



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Planning Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: Bruce K. Walden, Chief Administrative Officer

FROM: Elizabeth H. Tyler, AICP, City Planner, Director

DATE: December 15, 2005

SUBJECT: Case No. 1967-SU-05, Request for a Special Use Permit to establish a Warehouse, Self-Storage Facility at 2006 S. Philo Road in the B-3, General Business Zoning District.

Introduction

JSM Management, Inc. is requesting a Special Use Permit to establish a self-storage warehouse facility at 2006 S. Philo Road in southeast Urbana. The proposal includes plans for subdivided rental spaces inside of the existing building and additional storage units on the lot in separate buildings. The subject property has been vacant for several years and was formerly the site of a nursing home. The property is zoned B-3, General Business. A *Warehouse, Self-Storage Facility* is permitted by Special Use in the B-3 Zoning District. At their meeting on December 8, 2005, the Plan Commission recommended approval of the Special Use Permit with certain conditions which have been incorporated in the proposed ordinance.

Background

Description of the Site and Surrounding Properties

The subject property is an approximately 1.4 acre parcel located on the east side of Philo Road. The site includes an existing building (13,471 square feet) which previously served as a nursing home. To the north is Grace Methodist Church, and the former Jerry's IGA is to the south. To the east are town homes in the Eagle Ridge subdivision. Across Philo Road to the west are apartment buildings and commercial properties. The surrounding neighborhood combines multiple uses including commercial buildings, institutional uses, multifamily residential buildings, and undeveloped land in a vacant plot to the northeast of the subject property and directly east of the Grace Methodist Church.

The following is a summary of surrounding zoning and land uses for the subject site:

Zoning and Land Use Table*

Location	Zoning	Existing Land Use	Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use
Subject Property	B-3, General Business	Vacant nursing home	Community Business
North	R-4, Medium Density Multiple Family Residential	Church	Community Business
South	B-3, General Business	Vacant grocery store and parking lot	Community Business
East	R-4, Medium Density Multiple Family Residential	Town homes	Residential (Suburban Pattern)
North West	B-1, Neighborhood Business	Commercial offices (some vacant)	Community Business
West	R-5, Medium High Density Multiple Family Residential	Apartments	Multifamily

* (Please refer to the attached Zoning, Existing Land Use, and Future Land Use maps for further information.)

The Proposal

The applicant, JSM Management, proposes to operate a self-storage warehouse facility as the primary use. Storage will be located within the existing building as well as in new buildings. The proposed storage facility will be all single story structures comparable to the scale of the existing building and configured in a density consistent with the general commercial development along Philo road. Three of the four new buildings are sited to the rear of the lot. The one new building at the front of the lot is located to be even with the front face of the existing building to maintain a consistent façade line facing Philo Road.

There will be 53 storage units of varying sizes accessible only from inside the existing building. Thirteen additional storage units will be added to the outside of the south façade of the building. Access to the new units on the outside of the building will be directly from the outside. There will be four new freestanding buildings containing 80 new storage units that will also be accessible directly from the outside. The complete proposal is for a total of 146 storage units to be available in various sizes. Access hours will be controlled and a perimeter fence with automatic gate system will secure the site and limit access to customers only.

Screening and Lighting

The existing building acts as a visual screen for the majority of the units from southbound Philo Road traffic and a line of mature pine trees along the south property line screens the units from view by northbound traffic. An existing eight foot tall solid screen fence along the east property line screens the development from the adjacent residential use. Night time illumination for security will be directed downwards and use fixtures with glare cutoff features to minimize the impact of lighting on adjacent properties.

Access & Paving

An existing drive enters the site from Philo Road. This two way asphalt paved drive will terminate at a line parallel to the rear façade of the existing building. The petitioners propose a different surface for the drives servicing the three buildings toward the rear of the lot. The proposal is to use a new paving product called Gravelpave2 that is essentially a grid mat of small ring-like chambers that will be under the surface of the drive and will hold gravel aggregate material in place while allowing rainwater to percolate through. The purpose of this is to reduce the amount of impervious paved surface and so reduce stormwater runoff rates without the need to build detention basins. City Planning and Engineering staff is working with the petitioners to determine if this system can be used as a test case for an environmentally friendly alternative to conventional paving. This type of system is particularly suited to driveways and parking areas with low numbers of vehicular traffic. Unlike retail business operations, individual customer access to the storage units is generally infrequent. The nature of self-storage facility usage patterns are inherently low in traffic and further reduce the perceived impact of traffic at the development.

Parking

According to the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, for a self-storage facility one parking space is required for every 100 storage units. The site has 28 existing parking spaces but most of them will be covered by the new buildings. There will be three parking spaces maintained at the main entrance to the existing building, including one handicapped double space. The designated spaces at the main building are all that are required by the Zoning Ordinance. Users of the self storage units that are accessible directly from the exterior will park temporarily in front of their units.

Similar Cases

In January of 2004, a similar Special Use Permit was granted to allow a mini-warehouse storage facility in the former Jewel Osco building at 1808 S. Philo Road. An additional Special Use Permit was granted in October 2002 for new mini-warehouse storage buildings east of the Jewel Osco building at 1604 E. Colorado Avenue. The Colorado Avenue storage buildings have not been constructed and that lot remains vacant.

Plan Commission Recommendations

At its December 8, 2005 meeting, the Plan Commission voted five in favor and one against to recommend approval of this application with certain recommended conditions. The Commission stated that their proposed conditions are intended for the facility to look like a commercial rather than industrial facility, and so that the facility comply with the essential character of the district. These recommended conditions have been incorporated in the proposed ordinance under consideration.

Discussion

Requirements for a Special Use Permit

Proposed uses approved through Special Use Permits must demonstrate they comply with the following criteria set forth in Section VII-6 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance:

1. *That the proposed use is conducive to the public convenience at that location.*

The proposed self-storage facility will provide an easily accessible location for customers with needs for short, intermediate and long term storage. The Philo Road location is well suited to offer convenient access for nearby residential and commercial areas.

- 2) *That the proposed use is designed, located, and proposed to be operated so that it will not be unreasonably injurious or detrimental to the district in which it shall be located, or otherwise injurious to the public welfare.*

With the proposed conditions, the facility will be designed in keeping with the existing building and a density consistent with the general commercial development along Philo Road. The new buildings will be visually screened from Philo Road through a combination of extension of the front building façade, a solid wood fence, and evergreen trees. The front gate will have a residential rather than industrial design. Night time illumination will be directed downwards and use fixtures with glare cutoff features to minimize the impact of lighting on adjacent properties.

- 3) *That the proposed use conforms to the applicable regulations and standards of, and preserves the essential character of, the district in which it shall be located, except where such regulations and standards are modified by Section VII-7.*

A Self Storage Warehouse is permitted as a Special Use in the B-3, General Zoning District. The proposed facility is designed to meet applicable regulations and standards of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance and Building Safety Code.

Consideration

The City Council shall determine whether the reasons set forth in the application and the evidence provided at the public hearing justify the granting of the special use permit. Furthermore the City Council must determine whether the proposed use will be in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the Zoning Ordinance, and will not be unreasonably injurious or detrimental to the district in which it shall be located, or otherwise injurious or detrimental to the public welfare.

The City Council may impose additional conditions and requirements on the proposed use as appropriate or necessary for the public health, safety, and welfare, and to carry out the purposes of the Zoning Ordinance, including but not limited to the following:

1. Regulate the location, extent, and intensity of such use;
2. Require adherence to an approved site plan;

3. Require landscaping and the screening of such use by means of fences, walls, or vegetation;
4. Stipulate a required minimum lot size, minimum yards, and maximum height of buildings and structures;
5. Regulate vehicular access and volume, and the design and location of parking and loading areas and structures;
6. Require conformance to health, safety, and sanitation requirements as necessary;
7. Regulate signs and outdoor lighting;
8. Any other conditions deemed necessary to affect the purposes of the Zoning Ordinance.

Summary of Findings

1. The proposed facility is conducive to the public convenience because it would offer storage service to residential and business customers in the area.
2. With the adopted conditions, the proposed use will not be unreasonably injurious to the district in which it is proposed to be located.
3. The proposed use is consistent with the zoning designations of the subject site and the surrounding area.
4. The proposed use is compatible with the existing land use pattern of the general area.
5. The proposed use conforms with the City of Urbana's 2005 Comprehensive Plan, including Map 13 which recommends "Community Business" land use for the property.

Options

The City Council has the following options regarding Plan Case No. 1967-SU-05:

1. Approve the Special Use Permit request, without any additional conditions.
2. Approve the Special Use Permit request with conditions necessary for the public health, safety, and welfare, and to carry out the purposes of the Zoning Ordinance.
3. Deny the request for a Special Use Permit.

Recommendation

Based on the evidence presented in the discussion above, and without the benefit of considering additional evidence that may be presented at the public hearing, the Plan Commission and staff recommend that the City Council **approve** Special Use Permit 1967-SU-05 as articulated above and with the **following conditions:**

1. The facility shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including building, zoning, fire safety and site development requirements.

2. The development shall be in general conformance to the plan submitted. Any significant deviation from the site plan, as determined by the City of Urbana Zoning Administrator, will require the project be resubmitted to the Plan Commission for reevaluation of the Special Use. The Zoning Administrator shall have the authority to administratively approve minor site plan changes in order for the project to comply with City regulations or due to reduction in the number of storage units.
3. All storage units other than inside the existing building shall be effectively screened from public view as shown on the attached plans. The opaque wood fence shall be a minimum of six feet in height. No barbed wire or razor wire shall be used for the fence.
4. For the purposes of screening along the east side, the existing wood fence located along the east property line on the adjoining property shall be considered sufficient screen. The petitioner agrees to initially replace any worn, damaged, or missing boards in cooperation with the adjacent property owners. Should this fence be removed or modified such that it no longer serves as an effective visual screen, the petitioner shall construct a solid opaque fence at least six feet in height on the subject property to match the remaining wood fence on the property.
5. Landscaping shall be installed as shown in the attached drawings. Evergreen screening shall be maintained so as to provide a continuous and effective screen. Existing site landscaping, including the row of evergreen trees along the south property line, shall be retained. All landscape materials shall be maintained or replaced within 60 days once dead, damaged, or diseased.
6. The west ends of the outdoor storage units shall be constructed with materials to match the façade design of the existing building as indicated on the attached drawings.
7. The gate along the west side of the property shall be composed of vertical metal pickets rather than chain link. While open, the gate shall be screened from view from Philo Road by a row of evergreens as shown in attached drawings.
8. Site lighting shall be directed downward and shielded away from adjacent properties.

Attachments: Exhibit A, Location Map
 Exhibit B, Zoning map
 Exhibit C, Aerial Photo with Existing Land Use
 Exhibit D, Future Land Use map
 Exhibit E, Site Plan

ORDINANCE NO. 2005-12-179

An Ordinance Approving A Special Use Permit

(To Allow the Establishment of a Warehouse, Self-Storage Facility in the B-3, General Business Zoning District, Located at 2006 S. Philo Road / JSM Management, Inc., Plan Case No. 1967-SU-05)

WHEREAS, JSM Management, Inc. has petitioned the Urbana Plan Commission in Case No. 1967-SU-05 for a Special Use Permit to construct a Self Storage Warehouse at 2006 S Philo Road; and

WHEREAS, subject property is located in Urbana's B-3, General Business Zoning District; and

WHEREAS, Table V-1. of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Urbana, Illinois states that "Warehouses, Self Storage" are permitted in the B-3, General Business zoning district under Special Use Permit review; and

WHEREAS, the conditions placed on the approval in Section 1 herein will insure that the proposed use will not be unreasonably injurious or detrimental to the district or to the public welfare, and that it will preserve the essential character of the district in which it is located; and

WHEREAS, after due publication, a public hearing was held by the Urbana Plan Commission on December 8, 2005 concerning the petition filed by the petitioner in Plan Case No. 1967-SU-05; and

WHEREAS, on October 20, 2005, the Urbana Plan Commission voted 5 ayes and 1 nays to forward the case to the Urbana City Council with a recommendation to approve the request for a Special Use Permit, subject to the conditions as outlined in Section 1 herein; and

WHEREAS, the approval of the Special Use Permit, with the conditions set forth below, is consistent with the requirements of Section VII-6 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, Special Use Permit Procedures, and with the general intent of that Section of the Ordinance; and

WHEREAS, the findings of the Plan Commission indicate that approval of the special use permit would promote the general health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the public.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT ORDAINED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF URBANA, ILLINOIS, as follows:

Section 1. A Special Use Permit is hereby approved to allow the installation of a Self Storage Warehouse at 2006 S Philo Road in the B-3, General Business Zoning District with the following conditions upon approval:

1. The facility shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations, including building, zoning, fire safety and site development requirements; and
2. The development shall be in general conformance to the plan submitted. Any significant deviation from the site plan, as determined by the City of Urbana Zoning Administrator, will require the project be resubmitted to the Plan Commission for reevaluation of the Special Use. The Zoning Administrator shall have the authority to administratively approve minor site plan changes in order for the project to comply with City regulations or due to reduction in the number of storage units; and
3. All storage units other than those inside the existing building shall be effectively screened from public view as shown on the attached plans. The opaque wood fence shall be a minimum of six feet in height. No barbed wire or razor wire shall be used for the fence; and

4. For the purposes of screening along the east side, the existing wood fence located along the east property line on the adjoining property shall be considered sufficient screen. The petitioner agrees to initially replace any worn, damaged, or missing boards in cooperation with the adjacent property owners. Should this fence be removed or modified such that it no longer serves as an effective visual screen, the petitioner shall construct a solid opaque fence at least six feet in height on the subject property to match the remaining wood fence on the property; and
5. Landscaping shall be installed as shown in the attached drawings. Evergreen screening shall be maintained so as to provide a continuous and effective screen. Existing site landscaping, including the row of evergreen trees along the south property line, shall be retained. All landscape materials shall be maintained or replaced within 60 days once dead, damaged, or diseased; and
6. The west ends of the outdoor storage units shall be constructed with materials to match the façade design of the existing building as indicated on the attached drawings; and
7. The gate along the west side of the property shall be composed of vertical metal pickets rather than chain link. While open, the gate shall be screened from view from Philo Road by a row of evergreens as shown in attached drawings; and
8. Site lighting shall be directed downward and shielded away from adjacent properties.

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

Lot 1 of Brook's 1st Subdivision to the City of Urbana, Champaign County, Illinois.

Parcel No. 93-21-21-200-008 (2006 S Philo Road)

Section 2. The City Clerk is directed to publish this Ordinance in pamphlet form by authority of the Corporate Authorities. This Ordinance shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and publication in accordance with the terms of Chapter 65, Section 1-2-4 of the Illinois Compiled Statutes (65 ILCS 5/1-2-4).

PASSED by the City Council this _____ day of _____, _____.

AYES:

NAYS:

ABSTAINS:

Phyllis D. Clark, City Clerk

APPROVED by the Mayor this _____ day of _____,
_____.

Laurel Lunt Prussing, Mayor

CERTIFICATE OF PUBLICATION IN PAMPHLET FORM

I, Phyllis D. Clark, certify that I am the duly elected and acting Municipal Clerk of the City of Urbana, Champaign County, Illinois.

I certify that on the _____, 2005, the Corporate Authorities of the City of Urbana passed and approved Ordinance No. _____, entitled

"An Ordinance Approving A Special Use Permit

(To Allow the Establishment of a Warehouse, Self-Storage Facility in the B-3, General Business Zoning District, Located at 2006 S. Philo Road / JSM Management, Inc., Plan Case No. 1967-SU-05)"

which provided by its terms that it should be published in pamphlet form. The pamphlet form of Ordinance No. _____ was prepared, and a copy of such Ordinance was posted in the Urbana City Building commencing on the _____ day of _____, 2005, and continuing for at least ten (10) days thereafter. Copies of such Ordinance were also available for public inspection upon request at the Office of the City Clerk.

DATED at Urbana, Illinois, this _____ day of _____, 2005.

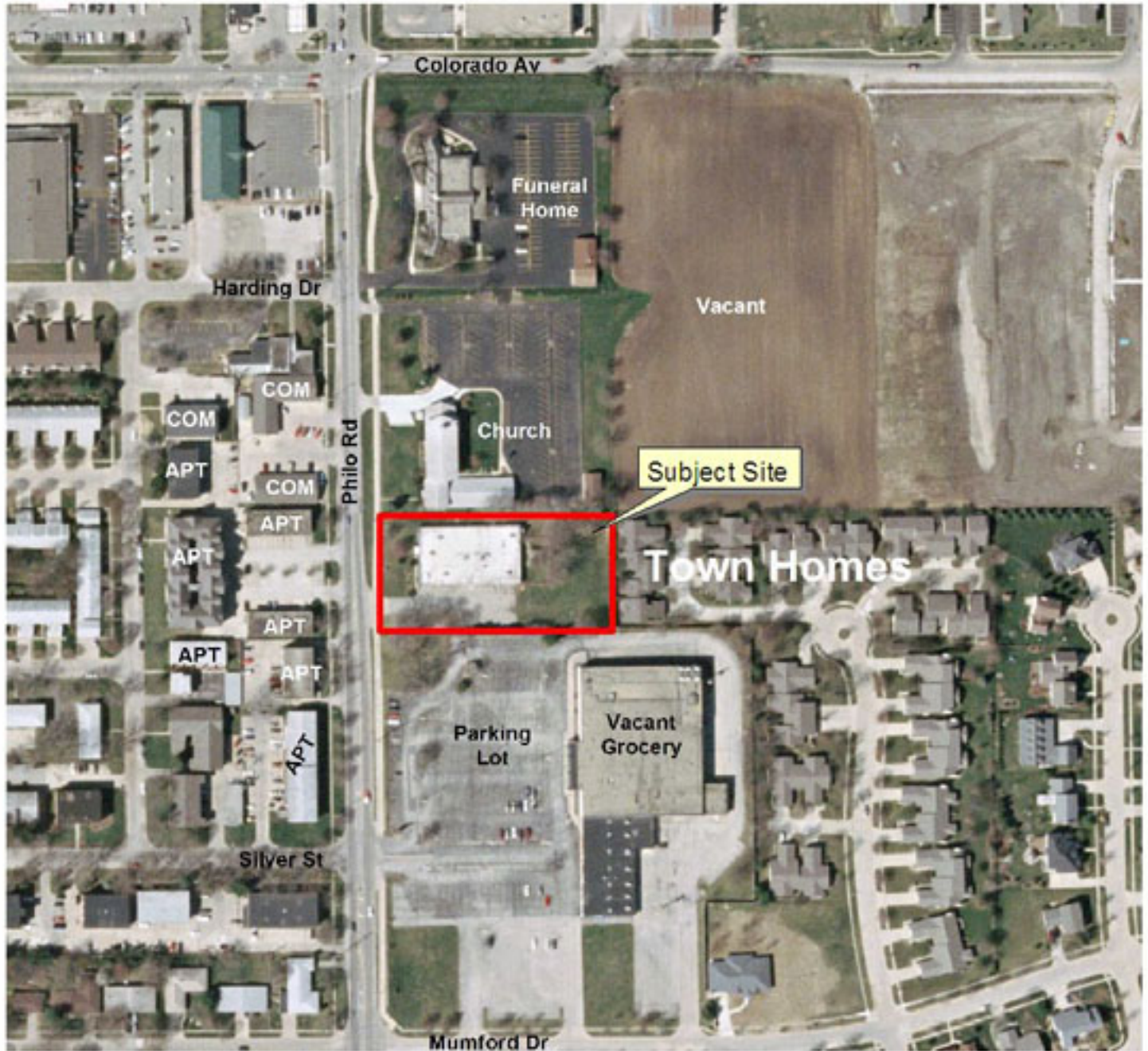
Location Map

Exhibit "A"



Plan Case: 1907-SU-05
Petitioner: JSM-Scott Kunkel
Location: 2008 S. Philo
Zoning: B-3 - General Business
Description: Special Use Permit to establish a
Mini Warehouse Self Storage in B-3 zone

Prepared 11/21/05 by Community Development Services - pal



Plan Case: 1907-SU-05
Petitioner: JSM-Scott Kunkel
Location: 2008 S. Philo
Zoning: B-3 - General Business
Description: Special Use Permit to establish a Mini Warehouse Self Storage in B-3 zone

Prepared 11/21/05 by Community Development Services - pal

APT - Apartment
COM - Commercial
PKG - Parking

MINUTES OF A REGULAR MEETING

URBANA PLAN COMMISSION

DRAFT

DATE: December 8, 2005
TIME: 7:30 P.M.
PLACE: Urbana City Building
400 South Vine Street
Urbana, IL 61801

MEMBERS PRESENT: Jane Burris, Ben Grosser, Lew Hopkins, Michael Pollock, Marilyn Upah-Bant, Jim Ward
MEMBERS EXCUSED: Laurie Goscha, Bernadine Stake, Don White
STAFF PRESENT: Robert Myers, Planning Manager; Paul Lindahl, Planner I; Teri Andel, Secretary
OTHERS PRESENT: Bjorg Holte, Mary Kent, Scott Kunkel, Susan Taylor

NEW PUBLIC HEARINGS

Plan Case No. 1967-SU-05: Request for a Special Use Permit to establish a Warehouse, Self-Storage Facility at 2006 South Philo Road in the B-3, General Business Zoning District.

Paul Lindahl, Planner I, presented the staff report for the proposed special use permit case to the Plan Commission. He began with a brief description of the proposed site and its surrounding properties noting their current zoning designations and land uses. He showed the site plan and recent photos of the proposed site. He talked about the purpose for the special use permit, screening and lighting, access and paving, and parking for the proposed property. He summarized staff findings. Robert Myers, Planning Manager, presented and reviewed staff's revised recommendation, which was as follows:

City staff recommended approval of the proposed case with the following conditions:

- 1. This facility shall comply with all applicable laws and regulations including building, zoning, fire safety, and site development requirements.*
- 2. The petitioners shall provide adequate on site storm water management as determined by the City of Urbana Engineering Department.*

3. *The development shall be in general conformance to the plan submitted. Any significant deviation from the site plan (as determined by the City of Urbana Zoning Administrator) will require the project be resubmitted to the Plan Commission for reevaluation of the Special Use. The Zoning Administrator shall have the authority to administratively approve minor site plan changes in order for the project to comply with City regulations, including Building, Fire, Public Works, and Site Development Codes, or due to a reduction in the number of storage units.*
4. *A solid opaque fence at least six feet in height shall be constructed and maintained to screen all storage units other than those within the existing building. For the purposes of screening, the existing wood fence located along the east property line on the adjoining property shall be considered a sufficient screen. The petitioner agrees to initially replace any worn, damaged, or missing boards in cooperation with the adjacent property owners. Should this fence be removed or modified such that it no longer serves as an effective visual screen, the petitioner shall construct a solid opaque fence at least six feet in height on the subject property to match the rest of the fence on the property. No chain link, barbed wire, or razor wire shall be used for the fence.*
5. *The existing gate, currently aligned with the building facade, shall be relocated eastward at least one-third the depth of the building.*
6. *Site lighting shall be directed downward and shielded away from adjacent properties.*
7. *Existing site landscaping, including the row of evergreen trees along the south property line shall be retained. Additionally, the applicant shall submit a landscape plan showing any additional landscaping between the building/gate and Philo Road.*

Mr. Ward pointed out that if the petitioner moved the existing gate eastward to at least 1/3 of the depth of the building, then a significant number of the proposed new storage units would have to be outside of the fenced in area. Would this be acceptable or would the petitioner need to reduce the number of outside storage units? Mr. Myers stated that the petitioner would either have to relocate these storage units inside the fenced in area or reduce the number of units.

Mr. Grosser inquired if comments were received primarily by property owners behind and/or to the east of the proposed site. Mr. Myers replied by saying that the comments had come from people who lived in the area, but not necessarily directly behind the proposed property. Overall, their concern was whether the facility would look like an industrial facility or more like other commercial businesses along the corridor. They also had expressed some concern about having a storage facility in the B-3 Zoning District. However, this was a separate matter, because a storage facility is currently allowed in the B-3 Zoning District with a special use permit.

Regarding Condition #4, Mr. Hopkins questioned whether the last sentence, “*No chain link, barbed wire, or razor wire shall be used for the fence*”, referred to all of the fencing around the entire perimeter. Mr. Myers said yes. There was also a question about the gate itself, because the gate was designed to move and be chain-linked. There was another question about whether the gate needed to be opened, so that the police could view through it for security purposes.

Mr. Pollock asked if it was staff’s intent that the entire parcel be fenced. Mr. Myers explained that the intent was for the outdoor storage units to be screened from the view of adjacent property owners and from the right-of-way. Mr. Lindahl added that another purpose for fencing the entire perimeter would be to provide security as well.

Mr. Pollock questioned what type of material the petitioner could use if not chain-link. Mr. Lindahl replied that it would be up to the developer. Staff requested a solid, opaque fence. The petitioner could use vinyl, wood or some other type of material.

Scott Kunkel, with JSM Management, Inc., stated that they were in general agreement with the intent of the revised conditions. He had some ideas of how they could compromise and obtain these goals.

One of their principal concerns is the perception of the facility from Philo Road. They do not want to have an industrial type of character to the facility. Therefore, he proposed that they extend the front wall of the building to the south and construct a wall on the south side of the drive to match to provide a contiguous appearance, so that it would read more as a single building unit. It would serve as the screen from Philo Road.

He mentioned that they do want to maintain the chain-link gate. They believe it would safer for people to be able to see if someone is coming or going through the gate.

He noted that there was a pretty heavy line of evergreen trees that do a pretty good job of screening the existing chain-linked fence. He suggested that they construct an opaque fence from the end of the tree line to the back of the property along the south property line. They would use the same type of fencing along the north property line.

Mr. Pollock clarified that there currently was a chain-linked fence along the tree line that the petitioner would like to keep. Mr. Kunkel said yes. Mr. Pollock asked if the chain-linked gate was hinged on the ends and opened inward in the middle. Mr. Kunkel responded by saying that it was a rolling or sliding gate that rolls laterally to the north towards the building.

Mr. Ward understood why there was some concern about the fencing. He also understood the need to have open fencing for security purposes. Has the petitioner considered something like an iron picket fence that would be able to move like the chain-link fence? The chain-link fence gives the property a look that was not pleasant to see. There were other kinds of open fencing that would aesthetically have a great deal more appeal than the chain-link fence.

Mr. Pollock asked if Condition # 5 were to be approved, would there be room for the petitioner to relocate the storage units that appeared would be outside of the fenced in area. Mr. Kunkel said no. He was hoping that the Plan Commission, City Staff and the City Council would go with idea of extending the front building facade rather than requiring them to relocate the gate.

Mr. Hopkins wondered if the gate would be left opened throughout the day. Mr. Kunkel remarked that the intent would be for the gate to be closed. Mr. Pollock questioned how people would get to their storage units. Mr. Kunkel explained that there would be a small pedestal where people, who rented a storage unit, would be able to wave a key fob, which would activate the gate to open.

Mr. Hopkins inquired about how people who come to rent a storage unit would enter the gate and park. Mr. Kunkel noted that there would not be an on-site management office. People would rent a storage space either over the web or the telephone. Someone from their staff would meet them at the site to finalize the arrangement.

Ms. Burris questioned where people would park when they came to get in their storage unit. Mr. Kunkel explained customers with outdoor storage units would drive up beside their unit and either load or unload their wares. Inside storage clients would park in one of the designated parking spaces provided on the south side of the building and enter through the door. Their clients do not visit on a daily basis. Most people would only come a couple of times per month.

Mr. Pollock inquired whether the lanes between each of the buildings would be big enough for vehicles to move between and around all of the buildings. Mr. Kunkel said that was correct. In fact, the lanes would be sized to allow two vehicles to drive down.

Mr. Grosser stated that when looking at the third criteria from Section VII-6 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, which states "*That the proposed use conforms to the applicable regulations and standards of, and preserves the essential character of the district in which it shall be located.....*", he noticed that the question of preserving the essential character of the neighborhood had not been addressed in the written staff report. To him, this was an essential point. The City Council recently passed their goals, and #2 of their goals relates to improving the Philo Road area. One of the surveys in the Philo Road Business District Revitalization Action Plan, which was also adopted by the City Council, talks about what the local residents would like to see in the Philo Road area. The survey found that the types of businesses desired by shoppers for this area primarily included general merchandise, restaurants, clothing, grocery, drug, building, hardware, and shoe and book stores. Therefore, he did not feel that a self-storage facility would be preserving the essential character of the area. He was unhappy to see the self-storage facility go into the old Jewel building. He believed that it would attract the types of businesses that were not desirable for this area.

When you look at the site plan as designed and the fact that it would have a rolling gate, it would still have the appearance of a self-storage facility even with the suggestions made by the petitioner of extending the facade. This is not what he believes people are looking for to improve the area. At the same time, he understands that this is a vacant property, and it is next to a property that is not being used. However, what type of business goes into the proposed property would affect the type of use that would be attracted to the property next door. He does appreciate the fact that the petitioner intends to reuse the existing building. Overall, his primary concern is that a self-storage facility does not match the essential character of the neighborhood. There is a twenty million dollar multi-use development going in where the old K-Mart building was located. It is envisioned to be upscale, student apartments on the top levels with retail on the ground level.

Mr. Ward agreed with Mr. Grosser in terms of goals for the area. However, he has a somewhat contrary interpretation of the facts. The existing building on the proposed site has remained vacant for quite some time, and it is beginning to become an eyesore, as well as the rest of the property. The old Jerry's IGA building next door was in a state that if something does not happen to it fairly soon, then it would be a major crime and eyesore problem. The parking lot is deteriorating. He agreed with the survey of the local residents. He would love to see an upscale grocery store, a restaurant and a book store locate in the area. Although no one has the ability to look into the future, he strongly suspects that the likelihood of these types of uses relocating in this area in the near future was not very great. As Mr. Grosser pointed out, there was going to be a new development in the area that would contain a lot of residential property, which would be oriented towards students and others who may lead somewhat transient lives. This indicated to him a need for a self-storage facility.

Mr. Ward stated that he had mentioned most of his concerns regarding the gate, etc. earlier. Another concern of his is that the line of trees on the south side of the property is mature. Mature enough, in fact, that the lower branches of the trees were high enough to not provide much screening. He would like to see the issue of providing some adequate screening be discussed more. Otherwise, he believed that the proposal met the criteria setup for the area and met the criteria for a special use permit in the B-3 Zoning District. He felt that this would be a good addition to the neighborhood given the kinds of choices that they have at this point. He was really concerned about the deterioration of the neighborhood if a business does not use the proposed property.

Ms. Upah-Bant agreed with Mr. Ward. She believed it would be an upscale storage facility from what Mr. Kunkel had described. She believed it would be a good use, especially with the multi-use development going up on the old K-Mart site. The plan calls for bookstores, shoe stores and coffee shops. However, hoping for it will not make it happen. The longer the property remains vacant, the more likely we would not get anything in there. She would rather see the proposed property used as a self-storage facility than to see it remain vacant. She felt that this was a good alternative.

Ms. Burris understood both sides of the issue. Like Mr. Grosser, she would prefer not to see another storage unit facility along Philo Road. She would like to see it develop into a coffee shop, etc., but that may not be realistic at the moment. The proposed use seems like a good use. However, she suggested that the petitioner make the outside fit into the aesthetic character of the neighborhood.

Mr. Hopkins moved that the Plan Commission forward the special use permit request to the City Council with a recommendation for approval with conditions. He felt that the Plan Commission needed to work on the conditions before voting on the motion. He wanted to incorporate language regarding the proposed use fitting the visual character of the neighborhood, which would mean that that the building look like a commercial facility from the front, and that they not use a chain-link fence in a visible way.

Mr. Pollock thought the proposed facility would be appropriate for the area at this point. The City cannot force property owners to put certain uses in a commercial area. JSM Management, Inc. is a developer that builds and maintains properties very well. He recommended that the Plan

Commission decide what the commercial look should be and building it specifically into the special use permit. Maybe by doing this, they would alleviate any confusion or misinterpretation.

Mr. Hopkins stated that his intent was actually the opposite. They have a local developer who has begun the negotiation process. He did not feel that there was enough time during the meeting to design the site. Mr. Pollock then suggested that staff should continue their negotiations with the petitioner, and that the Plan Commission make clear what would be acceptable and what would not be acceptable. Mr. Hopkins commented that they could give staff guidance and ask them to bring the case back to the Plan Commission at the next meeting.

Mr. Pollock asked Mr. Kunkel what the planned timetable was for the proposed development. Would waiting two more weeks make a difference? Mr. Kunkel remarked that they would like to move forward, because due to the Council meetings being cancelled at the end of December and early January, it would turn into a four to six week delay. He appreciated Mr. Hopkins approach. However, he pointed out that the company has been in the community for a long time. They developed the East Campus Commercial Center, which is a good example of the type of quality of development that they do. They want to be proud of the buildings they develop. They also have a good track record of working with the City staff in both Urbana and Champaign.

The kinds of things that have been discussed tonight were not contrary to the kinds of improvements that JSM Management, Inc. would want to do. They would be willing to provide an opaque fence and extend the front facade.

Mr. Kunkel also mentioned that they have owned the property for about a year, and they have actively marketed the building during this time. They flat struck out and have not received any interest from other businesses. One of the things that prompted them to develop a self-storage facility was the fact that there is a real demand for storage facilities and the new multi-use development that was mentioned earlier.

Mr. Hopkins recommended the following changes to the Conditions revised by City Staff:

1. Condition #1 should include language directly from the Zoning Ordinance that requires that the proposed use comply with preserving the essential character of the neighborhood.
2. Edit the language at the end of the revised Condition #4 to read as follows, *“No chain link, barbed wire, or razor wire shall be visible from outside the enclosed storage area or property.”*
3. Reword Condition #5 to read as such, *“The existing gate, currently aligned with the building facade, shall be screened from the street, so that the gate is only visible when closed. Everything else must be shielded from view. The gate, itself, cannot be chain-link and must appear appropriate to a commercial business, not an industrial business.”*
4. Change the last sentence of Condition #7 to read as follows, *“Additionally, the applicant shall submit a landscape plan showing additional landscaping for approval by the City Arborist. The applicant is responsible for maintaining any landscaping that is necessary to meet screening requirements.”*

Mr. Pollock inquired about the intent of Condition #7. Mr. Lindahl stated that the intent for Condition #7 was that the City of Urbana approves any and all landscaping prior to being done. He mentioned that the Zoning Administrator thought maybe some type of evergreen might be used to hide the parts of the gate that do not roll. Mr. Myers added that another intent of Condition # 7 was a requirement that existing landscaping be maintained and replaced when dead or damaged.

Mr. Pollock questioned whether the petitioner would have to replace the trees along the south side if something should happen to one or all of them. Mr. Myers responded by saying that it would be the responsibility of the property owner to do so, so long as it was a requirement in the special use permit.

Mr. Ward seconded the motion. Roll call was taken and was as follows:

Mr. Grosser	-	No	Mr. Hopkins	-	Yes
Mr. Pollock	-	Yes	Ms. Upah-Bant	-	Yes
Mr. Ward	-	Yes	Ms. Burris	-	Yes

The motion was passed by a vote of 5-1, and the case would go before the City Council on December 19, 2005.