



## CITY OF RICHMOND

### Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

**ORD. 2017-242:** To amend Ord. No. 2000-410-2001-10, adopted Jan. 8, 2001, as previously amended by Ord. No. 2001-220-231, adopted Jul. 23, 2001, which approved the "Shops at Stratford Hills Community Unit Plan," for the purpose of increasing the area subject to the community unit plan by 3.4 acres to 67.9± acres and modifying the development standards, under certain terms and conditions.

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**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Land Use Administration  
**Date:** February 5, 2018

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#### **PETITIONER**

T. Preston Lloyd, Jr. - Williams Mullen

#### **LOCATION**

Shops at Stratford Hills Community Unit Plan  
6935, 6935 A, 6941, 6941 Adj, 6931 A, 6931, 6945, 6933, 6965, 7017 & 7101 Forest Hill Avenue  
2606, 2604, 2604 Rear & 2602 Gravel Hill Road

#### **PURPOSE**

To amend Ord. No. 2000-410-2001-10, adopted Jan. 8, 2001, as previously amended by Ord. No. 2001-220-231, adopted Jul. 23, 2001, which approved the "Shops at Stratford Hills Community Unit Plan," for the purpose of increasing the area subject to the community unit plan by 3.4 acres to 67.9± acres and modifying the development standards, under certain terms and conditions.

#### **SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

The Shops at Stratford Hills Community Unit Plan is a commercial development consisting of 64.5 acres of land and containing a variety of retail, service and restaurant uses, located in the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Forest Hill Avenue and Chippenham Parkway.

A request has been made to amend the Shops at Stratford Hills Community Unit Plan in order to include an additional 3.4 acres of land area (shown as Phase II on the proposed 2018 Conceptual Plan) to be developed as part of the community unit plan, and to modify the development standards pertaining to the Community Unit Plan. The proposed amendments are summarized below in the Zoning & Ordinance Conditions section.

The Department of Planning and Development Review staff is supportive of the overall proposal to amend the Shops at Stratford Hills Community Unit Plan and finds it to be consistent with the General Commercial Land Use designation of the Master Plan and Zoning Ordinance.

The Department of Planning and Development Review staff was not supportive of the reduction of the existing buffer on Lot 3 along Forest Hill Avenue, as shown on the proposed 2017 Conceptual Plan, citing concerns regarding a negative impact on the aesthetics of the

development and the aesthetics and pedestrian experience along the Forest Hill Avenue corridor. The applicant has proposed additional landscaping and decorative fencing to supplement the reduction in the width of the buffer, and has proposed additional pedestrian access (as shown on the 2018 Landscape Sketch and 2018 Conceptual Plan). Staff is no longer opposed to the reduction of the existing buffer on Lot 3 along Forest Hill Avenue, based on the proposed amendments.

The Department of Public Works staff was not supportive of the proposed median breaks on the existing access drives (Cherokee Road extension and Joe Brooks Boulevard), citing safety concerns. The applicant has removed the proposed median breaks and has provided a modified internal access drive to offset the lack of median break on Cherokee Road extension (as shown on the 2018 Conceptual Plan). Staff is not opposed to the internal access layout now proposed.

Staff finds that the proposed Community Unit Plan Amendment would continue to adequately safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the occupants of the adjoining and surrounding properties, will not unreasonably impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent properties, will not unreasonably increase congestion in streets and will not increase public danger from fire or otherwise unreasonably affect public safety and will not diminish or impair the established values of property in surrounding areas.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of the community unit plan amendment request, as shown on the amended 2018 plans, with the following condition:

1. Per Section 2 of the amendatory ordinance, building permit applications shall be submitted within twelve (12) months from the effective date of amendatory ordinance, otherwise, the provisions of the amendatory ordinance shall be null and void and of no further effect, and Ordinance No. 2000-410-2001-10, adopted January 8, 2001, as previously amended by Ordinance No. 2001-220-231, adopted July 23, 2001, shall remain in effect and shall govern the use and development of the Property as defined in section 1(II) of Ordinance No. 2001-220-231, adopted July 23, 2001.

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## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **Site Description**

The Shops at Stratford Hills Community Unit Plan is a commercial development consisting of 64.5 acres of land and containing a variety of retail, service and restaurant uses, located in the southeast quadrant of the intersection of Forest Hill Avenue and Chippenham Parkway.

### **Proposed Use of the Property**

Inclusion of an additional 3.4 acres (Phase II) to be developed as part of the Shops at Stratford Hills Community Unit Plan and amendments as summarized below in the Zoning & Ordinance Conditions section.

### **Master Plan**

The Master Plan recommends General Commercial Land Use for the property, which includes a broad range of office, retail, general commercial, wholesale, and service uses, typically located along major transportation corridors and serving large portions of the City (p. 135).

### **Zoning & Ordinance Conditions**

The property is zoned R-2 Single-Family residential district and B-2 Community Business district. Development of the property is governed by the existing community unit plan ordinance (Ordinance No. 2001-220-231) and the 2001 conceptual plan.

The proposed amendment to the Community Unit Plan would add 3.4 acres of land area (shown as Phase II on the proposed 2018 Conceptual Plan) to be developed as part of the Community Unit Plan. This land is currently located east of the Cherokee Road extension and is adjacent to the boundaries of the existing community unit plan.

The proposed amendments would be regulated by the amended community unit plan ordinance and the 2018 conceptual plan. If approved, the amendments are summarized as follows:

- Inclusion of an additional 3.4 acres (Phase II) to be developed as part of the Shops at Stratford Hills Community Unit Plan

- Increase of total floor area permitted within the community unit plan from 420,000 sq ft to 428,000 sq ft

- Inclusion of a drive thru facility on Lot 2 (7005 Forest Hill Avenue) and removal of the restriction on drive thru facilities located within two hundred (200) feet of any property in an R District located outside the Property

- Expansion of the building and surface parking located on Lot 3 (7017 Forest Hill Avenue), which would include the reduction of the existing buffer on Lot 3 along Forest Hill Avenue, supplemented with landscaping, decorative fencing, and additional pedestrian access (as shown on the 2018 Landscape Sketch).

- In the area pertaining to Phase II, the buffer along the eastern boundary of the community unit plan would be relocated and configured as shown on the 2018 Landscape Plan. The requirements for the buffer along the eastern boundary of the property pertaining to Lot 14 (Future Development) would not be modified.

- An additional 5 foot landscape buffer is proposed along the Phase II parking area and the adjacent property (as shown on the 2018 Landscape Plan).

- Inclusion of one freestanding sign of up to 150 square feet in sign area and 20 feet in height along Chippenham Parkway

- Inclusion of one ground mounted sign containing a maximum sign area of fifty (50) square feet and a maximum height of seven feet along Forest Hill Avenue in Phase II

-Inclusion of one ground mounted sign containing a maximum sign area of fifty (50) square feet and a maximum height of seven feet along Forest Hill Avenue in Lot 2

-Inclusion of a new entrance to Forest Hill Avenue from Phase II. Left turns out from Phase II would be prohibited at this entrance.

-The median breaks on the existing access drives (Cherokee Road extension and Joe Brooks Boulevard) are no longer proposed. Modified internal access, with possible cross access between Phase II and adjacent property, is proposed.

**Surrounding Area**

A mix of commercial, office, vacant, and institutional uses are present in the immediate vicinity of the property.

**Neighborhood Participation**

Staff has received letters of opposition and letters of support.

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