount of traffic generated by the facility will cause an undue impact on the neighbors or adversely affect traffic safety.

7. No goods or items associated with the adaptive reuse may be stored outdoors, but such goods or items may be displayed or offered for sale on the porch of any such historic structure.

No goods or items associated with the adaptive reuse will be stored outdoors.

8. A thirty percent (30%) increase in the square footage of any historic structure shall be permitted in connection with the approval of the adaptive use thereof, and such additional square footage may take the form of an addition to such historic structure or to any accessory structure, or an additional accessory structure, so long as such addition or additional accessory structure otherwise meets all other applicable zoning and building code requirements and is of an architectural design that is compatible in size and appearance with the existing historic structure.

The applicant proposes to construct a porch and deck, approximately 18 feet by 28 feet, off the south (rear) elevation. There is no other proposed increase to the building's square footage.

9. All alterations and additions to existing historic structures, all additional accessory structures, including signs, shall be designed and constructed in a manner that conforms to the United States Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.

The alterations to be made to the historic structure are noted on the applicant's renovation drawings and in the Historic Resource Analysis section below. Staff has prepared a condition that addresses this standard.

10. Notwithstanding the residential density provisions found in Sections 2-308 and 3-401 of this Zoning Ordinance, not more than one (1) additional single-family dwelling unit may be established on a parcel hereunder in excess of the density otherwise permitted; and any remaining residential density available on any such property shall be reduced by one for each residential unit added under this adaptive use provision.

No other dwellings beyond the existing dwelling and rehabilitated building shall be permitted on the subject property.

11. In the event of a fire or other property-related casualty affecting the historic structure for which an adaptive use is granted hereunder, the structure must be substantially restored to its condition prior to the casualty in order for the adaptive use to remain legally permissible. If such restoration is not completed within two years of the occurrence of such casualty, then the adaptive use permitted hereunder shall no longer be allowed and the special exception therefore shall be null and void.

No action is required at this time.

12. All commercial activities permitted hereunder, and the structure or structures in which they are conducted, shall be subject to all applicable building code regulations, as well as applicable regulations promulgated by the Virginia Departments of Health and Transportation.

No commercial activities are proposed with this Special Exception.

Staff and Agency Review Comments:

Staff and certain referral agencies have reviewed this application for conformance with the Comprehensive Plan, the Zoning Ordinance, and other relevant policies and regulations. Findings,

comments, and recommendations are summarized below. Following each comment is a staff note in italics stating how the comment has been addressed.

Planning Considerations:

See analysis provided within the staff report.

Historic Resource Analysis:

The two buildings on the subject property were surveyed in 2011 for the Auburn Battlefield National Register nomination and given DHR identification number 030-5140-0075. Both buildings were constructed around 1890. The larger building was identified as a Folk Victorian style dwelling with architectural features associated with this style. The smaller building, the subject of this application, was identified as a two-story vernacular frame house with three bays, side gable roof covered with standing seam metal roofing, weatherboard siding, wood 2/2 double hung sash windows, and a pole or pier foundation. It was noted that an exterior-end, brick flue had collapsed and fallen away on the south side of the building. At the time of the survey, both buildings were assigned the condition of “poor to ruinous.”

The *Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation* are designed to allow a compatible use for a historic property through repair, alterations, and additions while still preserving those features of the property that convey its historical, cultural, or architectural values. The Standards advise that removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced, but where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials.

It is a vernacular building and was not constructed with any notable stylistic elements. However, there are other historic architectural features that characterize the building and should be retained during the rehabilitation, including the building’s form, height, massing, as well as its roof form (side gable), wood siding, and setting.

The drawings show that new windows and entrances will be cut into building; the siding will be replaced; a new full porch and wood deck will be constructed on the building’s south elevation; fishscale shingles will be added to the gable ends, and the existing standing seam metal roof will remain. The applicants’ proposed renovation drawings indicate that the form, height, massing, roof form, and setting will be retained. It is assumed that the original weatherboard siding was severely deteriorated since it has been removed. Staff recommends replacement with either lapped wood siding or lapped concrete fiberboard siding, like Hardiplank. The installation of vinyl siding would not meet the Standards.

Zoning Considerations:

The Zoning Office reviewed the Special Exception request. No outstanding issues or comments were noted.

Virginia Department of Health (VDH):

- 1) An Operation Permit has been issued for this property for:

- a) 1, 2-bedroom dwelling
 - b) 1, 1-bedroom dwelling
- 2) The owners now plan to complete the renovation of the 1-bedroom dwelling unit. Sewage disposal for this renovation has been approved by this office.