SHIMP ENGINEERING, P.C.
Design Focused Engineering

Project Narrative For: **Piedmont Grounds Management**

Parcel Description: **Tax Parcel 94-28C**

Pre-App Meeting Date: **01/08/2024**

Initial Submission: **02/19/2024**

Revised: **04/02/2024**

	ACREAGE	EXISTING ZONING	COMP PLAN DESIGNATION
TMP 94-28C	**3.13 (parcel)**	**RA Entrance Corridor Overlay**	**Rural Area 2**

Location:

The property is located on US 250 approximately 1,445 feet east of its intersection with Union Mills Road.

Surrounding Uses:

The property has historically been the site of a country store which occupies the southwest corner of the property. The property is bordered by a rural subdivision to the west and residential lots to the east.

Project Proposal:

Jordan Coffman is the owner (the "owner") of tax parcel 94-28C in Albemarle County, Virginia (the "property"). The property is located on Route 250, approximately 1,445 feet from the intersection with Union Mills Road. The owner seeks to establish a landscape contractor business, Piedmont Grounds Management LLC ("PGM") pursuant to Sec. 10.2.2(59) of the Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance. Sec. 10.2.2(59) allows, by special use permit in the Rural Areas district, for landscape contractors on lots three or more acres in size that do not otherwise qualify as an authorized home occupation under section 5.2A of the zoning ordinance.

The property has historically served as the site of a country store which occupies the southwest corner of the property; the country store is proposed to remain on the property and that portion of the property is not subject to this special use permit request.

Description of Business Operations:

PGM is an established local business and seeks to locate on the property which is conveniently sited on a major transportation corridor, Route 250, and is less than a mile from Interstate 64's Boyd Tavern exit. The property's location is ideal for supporting PGM's operations and provides the business with ease of access to major transportation corridors to access job sites. PGM proposes to construct a storage building with an office and parking area. PGM's employees will arrive at the site in the morning in their personal vehicles, gather materials and equipment for the day's jobs and then leave the site for the day in company vehicles for the day's work. At the end of the day, employees will return to the site and leave all company equipment and vehicles on the property for the evening and depart the site in their personal vehicles. Included below is a more detailed description of the proposed operation:

Hours of Operation: 8 a.m. – 5 p.m. Monday through Saturday; employees typically arrive to the site around 8 a.m. to depart for their respective job sites and return around 5 p.m. During the day, there is minimal activity on the site other than for equipment pick-up in the morning and drop-off in the evening.

Employees: There are currently 5 – 8 employees that will access the site daily.

Site Improvements: PGM proposes to construct a storage building, which will include a small office, and a parking area for employee parking and company vehicle and trailer storage. PGM proposes enhancing the landscape buffer between the proposed site improvements and the residential property to the east and in that area will provide a screening buffer consistent with County requirements for screening between residential and commercial uses. PGM also proposes to increase planting within the stream buffer area by incorporating native plantings consistent with the Department of Conservation and Recreation's guidance for Establishment of Riparian Buffers. The site improvements will be subject to review by the Architectural Review Board (ARB) since the property is within the County's Entrance Corridor Overlay District. Street trees will be planted along Route 250 consistent with the ARB's guidelines and the proposed storage building will need to be designed to obtain approval by the ARB prior to construction.

The primary purpose of the building is to store landscape equipment and vehicles and to house the company's office which will be used for operational and administrative tasks.

Materials Storage: Company vehicles and trailers will primarily be stored in the "parking envelope" shown on the concept plan. Company vehicles are primarily pick-up trucks, with the largest being a one-ton truck. PGM does not have large dump trucks or semi-trucks. The company will have approximately ten company vehicles and ten trailers stored on the property. Landscape materials, such as gravel, mulch, and topsoil will be stored in the area behind the building shown on the concept plan as "landscape materials storage." Piles of landscape materials will not exceed 10' in height.

Considerations for a Landscape Contractor Special Use Permit:

- *Types of materials or equipment stored or located onsite*
    - *Landscaping materials*
      PGM stores mulch, gravel, and topsoil on site; storage of materials will be in the location depicted on the concept plan
    - *Volume*
      The volume of landscaping materials varies however, it will be limited to the approximately 2,600 SF materials storage area shown on the concept
    - *Location of Storage*
      Materials storage will be relegated to the rear of the proposed building. Company vehicles and trailers will be stored in the area designated as "parking envelope" on the concept plan
    - *Height of Storage*
      Maximum height of stored materials is 10 feet
    - *Equipment*
      10 company pick-up trucks with trailers attached for hauling equipment needed for daily work; 1-ton pickup truck is the largest company vehicle
    - *Containment Elements*
      Open-air storage for landscape materials, company vehicles, and trailers; smaller company equipment such as mowers will be stored in the proposed building
    - *Square footage of storage yards*
      The outdoor materials storage area is approximately 2,600 SF
- *Number of Proposed Structures*

    - One structure is proposed on the property. Please see the attached exhibit for location.
- Anticipated water usage and water source
    - The landscape storage building is proposed to have a small office with a bathroom. The water usage to support the bathroom will be minimal. PGM plans to utilize the existing well on the property that serves the convenience store to serve the building; this may require reclassification of the existing well through the Office of Drinking Water. PGM will install a new drainfield to support the small office.
- Proposed setbacks for Landscape Contractor
    - The Landscape Contractor will adhere to a 75 foot front setback and a 50' side setback on the property.
- Access
    - The property is accessed directly from Route 250
- Information on proposed accessory sales or sales in general to include types offered for sale, anticipated volume and location of sales area
    - PGM does not offer items for sale to the general public; there are no accessory sales affiliated with this use.
- Fertilizers, chemicals, fuel storage (amounts, types, combustible or noncombustible, how they are stored); fire suppression systems, if necessary
    - Fertilizers, chemicals, and fuel storage are not kept in bulk quantities on the property. Some fuel is kept on site to serve the equipment.
- Equipment Maintenance
    - The owner utilizes specialty equipment businesses for any maintenance; these services are provided for off-site.
- Location and size of greenhouses, shadehouses
    - There are no greenhouses or shadehouses on-site as there is no cultivation of tree, shrubs, and other grown landscape materials. Location and types of lighting
- Location and types of lighting
    - Since development of this property will be subject to site plan regulations, outdoor lighting on site will comply with Albemarle County Lighting regulations; County regulations prohibit lighting spillover on adjacent properties.
- Hours of Operation
    - As previously described, the business typically operates six days a week. Hours of operation are from 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM with activity on-site largely being concentrated at the beginning and the end of the day; employees meet on-site to arrange equipment, materials, and transportation before departing the property to a job site and return to the property at the end of the day to return equipment, retrieve their personal vehicles and return home.
- Anticipated Traffic
    - Traffic is expected to be minimal; the greatest concentration of daily trips will occur in the mornings during equipment pick-up and in the evenings during equipment drop-off.
    - The trip generation numbers below are derived from the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Trip Generation Manual 11th Edition.

ITE Trip Generation Table T*rip Generation Manual, 11th Edition*									
				AM			PM		
Use Description	ITE Code	Qty	IV	In	Out	Total	In	Out	Total
Specialty Trade Contractor	180	8	Employees	4	1	5	2	4	6

- Information on expected noise and smell
  There are no significant noises and smells resulting from business operations. Landscape services take place off-site and business operations on-site primarily consist of project management and coordination of employees, materials, and equipment.

Consistency with the Comprehensive Plan:

Section 10.2.2(59) allows landscape contractors on lots three or more acres in size, that do not otherwise qualify as an authorized home occupation under section 5.2A, by special use permit in the Rural Areas district. This use was incorporated into the County's Zoning Ordinance and permitted as a use allowed by special use permit in 2020 as a result of a County initiated zoning text amendment to directly support Comprehensive Plan objectives for the County's Rural Areas. Within the Comprehensive Plan, the first objective of Rural Areas is to support a strong agricultural and forestall economy. Strategy 1j goes on to specifically recommend that the County should "consider amending the Zoning Ordinance to allow landscape services and storage of landscape materials in the Rural Area" (7.16). Prior to the 2020 ZTA, a service occupation related to landscaping as well as storage of landscape materials were not permitted in the Rural Areas except as a home occupation limited to two trucks and two trailers. A landscape contractor use inherently aligns with Rural Areas land use characteristics and directly supports Comprehensive Plan goals in promoting an agricultural and forestall economy. The owner seeks to operate a landscape contractor business on the subject parcel and permitting this use would directly support Comprehensive Plan goals for the Rural Areas. Land in the Development Areas of Albemarle County is largely prohibitively expensive to serve a landscape contractor business that doesn't have a retail component or some revenue stream other than providing a landscape service.

Public Need or Benefit:

Since the adoption of the 2020 ZTA, this special use permit request is the third landscape contractor special use permit application to be reviewed by the County. During the consideration of this ZTA, Staff shared feedback from community stakeholders that "expressed strong support for the ZTA" and one stakeholder expressed "how it is extremely difficult to stay in business in the Development Areas because of high lease prices, and there are many landscapers looking for cheaper options."[1] Permitting the landscape contractor use on the property allows a local business to locate on a property that is in a convenient location for the operations of PGM's business without being cost prohibitive.

Impacts on Environmental Features:

There are critical slopes and a stream buffer on the property and those environmental features will not be negatively impacted by the proposal; to the contrary, the owner proposes to increase native plantings within the stream buffer area to restore the riparian buffer along the pond's edge where vegetation was removed by a prior owner.

The disturbance proposed on the property to realize the site improvements will require a stormwater management plan and any land disturbance on the property will comply with applicable VESCP, VSMP, and County WPO regulations.

Impacts on Public Facilities:

There are no anticipated impacts to public transportation facilities, public safety, public utilities, public schools, or public parks with this proposal.