

PROPOSED REVOCATION USE PERMIT NO. 24-0489

Karma Restaurant & Lounge
85 and 87 Lincoln St

Planning Commission
November 20, 2025

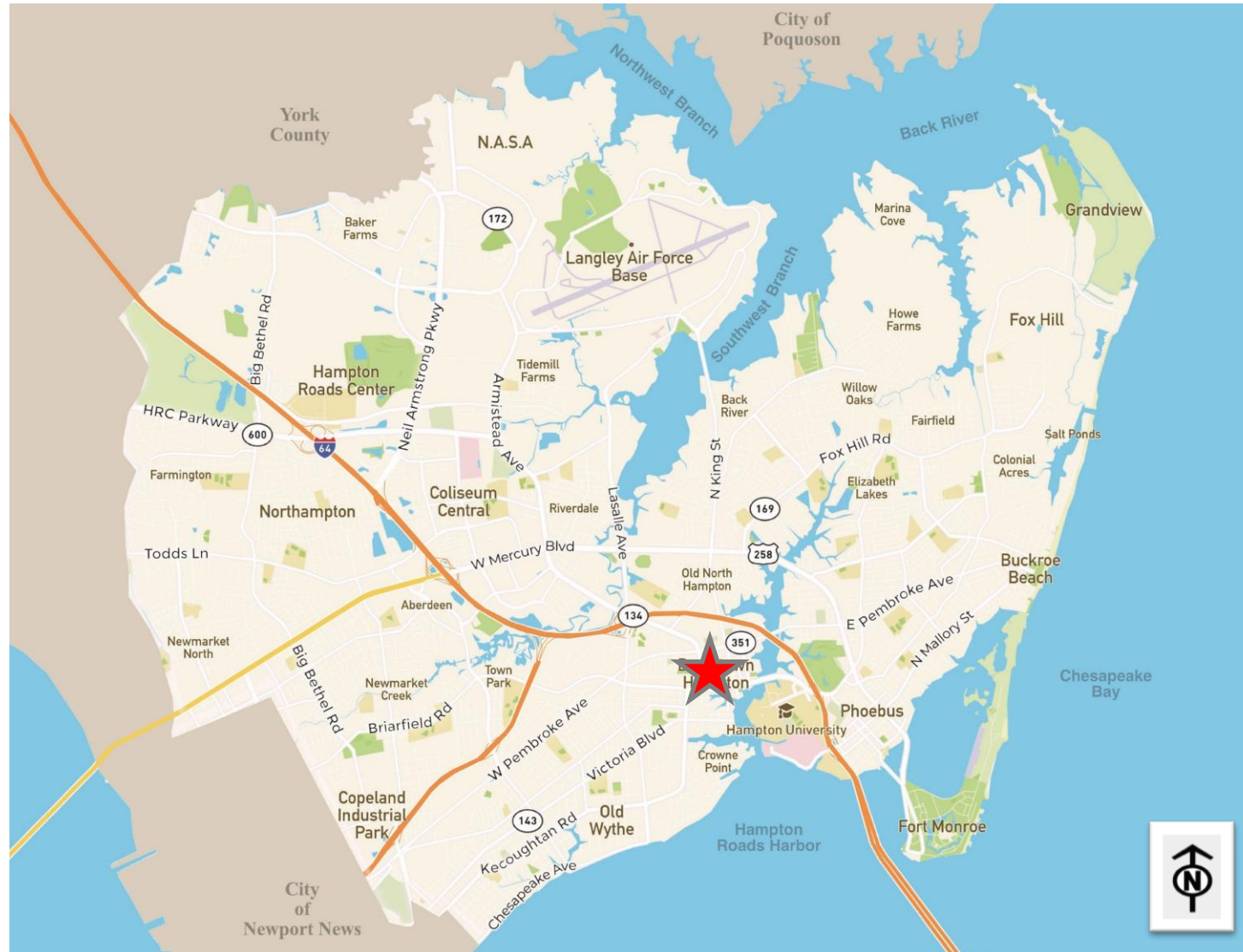
REVOKING A USE PERMIT

A Use Permit (“UP”) may be revoked for any violation of a term or condition of the permit.

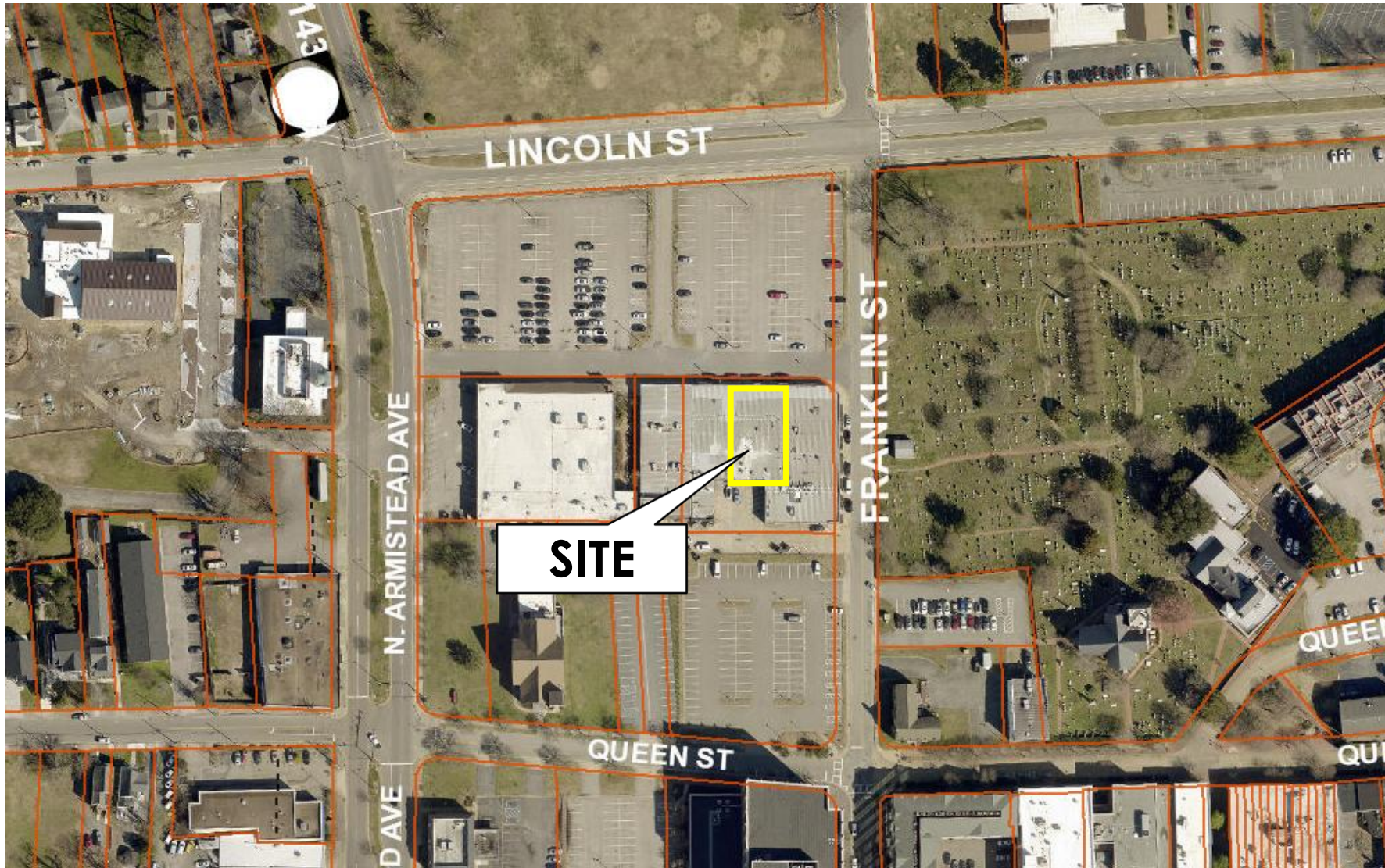
Procedures to consider revocation of a UP are the same as those to approve a UP.

– Hampton Zoning Ordinance § 14-11

LOCATION MAP



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HISTORY – FIRST USE PERMIT

January 10, 2024

- Karma Restaurant & Lounge received Use Permit 23-0312 to operate a Restaurant 3 at 87 Lincoln St.
 - Hours of Operation:
 - Sunday – Thursday 5:00 AM to 12:00 AM
 - Friday – Saturday 5:00 AM to 2:00 AM
 - Window treatments/coverings prohibited
 - Mandatory security plan included:
 - 5-7 licensed security personnel from one hour before opening until one hour after closing
 - Crowd control inside and upon exit
 - Personnel must be provided radios for communication

HISTORY – SECOND USE PERMIT

- **January – July 2024: Unlawful Expansion**
 - Permitholder expanded business to 85 Lincoln Street without seeking new Use Permit.
- **February 26, 2025: New Use Permit**
 - Permitholder lawfully obtained Use Permit 24-0489 for Restaurant 3 covering both the 87 and 85 Lincoln St. locations.
 - Prior Use Permit superseded by law.
 - Conditions were the same as UP 23-0312 except:
 - Hours of operation were **expanded until 2am daily**
 - **Third-party promoters** now prohibited
 - Security plan specifically requires **monitoring of parking lot**

UP CONDITION #7: SECURITY

The Use Permit and incorporated Security Plan require:

- That security be “**sufficient to monitor and control patron behavior inside as well as upon exit of the building into the surrounding area,**” including “**the adjacent parking area,**” until “**all patrons have dispersed from the parking lot.**”
- That Permitholder assign security staff members to “**patrol the parking lot to ensure guests exit safely.**”
- That security staff “**shall use radios to communicate with other guards for real-time updates.**”
- That security staff “**shall maintain an accurate count of occupancy load.**”
- That security staff “**cooperate with Hampton Police Division in their investigation into [any] criminal activity.**”

UP CONDITION #10: ABC LICENSE

The Use Permit requires:

- That Permitholder must “**obtain and maintain all applicable licenses to conduct the business,**” including Virginia ABC license necessary to serve alcohol.
- That Permitholder must “**comply with all restrictions or requirements imposed by VABC.**”

OTHER UP CONDITIONS

The Use Permit requires:

- That “**no exterior or interior window treatment [. . .] shall be installed [. . .] that would impede visibility into the restaurant**” (Condition #4).
- That “**neither the facility nor any portion of it shall be leased, let, or used by any third party to stage an event for profit**” (Condition #9).
- That the UP may be terminated “**for any violation of federal, state, or local law**” (Condition #11).
- That Permitholder “**shall not allow its existence to lapse or its certificate of authority or registration to transact business in Virginia to be revoked or cancelled**” (Condition #11.)

SECURITY INCIDENTS

- January 18, 2025: Fight
- April 11, 2025: Homicide
- June 7, 2025: Assault
- September 1, 2025: Disorderly
- September 21, 2025: Assault
- November 8, 2025: Fight



APRIL 11, 2025 - HOMICIDE

- Patron was shot and killed in public parking lot adjacent to establishment at around 1:30 a.m. (30 minutes prior to closing)
- Numerous patrons loitering and arguing in the parking lot, and no security personnel seen monitoring the parking lot, prior to shooting
- Shooting occurred about 30 feet from front door security personnel
- Outdoor security failed to report the shooting to other personnel by radio—patrons re-entered the establishment to inform interior staff.

HPD ANALYSIS

Recent Incidents

Date Range: January 1, 2023 – October 13, 2025

Total Calls: 97 – Higher than average in the City of Hampton

By Call Type:

- Assault / Fight / Domestic: 13 calls
 - Assault (7), Fights (3), Domestic-related (3)
- Disorderly Conduct / Person: 5 calls
- Weapons / Gun-related (Gunshots, Individual w/ Gun, Shooting): 6 calls
- Accidents (Hit & Run / Property Damage): 3 calls
- Parking Violations: 27 calls
- Suspicious Activity / Person / Vehicle: 5 calls
- Robbery / Larceny / Theft / Stolen Vehicle: 4 calls
- Other (Follow-ups, Public Assist, Threats, Vandalism, Vehicle Stops, Unspecified, etc.): 34 calls

HPD ENFORCEMENT HISTORY

- 65 Calls for service(CFS) since opening related the business. 11 CFS were fights, disorderly, assault.
- Crowd management concerns and lack of security oversight (DCJS/ABC violations)
- Public concern brought on by fights and firearm related offenses

HPD RESOURCES EXPENDED

- Extra Duty officers assigned nightly (suspended)
- RTIC Camera repositioning
- Multi-officer/ shift responses for crowd control
- Assignment of Chesapeake BID officers



APRIL 15 – VABC LICENSE SUSPENDED

- Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority (“VABC”) summarily suspended Permitholder’s liquor license after the April 11 homicide, due to Permitholder’s failure

“to take reasonable measures to prevent an act of violence resulting in death or serious bodily injury [. . .] from occurring on the licensed premises [. . .], or any public property immediately adjacent to the licensed premises.”

- VABC restored the permit on April 25 with a Negotiated Resolution in which Permitholder agreed to the following:
 - Maintain at least six VDCJS-certified security personnel at all times between 7:00 p.m. until half an hour after closing, including two in the parking lot
“ensuring that patrons do not loiter”
 - Contract with Hampton Police Division for extra-duty police coverage.

JULY 11, 2025 – COMPLIANCE CHECK

- On July 11, HPD and VABC undertook a joint compliance check at establishments across the City. The following violations were observed at Permitholder's establishment:
 - Only five personnel were observed, although the VABC Negotiated Resolution required six.
 - Security footage shows that when HPD arrived at the parking lot and requested that all security personnel identify themselves, an individual wearing a "SECURITY" shirt retreated into the restaurant from his position outside the front door. Other security personnel then moved to cover his position.
 - In the presence of an HPD officer, a security staff member hid what appeared to be an occupancy counter device behind his back and clicked it rapidly, concealing the true occupancy of the establishment.

OTHER INCIDENTS

- **Loitering.** HPD reports that patrons loitering in the parking lot is “typical,” and the City has received citizen complaints and obtained information from social media regarding patrons loitering on or in vehicles in the parking lot.
- **Window treatments.** Permitholder received a Notice of Violation on April 28, 2025 for violation of the window transparency requirement (Condition #4). The window treatments were removed. In October 2025, a new window treatment was applied that obscures visibility from the outside.
- **Third-party promoters.** Video obtained from social media shows Permitholder actively soliciting the public to lease the establishment for events. Images pulled from social media have advertised “VIP access” or “DJ section” packages offered by third parties.
- **Legal existence.** Due to failure to pay required State Corporation Commission fees, the Permitholder’s corporate existence lapsed on April 30, 2025 and has not been reinstated at time of writing.

GROUNDS FOR REVOCATION

- Pattern of violent incidents, including the April 11 homicide, demonstrate Permitholder's failures to **"monitor and control patron behavior"** and to **"patrol the parking lot to ensure guests exit safely"** (Condition #7.)
- Permitholder has failed to **"use radios to communicate with other guards"** and to **"maintain an accurate count of occupancy load"** (Condition #7).
- Permitholder has violated the terms of the April 25 Negotiated Resolution with VABC by failing to **"employ at least six (6) DCJS certified security at the establishment every day,"** and by failing to **"patrol the parking area, ensuring patrons do not loiter."** Violations of the Negotiated Resolution also violate the UP requirement to **"comply with all restrictions or requirements imposed by VABC"** (Condition #10).

GROUNDS FOR REVOCATION – CONT'D

- Permitholder's soliciting the public to hold events at the establishment, and allowing third parties to advertise for events at the establishment, shows Permitholder has permitted the establishment **"to be leased, let, or used by any third party to stage an event for profit"** (Condition #9).
- The current window treatment **"impede[s] visibility into the restaurant from the outside"** (Condition #4).
- Permitholder has allowed its corporate existence to lapse (Condition #11).

CONCLUSION

- Permitholder opportunity to present
- Public hearing
- Action
 - Staff recommends **REVOCATION** of Use Permit Application No. 24-0489