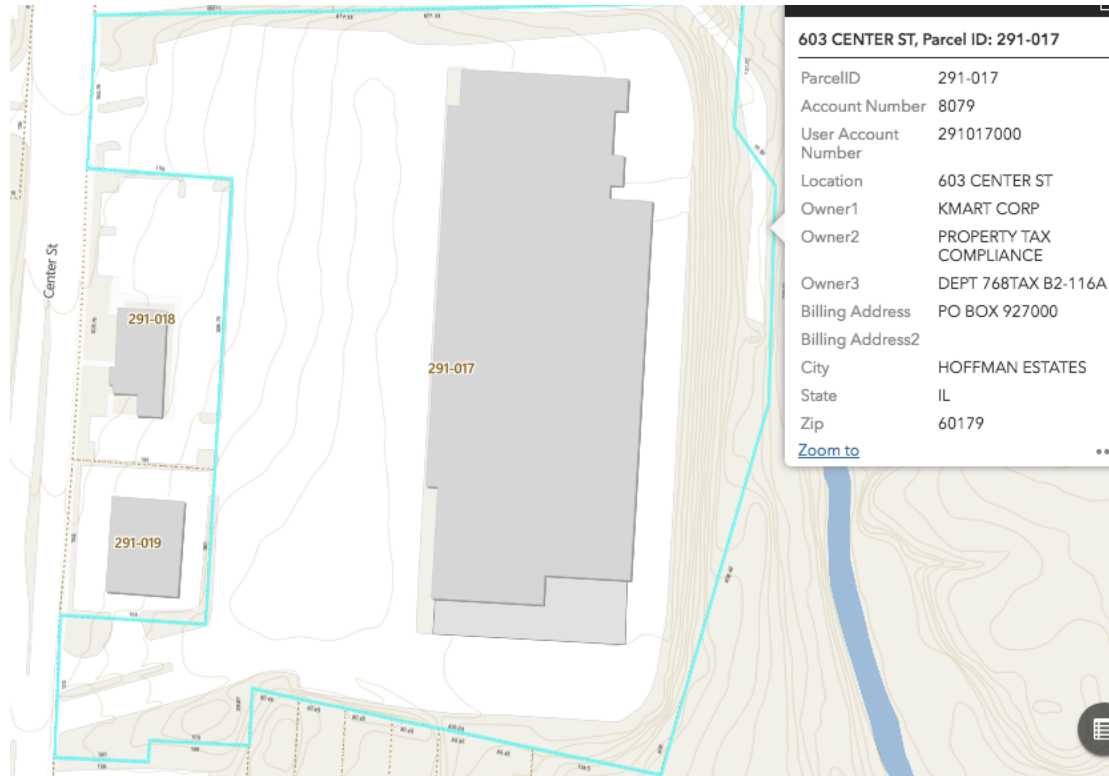


To: Auburn Planning Board  
 From: Megan Norwood, City Planner II  
 Re: 603 Center Street, (PID 291-017), Amerco Real Estate Company (U-Haul Moving and Storage), Special Exception & Site Plan Review in the General Business zoning district.  
 Date: April 14, 2020

I. PROPOSAL – Shawn Goldrup, on behalf of Amerco Real Estate Company, is applying for Site Plan Review and Special Exception in accordance with Sec. 60-45 and 60-499(b)(17): Any new building of 5,000 square feet or more or any existing building... which will occupy an area of 5,000 square feet or more in the General Business District. The proposal is for a self-storage, U-Haul truck and trailer share and associated retail uses.



The Applicant is proposing to retrofit the interior of the existing building to support self-storage units. There are no major structural improvements proposed to the exterior of the building aside from imaging and signing of the façade to look like a U-Haul rather than the existing box-store. The parking lot currently has 250 parking spaces, U-Haul has shown 131 parking spaces on the plan, including 3 handicapped spaces and will employ between 10-15 employees.

For a Wholesale/Warehouse use, the ordinance requires one space per 1,200 square feet of storage gross floor area. The Applicant is showing 94,000 square feet of proposed self storage and 14,000 square feet of proposed warehousing. Therefore, 90 spaces are required for the wholesale/warehouse use.

For retail uses, the ordinance requires 1 space per 300 square feet of gross floor area. The retail occupies 4,100 square feet of the existing building, therefore, 14 spaces are required for the retail portion of the building.

A total of 104 parking spaces are required for the proposed use. The existing K-Mart building contains 250 parking spaces. With the reduction in parking spaces to 131, it is unclear what will happen to the remaining 119 parking spaces. The area proposed for the U-Haul Equipment Shunting appears to be small in relation to the large number of parking spaces proposed. The Planning Board may want more information on:

- What will the reduction in parking spaces look like on the site?
- Will additional spaces be designated for equipment shunting or how will equipment be organized in that area?
- Are any larger spaces for trucks proposed? For example, when customers drop trucks off, where will they pull up and park? Where will trucks be parked that are ready to be picked up?
- Any plans to repave/restripe the parking area? It appears to be in disrepair currently and it is expected (depending on how many U-Haul trucks are coming in and out of there) could cause some issues in terms of the integrity of the parking area.
- Information on how many trucks, on average, are expected at the site during a traditional week.

*Response from the Applicant: We plan to keep the existing parking configuration as-is with exception to re-striping and repairs as needed. Equipment shunting is the area where trucks are parked and ready for customer pick-up and drop-off. This area is only utilized by U-Haul employees who will get the vehicle ready for the customer. The property will incorporate U-Haul self-storage and U-Haul truck and trailer share. It's difficult to quantify how many trucks will be on the lot at any given time, as the business is a fluid one and inventory is dependent on so many different factors (time, season, weather, school, etc.). Ideally we have no vehicles on site and all of our trucks and trailers are on the road being utilized by customers – this is likely on a holiday weekend in the spring / summer / fall. That being said, if it is a cold weekday in winter, our inventory will reflect that as there will be more vehicles parked on site. Shawn can speak to this in further detail at the meeting as well.*

As discussed, the current condition of the former K-Mart parking lot may need to be evaluated for U-Haul type of vehicles and will need to be re-striped. Staff recommends a plan be provided that shows how the parking lot will be restriped with the change of use.



Where this project is for the reuse of an existing building, the plans provided are conceptual in nature and are prepared by the construction department of Amerco Real Estate Company. The Applicant did have them stamped by the in-house Engineer and they are not proposing any land disturbance.

The Applicant is not proposing any changes to landscaping, lighting or stormwater and proposes to use the same traffic pattern as K-Mart. There are two traffic lights at both entrances and the amount of traffic is proposed to be less than when K-Mart was fully operating. Granted, it will be a different type of traffic with some potentially inexperienced drivers operating larger vehicles.

The application did not contain any information on a cost estimate or financial capacity and the City is currently reviewing the documentation provided for right, title and interest.

II. DEPARTMENT REVIEW-

- a. **Police**- No comments received.
- b. **Auburn Water and Sewer** – No comments received.
- c. **Fire Department/Code Enforcement** – No comments received.
- d. **Engineering** – No comments received.
- e. **Public Services**- No comments received.
- f. **Economic and Community Development** – The proposed U-Haul project is an appropriate use in that location, and having an established business in the building helps ensure taxable value remains on the tax roles.
- g. **Addressing** – No comments received.

PLANNING BOARD ACTION- The proposed project requires review and findings for approval of Sections 60-1277 and 60- 1336:

**A. Site Plan Review, Section 60-1277:** In considering a site plan, the planning board shall make findings that the development has made provisions for:

- 1. Protection of adjacent areas against detrimental or offensive uses on the site by provision of adequate surface water drainage, buffers against artificial and reflected light, sight, sound, dust and vibration; and preservation of light and air;**
- 2. Convenience and safety of vehicular and pedestrian movement within the site and in relation to adjacent areas;**
- 3. Adequacy of the methods of disposal for wastes; and**
- 4. Protection of environment features on the site and in adjacent areas**

**B. Special Exception, Section 60-1336.** - The board shall require evidence of the following:

- 1. That the special exception sought fulfills the specific requirements, if any, set forth in the zoning ordinance relative to such exception.**
- 2. That the special exception sought will neither create nor aggravate a traffic hazard, a fire hazard or any other safety hazard.**
- 3. That the special exception sought will not block or hamper the master development plan pattern of highway circulation or of planned major public or semipublic land acquisition.**
- 4. That the exception sought will not alter the essential characteristics of the neighborhood and will not tend to depreciate the value of property adjoining and neighboring the property under application.**
- 5. That reasonable provisions have been made for adequate land space, lot width, lot area, stormwater management in accordance with section 60-1301 (14), green space, driveway layout, road access, off-street parking, landscaping, building separation, sewage disposal, water supply, fire safety, and where applicable, a plan or contract for perpetual maintenance of all the common green space and clustered off-street parking areas to ensure all such areas will be maintained in a satisfactory manner.**
- 6. That the standards imposed are, in all cases, at least as stringent as those elsewhere imposed by the city building code and by the provisions of this chapter.**
- 7. That essential city services which will be required for the project are presently available or can be made available without disrupting the city's master development plan.**

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS- Staff recommends the Planning Board find that the Site Plan for the proposed development, meets the requirements of Sec. 60-1277, and further that the application meets the requirements of Special Exception, Sec. 60-1336, and APPROVE the project application. Staff recommends the following conditions:

- The Applicant shall provide additional information on parking, specifically addressing the following:
  - What will the reduction in parking spaces look like on the site?
  - Will additional spaces be designated for equipment shunting or how will equipment be organized in that area?
  - Are any larger spaces for trucks proposed? For example, when customers drop trucks off, where will they pull up and park? Where will trucks be parked that are ready to be picked up?



## City of Auburn, Maine

Office Economic and Community  
Development

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- Any plans to repave/restripe the parking area? It appears to be in disrepair currently and it is expected (depending on how many U-Haul trucks are coming in and out of there) could cause some issues in terms of the integrity of the parking area. A plan shall be provided showing the re-striping of the parking lot.
- Information on how many trucks, on average, are expected at the site during a traditional week.
- A cost estimate/financial capacity document shall be provided before the Planning Board meeting on 4/14/2020.
- Any right, title or interest considerations still pending shall be addressed.

*Suggested Motion:* I make a motion to approve the Site Plan/Special Exception for a self-storage, U-Haul truck and trailer share and associated retail uses at 603 Center Street (PID: 291-017) in the General Business Zoning District with the following conditions:

- The Applicant shall provide additional information on parking, specifically addressing the following:
  - What will the reduction in parking spaces look like on the site?
  - Will additional spaces be designated for equipment shunting or how will equipment be organized in that area?
  - Are any larger spaces for trucks proposed? For example, when customers drop trucks off, where will they pull up and park? Where will trucks be parked that are ready to be picked up?
  - Any plans to repave/restripe the parking area? It appears to be in disrepair currently and it is expected (depending on how many U-Haul trucks are coming in and out of there) could cause some issues in terms of the integrity of the parking area. A plan shall be provided showing the re-striping of the parking lot.
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*Megan Norwood*

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City Planner II