



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2017-152: To rezone a portion of the property known as 1900 Venable Street from the R-53 Multi-family Residential District to the B-5 Central Business District.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: September 5, 2017

PETITIONER

Lory Markham, Markham Planning

LOCATION

1900 Venable Street

PURPOSE

To rezone a portion of the property known as 1900 Venable Street from the R-53 Multi-family Residential District to the B-5 Central Business District, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The subject property is an irregular shaped lot that fronts on Venable Street between Mosby Street and North 18th Street and fronts on North 18th Street between Venable Street and East Leigh Street at the terminus of the Martin Luther King Memorial Bridge above the property. It is located in the Union Hill neighborhood of the East Planning District. The property is comprised of 3.627 acres and is currently unimproved. The portion of the property requested to be rezoned is approximately 2.8 acres in area.

The applicant is requesting to rezone a portion of the property to develop it under the mixed-use form-based regulations found in the B-5 district. The portion of the property to be rezoned is oriented toward North 18th Street and Shockoe Bottom and away from the lower density single- and multi-family development at the top of the hill along Venable Street.

Staff finds the B-5 zoning district to be an appropriate zoning designation for the property. The portion of the property to be rezoned could be considered an extension of the adjacent Urban Center Area of the Downtown Plan and Neighborhood Mixed-Use Area of the Pulse Corridor Plan, based on the topography and orientation of the subject property.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of the rezoning to B-5 - Central Business District.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject property is an irregular shaped lot that fronts on Venable Street between Mosby Street and North 18th Street and fronts on North 18th Street between Venable Street and East Leigh Street at the terminus of the Martin Luther King Memorial Bridge above the property. It is located in the Union Hill neighborhood of the East Planning District. The property is comprised of 3.627 acres and is currently unimproved. The portion of the property requested to be rezoned is approximately 2.8 acres in area.

The portion of the property to be rezoned is oriented toward North 18th Street and Shockoe Bottom and away from the lower density single- and multi-family development at the top of the hill along Venable Street.

Proposed Use of the Property

The applicant is requesting to rezone a portion of the property to develop it under the mixed-use form-based regulations found in the B-5 district.

Master Plan

The City's 2001 Master Plan recommends Multi-Family Medium Density land uses for the subject property. Primary uses for this category include multi-family dwellings at densities up to 20 units per acre. It includes day nurseries, adult day care and residential support uses such as schools, places of worship, neighborhood parks and recreation facilities, and limited public and semi-public uses. The Master Plan calls for infill development of like density, scale and use for the East District.

The subject property is adjacent to the boundary of the City's Downtown Plan. The property across North 18th Street from the subject property is designated as an Urban Center Character Area by the Downtown Plan. The Urban Center Area is characterized by higher density, mixed-use development, typically arranged on a fine-grained street network, with wide sidewalks, regular tree planting, and minimal setbacks. The recently adopted Pulse Corridor designates the adjacent property as Neighborhood Mixed-Use, which is characterized by "cohesive districts that provide a mix of uses, but with a larger amount of residential uses than other mixed-use districts." The Pulse Corridor Plan recommends the B-5 district as an appropriate zoning district for Neighborhood Mixed-Use areas (p. xii).

Zoning

The current zoning of the property is R-53 (Multi-family Residential). The rezoning would require a portion of the property to remain in the R-53 district. The remaining portion would be rezoned to the B-5 district. The mix of uses permitted in the B-5 district would apply to the rezoned portion of the property, as well as the requirements for setbacks, screening, parking areas, building height, and building façade fenestration that pertain to property within the B-5 district.

Surrounding Area

A combination of large tracts of R-63 Multifamily Residential and M-1 Light Industrial currently abut the property. Adjacent to the parcel to the north east as well as across Venable Street are the 196-unit townhome community known as Jefferson Townhouses. The entire Western edge of the property faces North 18th Street with light industrial uses among the properties toward Oliver Hill Way. Nearby destinations and institutions include Martin Luther King, Jr. Middle School, Main Street Station, and Jefferson Park.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff sent notices to the Union Hill Civic Association and Shockoe Partnership. No letters or correspondence in support of, or in opposition to, the proposed rezoning have been received.

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