

DATE: October 7, 2025

TO: Tony LaColla, Land Use Services Division Chief
Department of Planning and Zoning

FROM: Lanning Blaser, Planner
Department of Planning and Zoning

SUBJECT: Special Use Permit #2025-00050
Administrative Review for New Use
Site Use: Restaurant
Applicant: Life Alive Café, LLC
Location: 400 King Street, Suite 2
Zone: KR / King Street Retail

Request

Special Use Permit #2025-00050 is a request to operate a restaurant at 400 King Street, Suite 2. The 3,066 square foot restaurant, Life Alive Café, would operate daily from the hours of 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. The fast casual restaurant would serve smoothies, coffee, salads, grain bowls and salads for dine-in and take-out. The restaurant would employ an average of seven workers between two shifts and expects to serve around 600 guests daily.

Parking

The subject property is located within the Central Business District (CBD). Restaurants located within the CBD are exempt from parking requirements pursuant to Section 8-300(B) of the Zoning Ordinance.

Community Outreach

Public notice was provided through eNews, via the City's website, and by posting a placard on the site. Notice was also sent via email to the Old Town Civic Association. One comment letter was received expressing support. No other comments were received regarding the application.

Staff Action

Staff supports the applicant's request for a restaurant at this location. A ground floor restaurant will provide residents and tourists with additional food options along the King Street corridor. The proposed restaurant will take over a long-vacant and prominent corner tenant space where a non-complying office use once occupied. Staff has included standard special use permit conditions for restaurants in this report.

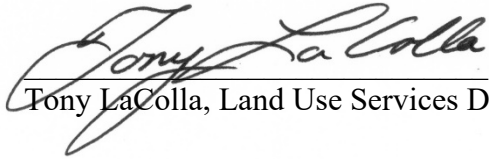
The restaurant is located within the Old & Historic Alexandria District and any exterior renovations are subject to Board of Architectural Review approval. The applicant must contact Historic Preservation staff at 703.746.3833 if it plans any exterior renovations.

Staff hereby approve the special use permit.

ADMINISTRATIVE ACTION - DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING:

Date: October 7, 2025

Action: Approve

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tony LaColla", written over a horizontal line.

Tony LaColla, Land Use Services Division Chief

- Attachments:
- 1) Special Use Permit Conditions
 - 2) City Department Comments
 - 3) Statement of Consent

CONDITIONS OF SPECIAL USE PERMIT #2025-00050

The new owner is responsible for ensuring that the following conditions are adhered to at all times. Violation of any of the conditions may result in fines and/or referral to public hearing by the Planning Commission and City Council.

1. The Special Use Permit shall be granted to the applicant only or to any corporation in which the applicant has a controlling interest. (P&Z)
2. All patrons must leave the premises one hour after the closing hour. (P&Z)
3. The applicant shall post the hours of operation at the entrance of the business. (P&Z)
4. The maximum number of indoor seats at the restaurant shall comply with the statewide building code. (P&Z)
5. No food, beverages, or other material shall be stored outside, with the exception of materials specified in other conditions. (P&Z)
6. The applicant shall conduct employee training sessions on an ongoing basis, including as part of any employee orientation, to discuss all SUP provisions and requirements, and on how to prevent underage sales of alcohol. (P&Z)
7. On and off premises alcohol sales are permitted in compliance with Virginia ABC requirements. (P&Z)
8. Delivery vehicles operated and managed by the applicant are permitted. Delivery vehicles must be parked off-street when not in use. (P&Z)
9. Indoor limited, live entertainment as background music may be offered. No admission or cover fee shall be charged. All entertainment shall be subordinate to the principal function of the restaurant as an eating establishment. Any advertising of the entertainment shall reflect the subordinate nature of the entertainment by featuring food service as well as the entertainment. (P&Z)
10. All windows shall remain transparent. The placement or construction of items that block the visibility through windows of the interior of the commercial space from the street and sidewalk, including but not limited to walls, window film, storage cabinets, carts, shelving, boxes, coat racks, storage bins, and closets, shall be prohibited. This is not intended to prevent retailers from displaying their goods in display cases that are oriented towards the street frontage. (P&Z)
11. Exterior power washing of the building shall not be completed using any kind of detergents. (T&ES)
12. Chemicals, detergents or cleaners stored outside the building shall be kept in an enclosure with a roof. (T&ES)

13. If used cooking oil is stored outside, the drum shall be kept securely closed with a bung (a secure stopper that seals the drum) when not receiving used oil, it shall be placed on secondary containment, and it shall be kept under cover to prevent rainwater from falling on it. (T&ES)
14. Trash and garbage shall be stored inside or in sealed containers that do not allow odors to escape, invasion by animals, or leaking. No trash or debris shall be allowed to accumulate outside of those containers. Outdoor containers shall be maintained to the satisfaction of the Directors of Planning & Zoning and Transportation & Environmental Services, including replacing damaged lids and repairing/replacing damaged dumpsters. (P&Z) (T&ES)
15. Kitchen equipment, including floor mats, shall not be cleaned outside, nor shall any cooking residue or wash water be washed into the streets, alleys or storm sewers. (T&ES)
16. The applicant shall control cooking odors, smoke and any other air pollution from operations at the site and prevent them from leaving the property or becoming a nuisance to neighboring properties, as determined by the Department of Transportation & Environmental Services. (T&ES)
17. All waste products including but not limited to organic compounds (solvents and cleaners) shall be disposed of in accordance with all local, state and federal ordinances or regulations. (T&ES)
18. Supply deliveries, loading, and unloading activities shall not occur between the hours of 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. (T&ES)
19. The applicant shall require its employees who drive to use off-street parking. (T&ES)
20. The applicant shall encourage its employees to use public transportation to travel to and from work. The business shall contact Go Alex at goalex@alexandriava.gov for information on establishing an employee transportation benefits program. (T&ES)
21. The applicant shall provide information about alternative forms of transportation to access the site, including but not limited to printed and electronic business promotional material, posting on the business website, and other similar methods. Contact Go Alex at goalex@alexandriava.gov for more information about available resources. (T&ES)
22. The applicant shall encourage patrons to park off-street through the provision of information about nearby garages or lots in the business' advertising and website. (T&ES)
23. The applicant shall contact the T&ES parking planner at 703.746.4025 for information about applying to participate in the Discount Parking Program for Employees of Old

Town Businesses (or other similar program if one is created) that offers discounted parking at select City parking facilities on evenings and weekends. (T&ES)

24. Litter on the site and on public rights-of-way and spaces adjacent to or within 75 feet of the premises shall be picked up at least twice a day and at the close of business, and more often if necessary, to prevent an unsightly or unsanitary accumulation, on each day that the business is open to the public. ((T&ES)
25. All loudspeakers shall be prohibited from the exterior of the building and no amplified sounds shall be audible at the property line. (T&ES)
26. The Director of Planning and Zoning shall review the special use permit one year after it has been operational, and then again every three years for compliance with all conditions and may docket the matter for consideration by the Planning Commission and City Council if there have been documented violations of the permit conditions which were not corrected immediately, constitute repeat violations or which create a direct and immediate adverse zoning impact on the surrounding community; or the Director has new or revised conditions are needed to offset land use impacts not addressed in the city code. (P&Z)

CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Legend: C - code requirement R - recommendation S - suggestion F - finding

Transportation & Environmental Services:

- C-1 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Solid Waste Control, Title 5, Chapter 1, which sets forth the requirements for the recycling of materials (Sec. 5-1-99). In order to comply with this code requirement, the applicant shall provide a completed Recycling Implementation Plan (RIP) Form within 60 days of SUP approval. Contact the City's Recycling Program Coordinator at (703) 746-4410, or via e-mail at commercialrecycling@alexandriava.gov, for information about completing this form. (T&ES)
- C-2 Section 5-1-42- Collection by Private collectors. (c) Time of collection. Solid waste shall be collected from all premises not serviced by the city at least once each week. No collections may be made between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. (6:00 a.m. from May 1, through September 30) if the collection area is less than 500 feet from a residential area. (T&ES)
- C-3 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line. (T&ES)
- R-1 The applicant shall control cooking odors, smoke and any other air pollution from operations at the site and prevent them from leaving the property or becoming a nuisance to neighboring properties, as determined by the Department of Transportation & Environmental Services. (T&ES)
- R-2 Supply deliveries, loading, and unloading activities shall not occur between the hours of 11:00pm and 7:00am. (T&ES)
- R-3 All loudspeakers shall be prohibited from the exterior of the building and no amplified sounds shall be audible at the property line. (T&ES)
- R-4 The applicant shall require its employees who drive to use off-street parking. (T&ES)
- R-5 The applicant shall encourage its employees to use public transportation to travel to and from work. The business shall contact Go Alex at goalex@alexandriava.gov for information on establishing an employee transportation benefits program. (T&ES)
- R-6 The applicant shall provide information about alternative forms of transportation to access the site, including but not limited to printed and electronic business promotional

material, posting on the business website, and other similar methods. Contact Go Alex at goalex@alexandriava.gov for more information about available resources. (T&ES)

- R-8 The applicant shall encourage patrons to park off-street through the provision of information about nearby garages or lots in the business' advertising and website. (T&ES)
- R-9 The applicant shall contact the T&ES parking planner at 703.746.4025 for information about applying to participate in the Discount Parking Program for Employees of Old Town Businesses (or other similar program if one is created) that offers discounted parking at select City parking facilities on evenings and weekends. (T&ES)
- R-10 Exterior power washing of the building shall not be completed using any kind of detergents. (T&ES)
- R-11 Chemicals, detergents or cleaners stored outside the building shall be kept in an enclosure with a roof. (T&ES)
- R-12 If used cooking oil is stored outside, the lid of the used cooking oil drum shall be kept securely closed (using a bung) when not receiving used oil. The drum shall be placed on secondary containment and situated under cover to prevent rainwater from falling on it. (T&ES)
- R-13 Trash and garbage shall be stored inside or in sealed containers that do not allow odors to escape, invasion by animals, or leaking. No trash or debris shall be allowed to accumulate outside of those containers. Outdoor containers shall be maintained to the satisfaction of the Directors of P&Z and T&ES, including replacing damaged lids and repairing/replacing damaged dumpsters. (P&Z) (T&ES)
- R-14 Kitchen equipment, including floor mats, shall not be cleaned outside, nor shall any cooking residue or wash water be washed into the streets, alleys or storm sewers. (T&ES)
- R-15 The applicant shall control cooking odors, smoke and any other air pollution from operations at the site and prevent them from leaving the property or becoming a nuisance to neighboring properties, as determined by the Department of Transportation & Environmental Services. (T&ES)
- R-16 All waste products including but not limited to organic compounds (solvents and cleaners) shall be disposed of in accordance with all local, state and federal ordinances or regulations. (T&ES)
- R-17 Litter on the site and on public rights-of-way and spaces adjacent to or within 75 feet of the premises shall be picked up at least twice a day and at the close of business, and more often if necessary, to prevent an unsightly or unsanitary accumulation, on each day that the business is open to the public. (T&ES)

Code Enforcement:

- C-1 Any new construction, changing of use, or increasing the occupant loads will trigger for a building permit.

Health Department:

- C-1 An Alexandria Health Department Permit is required for all regulated facilities. A permit shall be obtained prior to operation, and is not transferable between one individual, corporation or location to another. Permit application and fee are required.
- C-2 Construction plans shall be submitted to the Health Department located at 4850 Mark Center Drive and through the Multi-Agency Permit Center. Plans shall be submitted and approved by the Health Department prior to construction. There is a \$200.00 plan review fee payable to the City of Alexandria- fee must be paid separate from any other departmental fees.
- C-3 Construction plans shall comply with Alexandria City Code, Title 11, Chapter 2, The Food Safety Code of the City of Alexandria. Plans shall include a menu of food items to be offered for service at the facility and specification sheets for all equipment used in the facility, including the hot water heater.
- C-4 A Food Protection Manager shall be on-duty during all operating hours.
- C-5 The facility shall comply with the Virginia Indoor Clean Air Act and the Code of Alexandria, Title 11, Chapter 10, Smoking Prohibitions.
- C-6 In many cases, original wooden floors, ceilings and wall structures in historical structures may not be suitable for food service facilities. Wood materials shall be finished in a manner that is smooth, durable, easily-cleanable, and non-absorbent.
- C-7 Facilities engaging in the following processes may be required to submit a HACCP plan and/or obtain a variance: Smoking as a form of food preservation; curing/drying food; using food additives to render food not potentially-hazardous; vacuum packaging, cook-chill, or sous-vide; operating a molluscan shellfish life-support system; sprouting seeds or beans; and fermenting foods.
- C-8 Starting on 1/1/2023, The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (VDACS) is the point of contact for the following type of establishments: grocery stores, convenience stores, ice cream stores, wine shops, or bakeries. The divisions of Food Safety can offer further guidance. Please use the following contact information:
VDAC's Food Safety Program
804.786.3520
804.371.7792
foodsafety@vdacs.virginia.gov

Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities:
No comments.

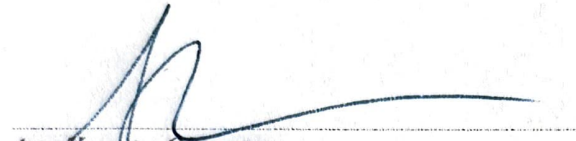
Police Department:
No comments received.

Fire:
C-1 This new use will require a fire prevention permit.

Application can be accessed online at:
www.alexandriava.gov/fire-department/the-fire-marshals-office.

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

The undersigned hereby agrees and consents to the attached conditions of this Special Use Permit #2025-0050. The undersigned also hereby agrees to obtain all applicable licenses and permits required for the restaurant at 400 King Street, Suite 2.


Applicant - Signature

10/16/25
Date

ALEXANDRA CHAN
Applicant - Printed

10/15/25
Date

CEO
Cafe Mino Cafe LLC