



# **INFORMATION MEMORANDUM**

TO: Mayor and City Council

FROM: Charles S. Cox  
City Manager

DATE: January 4, 2022

SUBJECT: Conduct a public hearing and consider adopting Ordinance No. 3719 for a Specific Use Permit and associated Detailed Site Plan for open storage on an approximate 2.17-acre property located at 13213 Senlac Drive; and take appropriate action.

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## **Background:**

The City of Farmers Branch has received a request from Paul Morin, Blue Caterpillar Properties, for a specific use permit (SUP) to allow open storage for the proposed Einstein Moving Company to be located at 13213 Senlac Drive. The applicant plans to store their fleet of moving trucks on this property, which constitutes open storage as defined within the Comprehensive Zoning Ordinance (CZO). The subject property is located in Planned Development District No. 77 (PD-77), which requires approval of an SUP for any open/outside storage.

## **Subject Property:**

Site acreage: 2.17 acres

Location: 13213 Senlac Drive

## **Existing Condition:**

The subject property currently has a 3,683 sf building and associated surface parking. The northern half of the 2.17-acre tract is vacant. There is an existing unimproved parking lot located behind the building along the western portion of the lot. There are some visitor/office staff parking spaces at the front, visible from Senlac Drive. Altogether, the building and this parking lot comprises of approximately 0.351± acres of the entire 2.17-acre property. The perimeter of the property, excluding the portion in front of the building, is surrounded by a chain-link fence with a chain-link gate. The building has been unoccupied for at least six months which eliminates any pre-existing

legal non-conforming use rights.

Einstein Moving Company have recently acquired the property to locate their office and store their fleet of moving trucks on this property. As per the CZO, “the placement, keeping or storage of personal or business property, including, but not limited to, motor vehicles in an area outside an enclosed building” is considered open storage/outside storage. As a result, this SUP application is required due to open storage of moving trucks on this property. Hours of operation for the proposed business is 7:30 a.m. to 7:30 p.m. daily. Four to five employees will be working at the office during regular business hours. Approximately 35 employees will be operating the moving trucks and will access the site to receive and return the vehicles. Their daily work-hours are variable.

**Adjacent Zoning Districts and Land Uses:**

Direction	Zoning District	Land Use
North	Planned Development-77 (PD-77)	Office, and Public building, shop or yard of local government
South	Planned Development-77 (PD-77)	Office/Warehouse
East	Planned Development-77 (PD-77)	Auto/truck leasing or rental with outdoor storage (across Senlac Drive)
West	Planned Development-77 (PD-77)	Warehouse

**Access:**

The site is accessible from Senlac Drive through an existing driveway.

**Parking:**

Required Parking Ratio per PD-77	Total Minimum Parking Required	Total Parking Provided	Type of Parking Provided	Complies
• Office: 1 space/300 SF	13	60	Surface	Yes

*(continued on next page)*

**Landscaping:**

% Required per PD-77	% Provided	Location Provided	Complies
Not less than 5% of the total property area shall be landscaped between the building and all street right-of-way lines	5.4%	<p>Landscaping is provided primarily along Senlac Drive and along the exterior of the building.</p> <p>There are four existing trees. The applicant will be adding four Chinkapin Oaks and two Thornless Honeylocusts along Senlac Drive.</p> <p>There is an existing solid row of shrubs along Senlac Drive. Declining shrubs will be removed and replaced with similar kind shrubs.</p>	Yes

**Street Trees Required:**

Street Name	Minimum Number Required	Number Provided	Tree Variety/Type	Complies
Senlac Drive	6	7	<p>1 – existing tree</p> <p>4 – proposed Chinkapin Oak</p> <p>2 – proposed Thornless Honeylocust</p>	Yes

**Screening for Outside Storage:**

PD-77 requires any allowed outside storage to be screened from all sides fronting on a street. The existing chain-link fence and gate separating the existing unimproved parking lot or the open storage area from the front parking and office building will be replaced with an 8-foot tall solid masonry screening wall with an accompanying wooden gate. This open storage/parking area will not be visible from Senlac Drive.

The vacant northern portion of the subject property will not be used for outside storage. Should this change, an SUP amendment will be required to allow the open storage use to be expanded into the vacant property. This segment has an existing solid row of shrubs that provide screening. Any declining shrubs will be removed and replaced to improve appearance along Senlac Drive.

The eight existing trees on the subject property will remain in place including one tree located on the southeast corner of the subject property and three located along the southern property boundary. In addition to these trees, the applicant will plant four 3-in. caliper Chinkapin Oaks and two 3-in. caliper Thornless Honeylocusts along the property fronting Senlac Drive.

### **Proposed SUP Request:**

The applicant is requesting an SUP to allow for open storage of moving trucks at the existing unimproved parking lot located on the west side of the office building. Initially, the applicant is proposing to have nine trucks located on the subject property, but could have as many as 15 trucks on-site. This parking lot is accessible only by the employees and will be installed with controlled access gates. The applicant plans to replace the unimproved surface with concrete paving and stripe the parking spaces and the fire lane. The applicant will also be making repairs to a portion of the existing asphalt drive around the southeast corner of the office building as well as adding striping to the front parking lot.

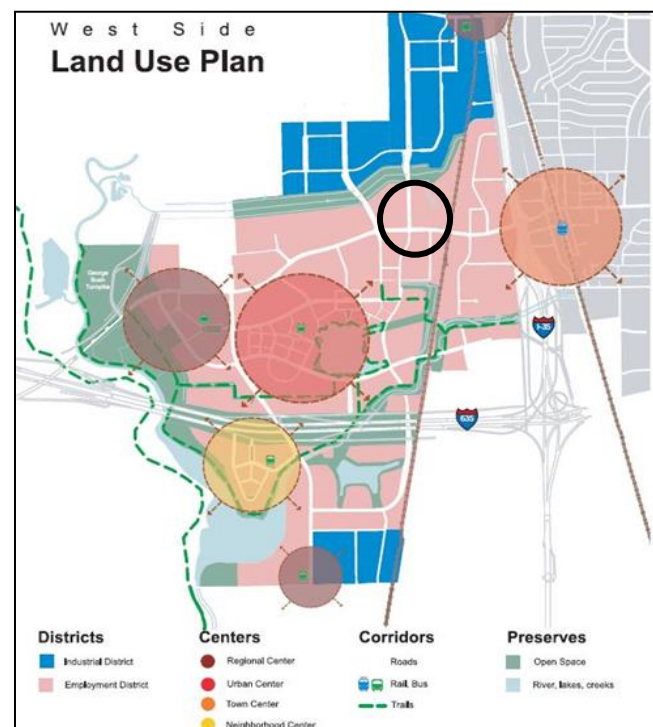
The subject property is located within a primarily non-residential area that is comprised mostly of office, warehouse, distribution, and outside storage uses. PD-77 allows a wide range of light industrial uses as well as multiple motor vehicle and related service uses requiring the approval of an SUP. Open storage for motor vehicles can be an appropriate use so long as the adjacent land uses are similar in nature. An SUP was approved by City Council on June 15, 2021 (SUP Ordinance No. 3688) to allow for open storage of vehicle across the street at 13210 Senlac Drive for Enterprise Truck Rentals. The City of Farmers Branch also maintains a service facility on the adjacent property to the north. This facility allows for open storage of vehicles as well.

Given the additional improvements proposed by the applicant and the current land use characteristics of this area, staff believes that granting this SUP will not be detrimental for the long-term growth and development of properties along Senlac Drive.

### **Comprehensive Plan Recommendation:**

The West Side Plan, adopted in 2003, designates the subject property as Employment District as provided for on the Future Land Use Map. This land use designation recommends predominantly employment land uses with office and research and development uses.

Even though the West Side Plan recommends office and employment land uses for this area, since the Plan's adoption 18 years ago, this area has maintained its predominantly industrial land use character. The PD-77 zoning district, originally adopted in 1988 and amended twice in 2018 and 2019, continues to allow more industrial and warehouse uses. Therefore, this requested use while not wholly consistent with the Plan recommendation, is consistent with other surrounding land uses and provides employment opportunities.



**Public Response:**

On December 3, 2021, 11 zoning notification letters were mailed to the surrounding property owners in addition to both Carrollton-Farmers Branch and Dallas Independent School Districts. One zoning notification sign was also placed on site. In addition, the required public hearing notice was published in the Dallas Morning News on December 17, 2021. As of writing of this staff report, no written correspondence has been received by the city.

**Recommendation:**

On December 13, 2021 the Planning and Zoning Commission considered this request and recommended approval (6-1) of the Specific Use Permit, as presented in Ordinance No. 3719.

**Possible Council Action:**

1. Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 3719.
2. Motion to adopt Ordinance No. 3719 with the following modifications...
3. Motion to deny Ordinance No. 3719.
4. Motion to continue discussion at the next meeting.