

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD STAFF REPORT

Project #/Name	SP-2023-19: Stonefield Tesla Outdoor Sales, Storage and Display
Review Type	Advisory Review for a Special Use Permit
Parcel Identification	061W00300019A0
Location	Four parking spaces along the northeast elevation of the building at 1951 Swanson Dr. and six parking spaces along the southeast elevation of the building at 1954 Swanson Dr. (See Fig. 1 and Attach. 1.)
Zoned	Neighborhood Model District (NMD), Entrance Corridor (EC)
Owner/Applicant	OCT Stonefield Property Owner LLC/Woods Rogers Vandeventer Black (Steve Blaine)
Magisterial District	Jack Jouett
Proposal	To establish outdoor sales, storage and display of vehicles associated with a Tesla vehicle sales office. (See Attach. 2.)
Context	The immediate context is the Stonefield Town Center.
Visibility	The parking spaces proposed for sales, storage and display are existing spaces in existing parking lots. They are visible from the Entrance Corridors but aren't readily distinguishable from nearby parking spaces. (See Figs. 2 and 3.)
ARB Meeting Date	January 16, 2024
Staff Contact	Margaret Maliszewski

PROJECT HISTORY

The ARB has reviewed numerous applications for development within the Stonefield Town Center. Approvals include the original design of the building at 1951 Swanson Dr., and subsequent exterior renovations to the building. The layout of parking and travelways and associated landscaping throughout the town center were approved by the ARB with various site development plans. A Special Use Permit is required for outdoor sales, storage, and display within the Entrance Corridor overlay. The applicant has also applied for an amendment to the approved Code of Development for the town center to allow motor vehicle sales as a by-right use in Blocks A, B, C and G. (See Attach. 3 for the Stonefield block plan.) Any outdoor sales, storage and display associated with motor vehicle sales in those blocks would require additional Special Use Permits and review by the ARB.

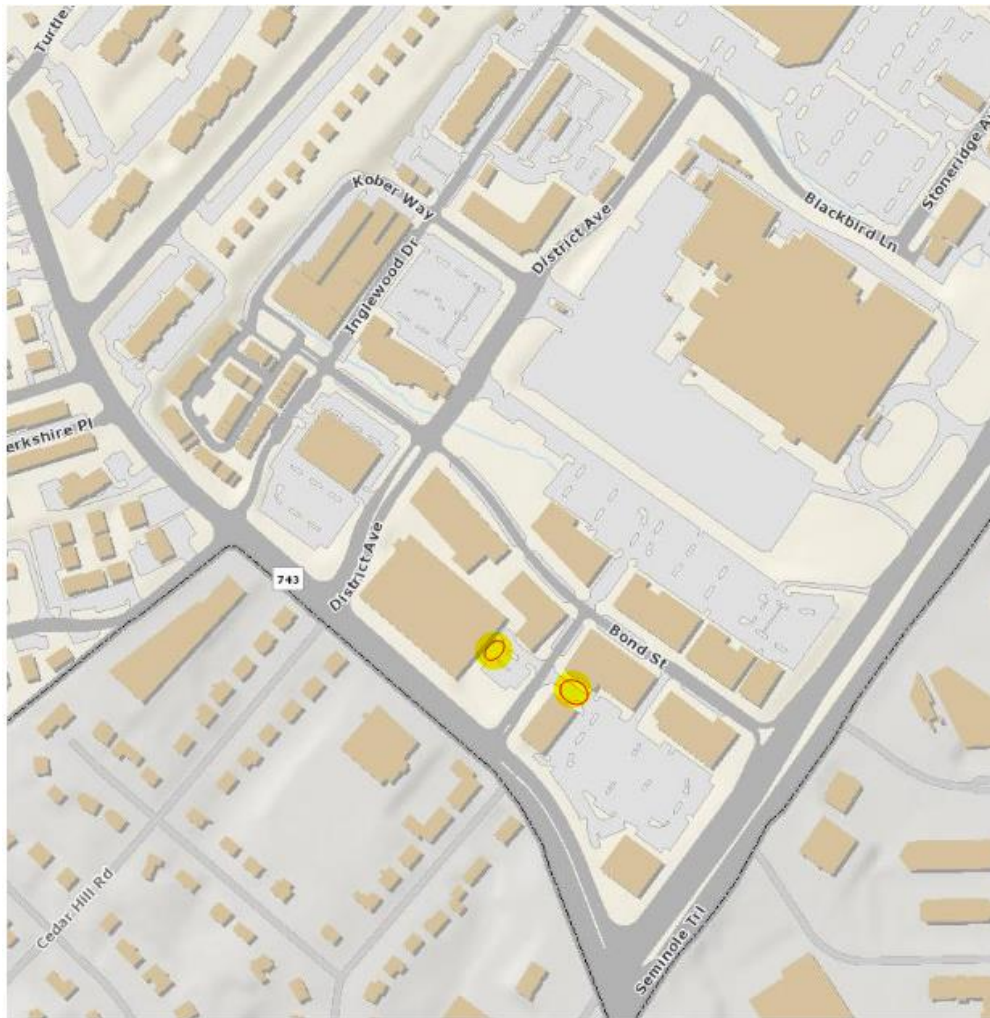


Fig. 1: Left: Location of proposed outdoor sales, storage and display parking spaces within the Stonefield Town Center. Right: Proposed Tesla parking plan.



Fig. 2: View of 4-space parking area from the Rt. 29 Entrance Corridor.




Fig. 3: View of 6-space parking area from the Hydraulic Rd. Entrance Corridor.

ANALYSIS

REF	GUIDELINE	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION
	<i>Purpose</i>		
1	The goal of the regulation of the design of development within the designated Entrance Corridors is to ensure that new development within the corridors reflects the traditional architecture of the area. Therefore, it is the purpose of ARB review and of these Guidelines, that proposed development within the designated Entrance Corridors reflect elements of design characteristic of the significant historical landmarks, buildings, and structures of the Charlottesville and Albemarle area, and to promote orderly and attractive development within these corridors. Applicants should note that replication of historic structures is neither required nor desired.	The proposed use would not alter the layout of the site, the orientation of buildings, pedestrian or vehicular connections, open spaces, or views around the site. The sales office is proposed to be established in an existing building whose architecture was previously approved by the ARB. Proposed changes to the exterior of the building are not expected to be visible from the EC street. (Attach. 4) The parking spaces that would be used for outdoor sales, storage, and display already exist. The appearance of those spaces would not change from the current condition.	Staff recommends approval of the proposed outdoor sales, storage, and display in the existing parking spaces noted in the Tesla Parking Plan with the standard conditions for this use, including parking only in striped spaces and no elevated vehicles.
2	Visitors to the significant historical sites in the Charlottesville and Albemarle area experience these sites as ensembles of buildings, land, and vegetation. In order to accomplish the integration of buildings, land, and vegetation characteristic of these sites, the Guidelines require attention to four primary factors: compatibility with significant historic sites in the area; the character of the Entrance Corridor; site development and layout; and landscaping.	There are some characteristics of sales, storage and display parking that typically contribute to negative visual impacts. These include vehicles parked for longer and more continuous periods of time as compared to customer and employee parking, and a layout that parks vehicles in stacked rows and closer together than customer and employee parking. These issues are not present with this proposal because the layout is the existing customer parking, the number of display spaces is minimal, and visibility of the spaces from the EC streets is limited. Consequently, orderly development will be maintained, and the character of the EC will not change.	
6	Site development should be sensitive to the existing natural landscape and should contribute to the creation of an organized development plan. This may be accomplished, to the extent practical, by preserving the trees and rolling terrain typical of the area; planting new trees along streets and pedestrian ways and choosing species that reflect native forest elements; insuring that any grading will blend into the surrounding topography thereby creating a continuous landscape; preserving, to the extent practical, existing significant river and stream valleys which may be located on the site and integrating these features into the design of surrounding development; and limiting the building mass and height		

	to a scale that does not overpower the natural settings of the site, or the Entrance Corridor.		
39	<p>The relationship of buildings and other structures to the Entrance Corridor street and to other development within the corridor should be as follows:</p> <p>a. An organized pattern of roads, service lanes, bike paths, and pedestrian walks should guide the layout of the site.</p> <p>b. In general, buildings fronting the Entrance Corridor street should be parallel to the street. Building groupings should be arranged to parallel the Entrance Corridor street.</p> <p>c. Provisions should be made for connections to adjacent pedestrian and vehicular circulation systems.</p> <p>d. Open spaces should be tied into surrounding areas to provide continuity within the Entrance Corridor.</p> <p>e. If significant natural features exist on the site (including creek valleys, steep slopes, significant trees or rock outcroppings), to the extent practical, then such natural features should be reflected in the site layout. If the provisions of Section 32.5.2.n of the <i>Albemarle County Zoning Ordinance</i> apply, then improvements required by that section should be located so as to maximize the use of existing features in screening such improvements from Entrance Corridor streets.</p> <p>f. The placement of structures on the site should respect existing views and vistas on and around the site.</p>		
3-5, 9-16	<i>Compatibility with character of the Entrance Corridor and significant historic sites; Structure design</i>	Changes to the exterior of the existing building are proposed to accommodate the Tesla vehicle sales office. The changes are limited to the northeast elevation of the building and are not expected to be visible from the EC streets.	None.
	Accessory structures and equipment		
17	Accessory structures and equipment should be integrated into the overall plan of development and shall, to the extent possible, be compatible with the building designs used on the site.	Electric vehicle charging stations would be installed at the four parking spaces located near the sales office. This equipment, illustrated in the following image, has a streamlined appearance and would be installed in a location that would not have	None.
18	The following should be located to eliminate visibility from		

	the Entrance Corridor street. If, after appropriate siting, these features will still have a negative visual impact on the Entrance Corridor street, screening should be provided to eliminate visibility. a. Loading areas, b. Service areas, c. Refuse areas, d. Storage areas, e. Mechanical equipment, f. Above-ground utilities, and g. Chain link fence, barbed wire, razor wire, and similar security fencing devices.	a negative visual impact on the ECs.	
19	Screening devices should be compatible with the design of the buildings and surrounding natural vegetation and may consist of: a. Walls, b. Plantings, and c. Fencing.		
20	Surface runoff structures and detention ponds should be designed to fit into the natural topography to avoid the need for screening. When visible from the Entrance Corridor street, these features must be fully integrated into the landscape. They should not have the appearance of engineered features.		
21	The following note should be added to the site plan and the architectural plan: “Visibility of all mechanical equipment from the Entrance Corridor shall be eliminated.”		
22-31	Lighting	No changes to lighting are proposed with this request.	None.
7-8, 32-38	Landscaping	Approved landscaping for this development helps to limit visibility of the parking spaces that are proposed for sales, storage, and display. Trees along the Rt. 29 frontage and interior parking lot trees filter views from Rt. 29 to the group of four parking spaces, and landscaping along Hydraulic Rd. limits visibility of the group of 6 spaces. No changes to this landscaping are proposed.	None.
40-44	Site Grading	No grading is proposed with this request.	None.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Primary points of discussion:

1. Visual impact of proposed outdoor sales, storage and display parking on the EC streets.

Staff recommendations:

Staff recommends that the ARB recommend approval of the proposed special use with the following conditions:

1. Use of this site must be in general accord with the Tesla Parking Plan. To be in general accord, vehicles for sales, storage and/or display must be parked only in the spaces indicated for sales, storage and display on the Tesla Parking Plan.
2. Vehicles for sales, storage and/or display must be parked in striped parking spaces.
3. Vehicles must not be elevated anywhere on site.

Possible Motions:

Should an ARB member choose to recommend approval of the request:

I move to recommend approval of SP-2023-19 Stonefield Tesla Outdoor Sales, Storage and Display with the conditions outlined in the staff report.

Should an ARB member choose to recommend approval with revised conditions:

I move to recommend approval of SP-2023-19 Stonefield Tesla Outdoor Sales, Storage and Display with the conditions outlined in the staff report, amended as follows (state amendments).

Should an ARB member choose to recommend denial of the request:

I move to recommend denial of SP-2023-19 Stonefield Tesla Outdoor Sales, Storage and Display for (state the reasons).

ATTACHMENTS

Attach. 1: [SP2023-19 Stonefield Tesla Parking Plan](#)

Attach. 2: [SP2023-19 Stonefield Tesla Narrative](#)

Attach. 3: [SP2023-19 Stonefield Block Plan](#)

Attach. 4: [SP2023-19 Stonefield Tesla Architectural Plans](#)