

THE CITY OF KEY WEST  
PLANNING BOARD  
Staff Report



To: Chairman and Planning Board Members

Through: Katie P. Halloran, Planning Director

From: Daniel Sobczak, AICP-C, Planner II

Meeting Date: November 18, 2021

Application: **Conditional use – 1321 Simonton Street – (RE# 00035940-000000)** - A request for approval of a conditional use to allow an electronic scooter rental service as an accessory to a hotel use in the Historic Commercial Tourism (HCT) zoning district pursuant to Sections 18-355, 122-62 and 122-898 of the Land Development Regulations of the Code of Ordinances of the City of Key West, Florida.

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Applicant: Trepanier & Associates

Property Owner: Meisel Holdings FL – 1321 Simonton Street LLC

Location: 1321 Simonton Street – (RE# 00035940-000000)



**Background:**

*Electric scooter application items for properties at 1325 Simonton, 1220 Simonton, 1321 Simonton and 1401 Simonton Street were postponed at the September 16, 2021, and October 19, 2021, Planning Board meetings at the request of the applicant.*

The subject parcel is located at 1321 Simonton Street near the corner of Simonton Street and South Street. The main structure is a historically significant contributing structure to the Key West Historic District. The parcel is zoned HCT and is surrounded by HCT zoned properties to the north, south, and west, and Historic Residential Office (HRO) zoned properties to the east, northeast.

The property is operated as the Southwinds Motel, which operates as a 17-unit motel with an additional one non-transient residential unit. The property has 17 off-street parking spaces and a bike rack for seven bicycles. The applicant has applied to install an electronic scooter docking station for twelve (12) scooters straddling a concrete pathway and a grassy area. No regulated vegetation will be impacted by the work.

Per Code Section 18-355, the establishment of a new recreational rental vehicle use shall need a conditional use permit. The applicant has applied for the installation of 12 electronic kick scooters which will establish a new recreational rental vehicle use at the subject property. Per the City Code Section 122-898 (12), within the HCT zoning district conditional uses includes, “Small recreational power-driven equipment rentals (allowed only as an accessory use to a hotel/motel)”.

**Staff Analysis - Evaluation:**

As stated above, the subject parcel is located in the Historic Commercial Tourism (HCT) zoning district, which allows small recreational power-driven equipment rentals (if accessory to a motel/hotel) as a conditional use. The applicant has proposed to install an electric scooter docking station for 12 electric scooters as an accessory to the Southwinds Motel. The application shall be reviewed pursuant to conditional use criteria in Section 122-62 (immediately below) and in the following section, pursuant to criteria in Section 18-355.

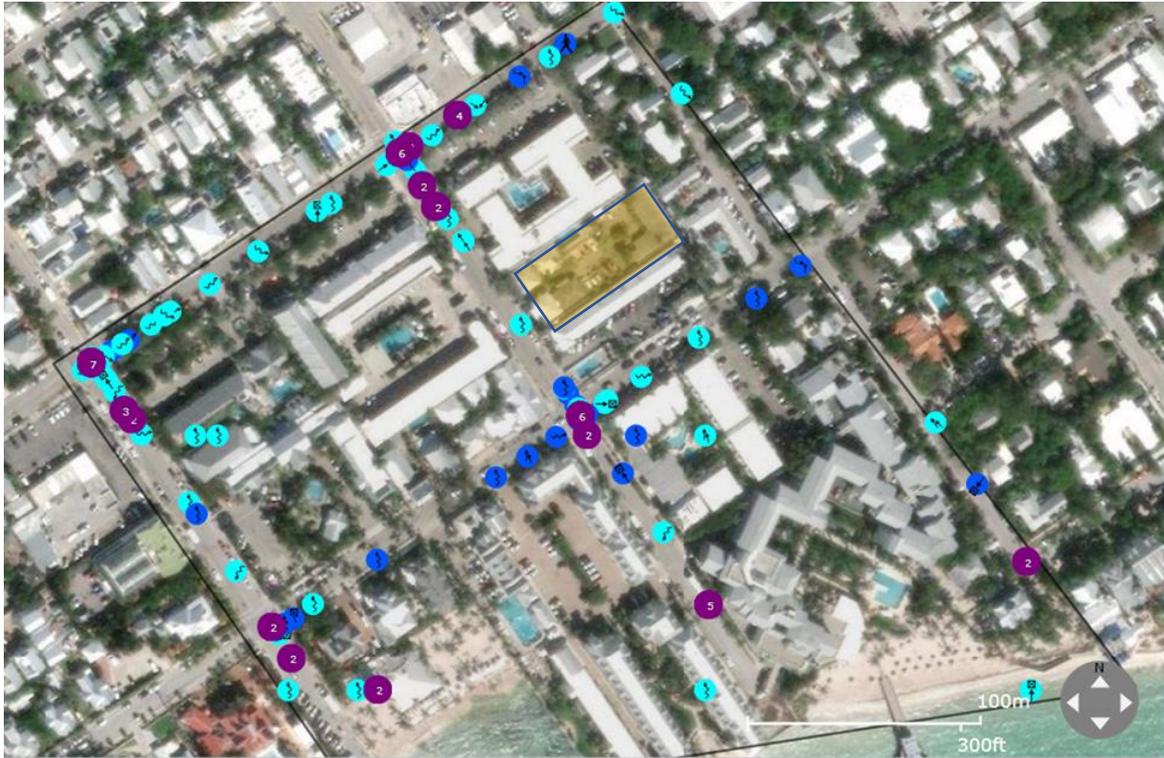
**Characteristics of use described:**

**(1) Scale and intensity**

- a. Floor Area Ratio:
  - i. The proposed conditional use will not affect the Floor Area Ratio of the site.
- b. Traffic Generation:
  - i. All new recreational rental vehicle permits are required to complete a traffic impact analysis to demonstrate that the operation will not degrade the traffic level of service (City Code Section 18-358). The applicant has submitted a traffic impact statement by KBP Consulting, dated April 8, 2021, which states that the proposed conditional use would not degrade the existing traffic level of service. The statement was based on the assumption that most of the scooters would be rented on a daily basis and thus traffic generation would be limited to a single in and out trip per day. Staff does not concur that most rentals, at least those by hotel guests, would consist of a single in and out trip per day, however given the small number of proposed vehicles, generally agrees that the traffic impacts will be minimal.

- ii. Staff reviewed collision data for the four-square blocks around the Southwinds motel, in the past ten years there have been 156 accidents in the area. Staff chose four-square blocks as to show the immediate data figures in the proposed scooter rental area. The map below shows a small circle for each crash:

Information and map from Single 4 Analytics – Using data from the FDOT  
 (All dots on map are crash incidents)



- c. Square feet of enclosed building for each specific use:
  - i. No enclosed buildings are being proposed.
- d. Proposed Employment:
  - i. It is unclear if employees will be hired for the proposed conditional use.
- e. Proposed number and type of service vehicles:
  - i. No service vehicles proposed.
- f. Off-street parking needs:
  - i. Per code, one parking space is required per three scooter rentals. The applicant has applied for 12 scooter rentals which would result in the need for 4 off-street parking spaces.

**(2) On- or off-site improvement needs generated by the proposed conditional use**

- a. Utilities
  - i. No improvements specified.
- b. Public facilities:
  - i. No improvements specified.
- c. Roadway or signalization improvements:
  - i. No improvements specified.
- d. Accessory structures or facilities
  - i. No improvements specified.

- e. Other unique facilities/structures proposed as part of site improvements
    - i. No improvements specified.
- (3) On-site amenities proposed to enhance site and planned improvements, including mitigative techniques such as:
- a. Open Space
    - i. None proposed.
  - b. Setbacks from adjacent properties
    - i. None proposed.
  - c. Screens and buffers
    - i. The applicant has proposed to remove some of the screen and buffering on the corner of the property.
  - d. Landscaped berms
    - i. None proposed.
  - e. Mitigative techniques for abating smoke, odor, noise, and other noxious impacts
    - i. None proposed. Staff notes that given all proposed scooters will be electric, there will be no noise or odor normally associated with gas powered recreational vehicles with this business.

**Criteria for conditional use review and approval**

**(1) Land Use Compatibility:**

- a. The applicant proposes to install 12 electronic scooters and a scooter docking station at the property. The City Code allows recreational rentals (if accessory to a hotel/motel use) as a conditional use in the HCT zoning district. This property includes a historic hotel and the conditional use is compatible with tourism oriented properties. It is noted that there are surrounding mixed use streets with residences, and Staff encourage the applicant to collaborate with neighbors to ensure any unanticipated nuisances are addressed on a timely basis.

**(2) Sufficient site size, adequate site specifications, and infrastructures to accommodate the proposed use**

- a. The size and shape of the site will remain the same as it is in its current state. The total square footage of rental equipment is proposed to be about 45 sqft and will be interior to the site.

**(3) Proper use of mitigative techniques**

- a. Mitigation for the scooter rentals was not mentioned in the application. The docking station proposed has a 48" electronic screen display. The electronic screen should not be visible from the right-of-way given the location within the Key West Historic District.

**(4) Hazardous waste**

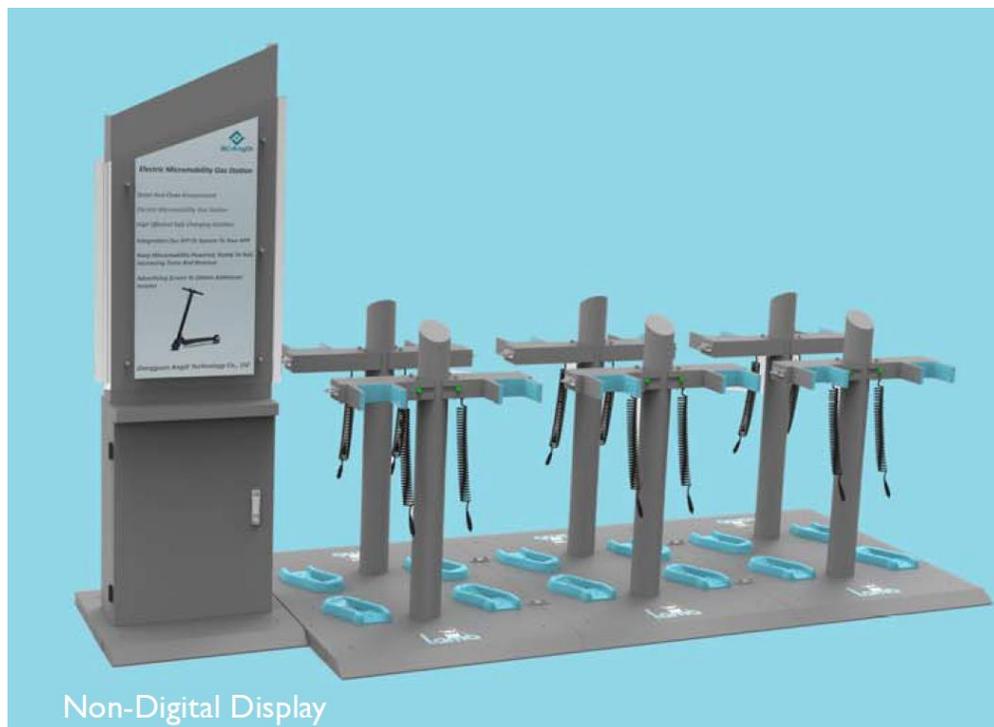
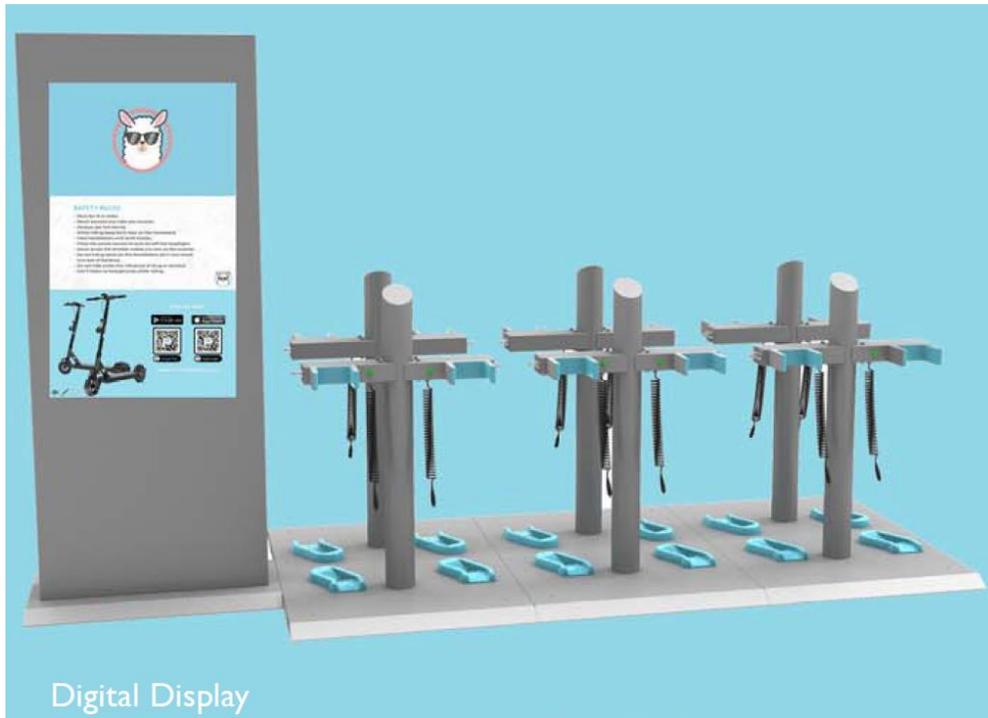
- a. The applicant has stated that no hazardous waste will be produced on the property.

**(5) Compliance with applicable laws and ordinances**

- a. The applicant would be required to receive a variance for parking requirements prior to receiving approval for the proposed conditional use.

**(6) Additional criteria applicable to specific land uses**

- a. The conditional use is requested for 1321 Simonton St. in the Key West Historic District. The property is currently noncomplying with city code for parking.
- b. The two possible docking station configurations are below; the electronic display docking station has a 43" screen.



**Recommendation:**

The proposed conditional use for 1321 Simonton St. is to install 12 electronic scooters at the motel property. The scooter rental docking location is interior to the site, but would be available for resort guests and the general public. Based on a review of the application according to the stringent evaluation criteria established by the Comprehensive Plan and the Land Development Regulations, the Planning Department recommends the request for a conditional use be **APPROVED with CONDITIONS:**

1. The approval is for a twelve 12-scooter docking station with all electric scooters.
2. Ridership and associated scooter rental data will be shared with the City of Key West upon request.
3. The electronic display attached to the scooter docking station should not be visible from the right of way.