

AN ORDINANCE NO. 21-5

To grant a special use permit to Southgate Square Virginia LLC to permit a hookah establishment at 90 Southgate Square, Suite 180, also known as parcel identification number 69010300001, which is zoned GB – General Business District. A hookah establishment is a lounge where patrons share flavored communal hookah or from one placed at each table or bar.

Applicant: Southgate Square Virginia LLC

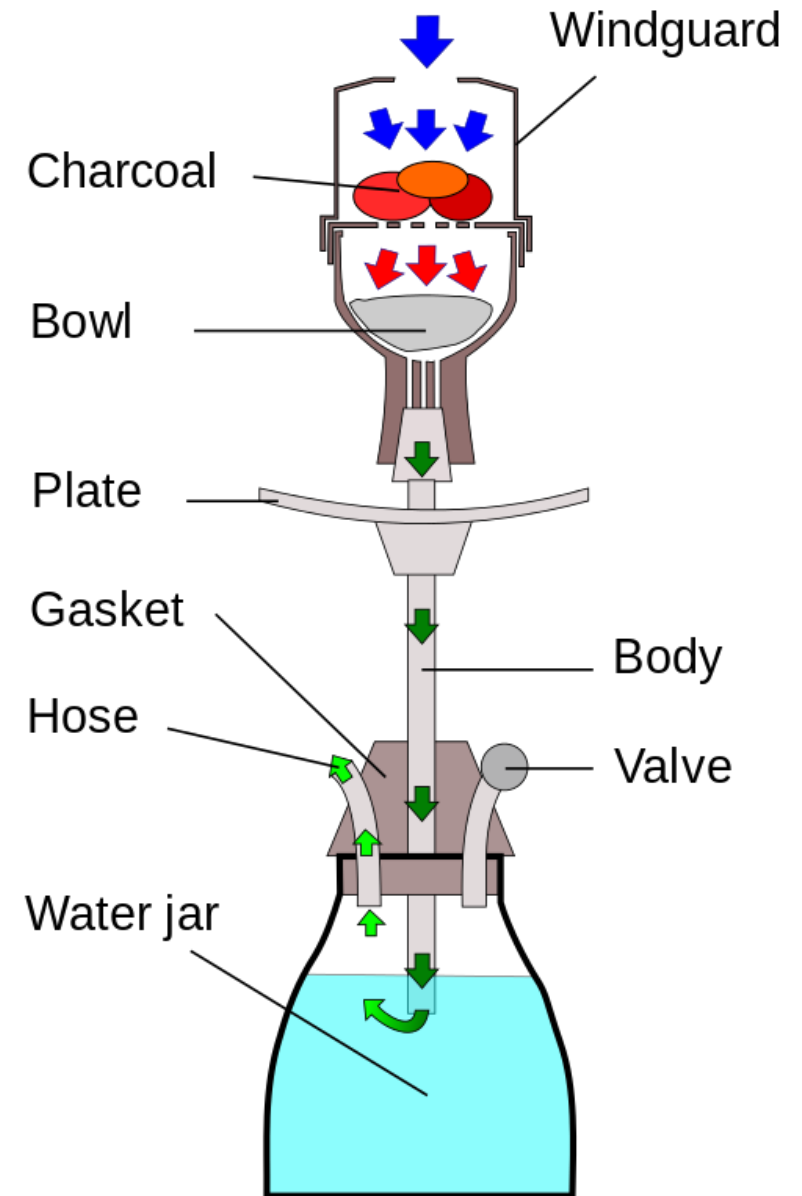
Applicant Power of Attorney: John T. Wood Attorney at Law





What is Hookah?

- A hookah, also known as shisha, is a water pipe dedicated to smoking tobacco or flavored tobacco.
- The tobacco is placed in a bowl heated by charcoal, and upon inhalation, the tobacco smoke is drawn through the water basin, converting the smoke into a vapor.



History of Hookah

- Originated 16th Century in India
- Culturally significant and traditional among Indian, Persian, Turkish, Egyptian and other Middle Eastern cultures.
- 1960-70s, popular with general public across Europe and North America.
- Hookah lounge industry has seen significant growth since 2000 with the resurgence of hookah's popularity among college students and young professionals.



Analysis of Request

- Applicant proposes a hookah lounge with restaurant.
- Suite 180 is 3,600 square feet.
- City's Zoning Ordinance does not define a use type for establishments dedicated to smoking, therefore a Special Use Permit is required.
- The Richmond Metropolitan Area has 8 hookah lounges. Mazaya Hookah Lounge in Midlothian is the closest location to the City.
- All smoking establishments must adhere to the Virginia Indoor Clean Area Act.

Recommendations

The recommendation from Staff for the Planning Commission was to approve Planning Commission Resolution 20-3, to recommend that the City Council approve Ordinance 21-5.

Planning Commission recommended approval (approved 6-1) of Ordinance No. 21-5 to the City Council on April 6, 2021.