



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2022-028: To rezone the properties known as 601 Albany Avenue, 603 Albany Avenue, 600 Maury Street, and 610 Maury Street from the M-2 Heavy Industrial District to the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: February 22, 2022

PETITIONER

Dan Slone

LOCATION

601 Albany Avenue, 603 Albany Avenue, 600 Maury Street, and 610 Maury Street

PURPOSE

To rezone the properties known as 601 Albany Avenue, 603 Albany Avenue, 600 Maury Street, and 610 Maury Street from the M-2 Heavy Industrial District to the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is requesting to rezone the property to the TOD-1 Transit Oriented Nodal District, which allows a greater range of uses and densities than the current M-2 Heavy Industrial District.

Staff finds that the proposed rezoning is appropriate given the area's future land use designation within the City's recent Richmond 300 Plan. The Plan designates a future land use category for the property as Destination Mixed-Use. This category better aligns with the property's infill potential, within a TOD-1 zone.

Staff also finds that the properties are within and in close proximity to the Downtown Manchester National/Regional Priority Growth Node and that the TOD-1 rezoning will assist in achieving the targeted growth objectives as defined by the Richmond 300 Master Plan.

Staff further finds that a portion of the properties are on a designated Major Mixed-Use Street which, among other defining characteristics, are intended to be "ideal locations for transit routes and transit stops". As such, TOD-1 is seen as the appropriate zoning category for Major Mixed-Use Streets.

Staff finds that the proposed rezoning is consistent with changing conditions in the area, in which vacant or underutilized parcels, many of which have historically been used for industrial or warehousing purposes, continue to be redeveloped for residential and mixed-use purposes, based on market demand. The existing M-2 zoning designation of the property is not consistent with the Master Plan and development of the property according to M-1 requirements would not be appropriate for the community.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of the rezoning request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The properties, together, consist of approximately 83,009 SF, or 1.90 acres, of land. The properties are located in the Old Town Manchester Neighborhood between Marx Street and Dinwiddie Avenue

Proposed Use of the Property

The proposed rezoning would accommodate existing uses and infill development allowable within the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District.

Richmond 300 Master Plan

The City's *Richmond 300* Plan designates a future land use category for the aforementioned property as Destination Mixed-Use which is defined as "Key gateways featuring prominent destinations, such as retail, sports venues, and large employers, as well as housing and open space. Located at the convergence of several modes of transportation, including Pulse BRT or other planned transit improvements."

Higher density, transit-oriented development encouraged on vacant or underutilized sites. New development should be urban in form, may be of larger scale than existing context, and, where relevant, should pay special attention to the historic character of the existing context. Development should enhance the public realm and create a sense of place. Many buildings are vertically mixed-use. Developments continue or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity. Ground floor uses engage with, and enliven, the street. Monolithic walls are discouraged, while windows, doors, storefronts, and other features that allow transparency and interaction between building and street are encouraged. Active commercial ground floor uses are required on street-oriented commercial frontages. Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated. Bike parking is provided. Driveway entrances are required to be of alleys whenever possible; new driveways are prohibited on priority and principal street frontages. Surface parking is prohibited as a principal use; when surface parking is provided as an accessory use, it should be located to the rear of buildings and screened. Parking requirements are reduced to allow more market-based parking strategies, including shared parking. Buildings typically a minimum height of five stories.

Primary Uses: Retail/office/personal service, multi-family residential, cultural, and open space.

Secondary Uses: Institutional and government. (p. 64)

This property is located within a designated "Great Street" under the category of "Major Mixed-Use Street" which is characterized by the following:

- Carry high volumes of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles, through commercial and mixed-use areas
- Prioritize use and density-scaled sidewalks and crosswalks

- Require form elements, such as buildings to the street with parking in the rear, as well as building windows and entrances on the street
- Incorporate streetscape features, such as trees, benches, and trash receptacles
- Ideal locations for transit routes and transit stops
- Prioritize the curbside for walking, bicycling, transit, and short-term parking access and loading for local shops and restaurants (p. 72)

Currently, adjacent properties are zoned the same M-2 Heavy Industrial with some B-6 and B-7 Mixed Use Business Districts, in the vicinity.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The properties are located in the M-2 Heavy Industrial District. The City’s Zoning Administration reviewed the application and provided the following comments:

ZONING AND USE:

Current: The current zoning district (M-2) permits many commercial uses, including manufacturing, wholesaling and distribution establishments.

Proposed: The proposed zoning district (TOD-1) permits a variety of residential and commercial uses, including retail, offices, personal service businesses and restaurants.

YARDS:

Current: The M-2 district has the following yard requirements for this location:

- (1) Front yard. None
- (2) Side yards. None
- (3) Rear yard. None

Proposed: The TOD-1 district has the following yard requirements for these properties:

- (1) Front yard.
 - a. For dwelling units located on the ground floor:
 - 1. A front yard of at least ten feet shall be required. In no case shall a front yard with a depth greater than fifteen feet be permitted, except for pedestrian plazas, outdoor dining areas and other features.
 - b. For all other uses:
 - 1. No front yard is required. In no case shall a front yard with depth greater than ten feet be permitted, except for pedestrian plazas, outdoor dining areas and other features.

- (2) Side yards. None
- (3) Rear yard. None

HEIGHT:

Current: In the M-2 district, no building or structure shall exceed 45 feet in height, provided that additional height shall be permitted, except for sign structures, when all portions of a building or structure over 45 feet in height are set back from side and rear lot lines a minimum of one foot for each two feet of height in excess of 45 feet and provided, further, that no portion of a building or structure shall penetrate an inclined plane originating at the centerline of an abutting street and extending over the lot at an inclination of one foot horizontal for each three feet vertical.

Proposed: In the TOD-1 zoning district, no building shall exceed twelve stories in height. Every main building hereinafter constructed shall have a minimum height of not less than two stories, except that porches, porticos and similar structures attached to a main building may be of lesser height.

USABLE OPEN SPACE: In the proposed TOD-1 zoning district, a usable open space ratio of not less than 0.10 shall be provided for newly constructed buildings or portions thereof devoted to dwelling uses.

PARKING: In the proposed TOD-1 zoning district, off-street parking spaces shall not be required for uses other than dwelling uses, hotels and motels. For multifamily dwelling units, no parking spaces are required for 1 to 16 dwelling units. One parking space is required per 2 dwelling units over 16 units.

SIGNAGE:

Current: The M-2 zoning district permits three square feet of signage for each linear foot of lot frontage along the street with a maximum of 300 square feet for each street frontage. Wall signs, projecting signs, suspended signs, awning signs, canopy signs, freestanding signs, roof signs and off-premises signs shall be permitted.

Proposed: Signage in the TOD-1 zoning district shall not exceed two square feet for each linear foot of lot frontage along the street nor in any case 200 square feet for each street frontage. Wall signs, projecting signs, suspended signs, awning signs, canopy signs, and freestanding signs shall be permitted. One freestanding sign not exceeding 20 square feet in area or 5 feet in height shall be permitted.

Surrounding Area

The property is within a very large M-2 Heavy Industrial District. The area is a mix of commercial and industrial uses with a rapidly developing segment of Commerce Street to the west.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified the Manchester Alliance as well as the Blackwell Historic Community Civic Association and area residents and property owners of the proposed rezoning. Staff has not received any letters or notices of support or opposition to this application.

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