



To: Urban Design Committee
From: Planning and Preservation Division
Date: November 6, 2014
RE: **Final Location, Character and Extent review of the Richmond Police Department K-9 facility, 500 Forest Lawn Drive; UDC No. 2014-34(2)**

I. APPLICANT

Lacy Salomone, Department of Public Works

II. LOCATION

500 Forest Lawn Drive (Pine Camp)

Property Owners:

City of Richmond

III. PURPOSE

The application is for final location, character and extent review of the Richmond Police Department K-9 facility at 500 Forest Lawn Drive.

IV. SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

This is a request to replace the existing Richmond Police Department (RPD) K-9 facility with a new building, to contain offices and a kennel area. The new facility will be built within the existing RPD K-9 complex, adjacent to the existing office building. Upon completion of the new facility, the existing office building and kennel area will be demolished and the site restored.

Staff is supportive of providing a new facility for the Richmond Police Department K-9 division. Staff notes that the building is being constructed in an area that will rarely be visited by the citizenry, and finds the proposal to be generally consistent with the recommendations of the Urban Design Guidelines. Staff also finds that the applicant has made a good-faith effort to address to the recommendations made by the Urban Design Committee and Planning Commission during conceptual review, while respecting the limitations of the budget. Therefore, it is Staff's position that the Urban Design Committee should recommend that the Planning Commission grant final approval as submitted.

Staff Contact:

Jeff Eastman, (804) 646-6348

V. FINDINGS OF FACT

a. Site Description and Surrounding Context

The subject property is located at the intersection of Old Brook Road and Azalea Avenue and is zoned R-5 (Single-family residential). The public face of the property is the City's Pine Camp Arts and Community Center, however, the heavily wooded 103.8 acre property extends southward behind the Henderson Sports Complex and is also home to several City storage buildings and yards, the existing Police Department (RPD) K-9 facility, a K-9 training area, and the

Northside dog park. The existing K-9 facility is a concrete block building dating to pre-1962.

The northern and eastern property lines are also the border between the City and the County of Henrico. The area of Henrico County to the north is developed with single-family residential uses, while the area to the east contains the Forest Lawn Cemetery. At the southern tip of the subject property is the City's Washington Park neighborhood, also zoned R-5 and developed with single-family detached dwellings. To the west of the subject property are the City's John Marshall High School and Henderson Middle School.

b. Scope of Review

The project is subject to location, character, and extent review as a "public building" under Section 17.07 of the City Charter.

c. UDC Review History

The UDC reviewed and the Planning Commission approved the conceptual plans in October 2014, with the following conditions:

- That the applicant receives approval from the Board of Zoning Appeals to locate on the site prior to final review.
- That the applicant modifies the building design to make the front entrance more prominent.
- That the applicant replaces the standard concrete block walls in the kennel portion of the building with split-faced block.
- That the applicant considers incorporating sustainability measures such as skylights and a rainwater retention system.
- That the final plans include color elevation renderings.
- That the final plans include building material samples, or pictures showing the proposed building materials.
- That the final plans provide a landscape plan, to include plant species, location, quantity, and size at the time of installation.
- That the final plans provide details on the proposed parking lot lighting, to include pole and fixture model, height, color, finish and light source.
- That the architect explore options to break up the scale of the proposed metal siding along the south elevation while being mindful of the project's budget.

d. Project Description

This is a request to replace the existing Richmond Police Department (RPD) K-9 facility with a new building, to contain offices and a kennel area. The applicant's report notes that the current facility needs replacement due to significant operational deficiencies and substantial ongoing facility maintenance problems. The new facility will be built within the existing RPD K-9 complex, adjacent to the existing office building. Upon completion of the new facility, the existing office building and kennel area will be demolished and the site restored.

The new 4,060 square feet K-9 facility will have an administrative area and a kennel area, separated by a breezeway. The administrative area will provide office and training spaces for the twelve RPD K-9 officers in addition to locker rooms. The training classroom will also be used for regional K-9 training, where officers from other localities come for instruction.

The kennel area will be located at the rear of the new facility; providing kennels, food storage, a canine examination/cleaning room, and an equipment storage room. There are 6 kennels interior to the building, which connect to another 6 kennels which are exterior but protected by a roof. These exterior kennels in turn connect to a fenced-in dog run. The RPD K-9 dogs typically reside with their handlers, but they are occasionally boarded overnight. Most nights these kennels will be vacant.

The exterior materials on the administrative portion of the building include an aluminum storefront door and sidelights alongside corrugated metal panel siding and board-and-batten cementitious siding. In order to make the building entrance more prominent, the entry has been moved forward 18" and the entry door has been moved to the center of the storefront, which will be painted a shade of blue that matches the color in the police logo. Windows are provided in the administrative wing in the office/training areas, and skylights are provided above the locker rooms. The kennel wing exterior material is composed of split-faced concrete block with a row of upper-level windows composed of polycarbonate panels. The interior kennel is climate controlled. The building is capped by a low-slope membrane roof that overhangs the building by about 2'.

Access to the site will be provided by an extension to the existing asphalt drive. A twenty-one space parking lot is located to the east of the building, between the training field and the obstacle course. Two bioretention areas for stormwater quality and runoff reduction are proposed – one to the west of the building and one to the west of the parking area. The plans also call for the relocation of the existing K-9 memorial.

Site landscaping is focused around the entrance, parking and the two bioretention areas. In response to concerns voiced by the Planning Commission during conceptual review regarding the uninterrupted expanse of horizontal siding on the southern façade, the plans call for three Foster hollies to be placed at the vehicular entry to the site and another alongside the building. Three crepe myrtles will be placed on either side of the access drive at the building entrance, and three Nuttall oaks will be placed at the edges of the parking area. Shrubs, grasses and groundcovers are proposed for the planting areas around the entrance to the site and the building, as well as in and around the perimeters of the bioretention areas.

The main entrance to the building will be highlighted with a black BEGA ceiling mounted LED downlight with a color temperature of 4000k. The exterior of the building will be illuminated by dark bronze Lithonia Lighting TWR2 LED building mounted luminaires with color temperatures of 5000k. Parking lot lighting will be provided by the dark bronze Lithonia Lighting KAD LED luminaires with color temperatures of 5000k. The parking lot luminaires will be mounted atop a 20' tall, dark bronze square pole.

The project is funded through the City of Richmond's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget and a grant through the Virginia Office of the Attorney General. The CIP Budget provides \$200,000 across fiscal years 2014 and 2015 for design of the new facility, and the state grant provides \$1,184,177 for the construction of the new facility. Construction is slated to begin in February 2015, and the facility is expected to open before December 31, 2015.

e. Master Plan

The subject corridor is located within the North Planning District as defined by the citywide Master Plan, which recommends Public and Open Space uses for the subject property, a designation that includes publicly owned and operated parks, recreation areas, open spaces and other government and public service facilities (page 135). There is no language in the Plan specific to the subject property or the proposed improvements.

f. Urban Design Guidelines

In general, the Urban Design Guidelines note that “the quality, design, and condition of all public facilities sets the image of the City, and sends a message about the values placed upon the services provided” (page 13). More specifically, the Guidelines state that “a building's entrance should be easily recognizable (page 13). The Guidelines also note that building materials “should be appropriate for the size and architectural style of the building” and that “many different materials on a single building lead to visual confusion and should be avoided” (page 17). Building materials should also be “aesthetically and structurally durable, of high quality, and require little maintenance” (page 17).

The subsection on materials continues to say that “building textures and their combinations should add continuity and not conflict or detract from each other” and that “textures should be appropriate for the size, proportion and architectural style of the building and its surroundings” (page 17). Referring to building colors, that Guidelines note that they “should be coordinated and compatible with each other and with adjacent buildings” (page 17). The Guidelines also state that “windows, projecting cornices, and architectural details, such as decorative masonry bands in an accent color, may be used to break up flat building planes” (page 19).

The Guidelines note that landscape plans should “include diverse plant species, including evergreen, flowering and shade tree species combined with shrubs, ground covers and annual and perennial plantings” and that “shade trees for pedestrian comfort should be the predominant plant material in an urban setting” (page 10).

VII. ATTACHMENTS

- a. Vicinity Map**
- b. Application & Summary**
- c. Plans**