



## ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item  
Meeting of June 13, 2009**

**DATE:** June 5, 2009

**SUBJECT:** SP #211 SITE PLAN AMENDMENT of Touch of Asia, LLC, to convert retail space to a medical office/trade school use, is located at 1211 N. Glebe Road (RPC# 14-011-016).

**Applicant:**

David Roylance  
Touch of Asia, LLC  
3900 Fairfax Drive, Suite 1718  
Arlington, Virginia 22203

**By:**

William B. Lawson, Jr.  
Lawson, Tarter & Charvet, P.C.  
6045 Wilson Boulevard, Suite 100  
Arlington, Virginia 22205

**C.M. RECOMMENDATION:**

Approve the site plan amendment subject to all previously approved conditions, and the conditions of the staff report.

**ISSUES:** This is a request for space conversion from retail to a medical office/trade school use, and no issues have been identified.

**SUMMARY:** This is a site plan amendment request of the Thai Institute of Healing Arts (TIHA) to convert approximately 1,700 square feet of internal retail space at Enterprise Square (SP #211) to a trade school/medical office use for massage instruction and a massage clinic. This site has previously been used as a real estate office, and has been vacant for a number of years prior to this request. The trade school and medical office uses are consistent with the Zoning Ordinance and GLUP designation of the site, and generally consistent with recommendations in the *Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor Retail Action Plan* for areas adjacent to the site. In addition, the applicant has agreed to certain façade improvements and access to activate the site's Washington Boulevard frontage. Therefore, staff recommends that the site plan amendment be approved subject to all previously approved conditions, and the conditions of the staff report.

County Manager: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff: Matthew Pfeiffer, DCPHD, Planning Division

PLA-5277

**BACKGROUND:** The applicant is proposing to convert approximately 1,700 square feet of space originally approved for retail to a medical office/trade school use. The site is located at 1211 North Glebe Road, and is described as follows:

Site: The 55,677 square foot site is bound on the west by North Glebe Road, on the south by Washington Boulevard, to the north by the I-66 on-ramp, and to the east by townhomes and single-family dwellings. The site, known as the Enterprise Square project, consists of one (1) mixed-use building which contains both an underground structured parking garage and a surface lot, and a row of 20 townhouse units.

Zoning: The site is zoned “C-O-1.0” Commercial Office Building, Hotel and Apartment Districts

Land Use: The site is designated on the General Land Use Plan (GLUP) as “Service Commercial.” Personal and Business Services, generally one to four stories, with special provisions within the Columbia Pike Revitalization District.

Neighborhood: The site is located within the Ballston-Virginia Square Civic Association.

Site Plan #211 for Enterprise Square was approved by the County Board in November 1983. The project included a three-story mixed-use building containing 150 motel units, retail and restaurant space, and 20 townhouse units. The project was approved for 169 parking spaces in an underground parking garage and a surface lot in an interior courtyard of the building. Since site plan approval, the commercial spaces at Enterprise Square have undergone reconfiguration. When the project was originally built, a real estate office occupied this space (a portion of which is now the subject space). The real estate office space was later reconfigured so that a portion of that space was incorporated into the adjacent restaurant. This reconfiguration had the effect of making the subject retail space effectively internal, and separated from Washington Boulevard through an interior lobby.

In February 1992, the retail space fronting the driveway to the courtyard parking lot (the space that is now occupied by a dry cleaner) was approved for a site plan amendment to convert from retail to a real estate office use. Currently, Comfort Inn operates the motel on the site, while the commercial spaces are occupied by the Sangam restaurant, and a dry cleaner. The 1,700 square foot space proposed for conversion was used by the hotel as a conference room from the late 1990’s, and is currently vacant. This space has not been used as a retail space in the past.

**DISCUSSION:** The applicant, the Thai Institute of Healing Arts (TIHA) proposes to convert the 1,700 square foot vacant retail space (located between the dry cleaners and the Sangam restaurant) to a trade school/medical office use that would instruct students in massage techniques and also offer massages to customers. The applicant estimates that the school would operate 20 classes per year, or approximately two (2) classes per month. Each class would have between six (6) and 10 students, and would last approximately five (5) days each, or a total of eight (8) –10 days per month. The classes would be taught between the hours of 9 am to 6 pm, and only one (1) class would be taught at a time. The massage clinic would be operated on days that classes are not taught, between the hours of 10 am and 8 pm, and would be open to customers by appointment or walk-ins.

Staff is in support of the applicant's request to convert the 1,700 square foot space from retail to a trade school/medical office use. The site is designated in the GLUP as "Service Commercial," which allows personal and business services. While it does not specifically reference this site, the *Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor Retail Action Plan* lists the area along Glebe Road directly to the south of Enterprise Square as a "Neighborhood street[s] where consumer services are encouraged but not required." Under this retail designation, uses such as a trade school and the medical offices are considered appropriate, and are listed under the category "consumer and business services" included in the Plan. The site is also consistent with its zoning district as medical and professional office uses are allowed in the "C-O-1.0" District. Finally, real estate office, a professional office use, has operated in this space and the adjacent "dry cleaners" space successfully in the past.

As the Enterprise Square project is located on the edge of the Ballston metro station area, the retail uses originally approved were intended to function as a neighborhood oriented commercial area. The applicant has agreed to certain façade improvements, such as awnings and signs, which are designed to keep that section of Washington Boulevard's streetscape active as a neighborhood retail and service center. This includes the installation of awnings and façade signs along the Washington Boulevard frontage.

Currently, the subject space shares a common entrance from Washington Boulevard with the adjacent Sangam restaurant through a small interior lobby. Each space has a separate interior entrance from this lobby. The subject 1,700 square foot space currently keeps the door from this lobby locked, preferring to use a back entrance from the courtyard parking lot as its main entrance. The applicant has agreed to open the entrance to allow students and patrons to enter from the Washington Boulevard frontage, and to make this entrance the main one to the business. This would allow the use to maintain a more active presence on the street frontage, as was originally intended by the retail uses along Washington Boulevard and Glebe Road.

**CONCLUSION:** The applicant is proposing to convert approximately 1,700 square feet of retail space to a trade school/medical office use. These uses are consistent with the GLUP, the Zoning Ordinance, and the *Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor Retail Action Plan*. The applicant has agreed to install signs and awnings as well as provide direct access to the space which currently does not exist, to create an active presence on the site's Washington Boulevard frontage that is inviting and accessible. The president of the Ballston-Virginia Square Civic Association has indicated verbally to staff that they have no issues with the proposed space conversion. Therefore, staff recommends that the site plan amendment be approved subject to all previously approved conditions and three (3) new conditions.

Proposed Additional Conditions:

33. The applicant agrees to meet all applicable State and County code requirements, including securing the appropriate State and County licensing prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

34. The applicant agrees to submit a plan for improvements to the façade adjacent to the subject space. This plan shall be consistent with Section 34 of the Zoning Ordinance and the *Sign Guidelines for Site Plan Buildings*, shall be approved by the County Manager or his designee before the final Certificate of Occupancy, and may include the following:
- a. Window awnings similar in size, type, and style as the existing awnings on the adjacent restaurant space.
  - b. Signs along the building façade at the subject space.
35. The applicant agrees to have the entrance to the space from the interior lobby off of Washington Boulevard open to entry for customers and students.

PREVIOUS COUNTY BOARD ACTIONS:

November, 1983

Approved site plan #211 for construction of a development containing 20 townhouse units, 149 motel units, and approximately 8,600 square feet of commercial space.

February 1992

Approved a site plan amendment to convert approximately 1,160 square feet of retail to real estate office.