




Staff Report  
City of Richmond, Virginia  
**Urban Design Committee**



UDC 2023-16	FINAL Location, Character, and Extent Review	Meeting Date: 8/10/2023
<b>Applicant/Petitioner</b>	Lynne Lancaster, City of Richmond Capital Projects	
<b>Project Description</b>	FINAL Location, Character, and Extent review of the construction of a new police precinct and parking garage located at 1701 Fairfield Way.	
<b>Project Location</b>		
<b>Address:</b> 1701 Fairfield Way		
<b>Property Owner:</b> CITY OF RICHMOND PUBLIC WORKS		
<b>High-Level Details:</b>  The Applicant proposes to construct a 2 story, 22,850 sq. ft. facility and adjacent parking deck to replace the current Police Precinct 1, in the existing parking lot of the City Jail.		
<b>UDC Recommendation</b>	Approval, with Conditions	
<b>Staff Contact</b>	Ray Roakes, Planner, raymond.roakes@rva.gov	
<b>Public Outreach/ Previous Reviews</b>	The Applicant has requested that this application be reviewed at FINAL approval rather than go through CONCEPT first. Staff sees no issue with doing so, the plans are relatively simple and the location is already used as a public safety facility.	
<b>Conditions for Approval</b>	<u>Staff Recommended Conditions of Approval</u>  Outdoor lighting shall be sensitive to light pollution or dark-skies compliant.  Revise plans to detail pedestrian access from the garage to the police station and jail and add a sidewalk, etc. as needed- to be approved by Staff.  Revise plans to show additional interest for the parking deck façade facing Oliver Hill Way and the south facing façade as visible from Oliver Hill Way- to be approved by Staff.  Staff suggests the Applicant work with DPW to determine the need for any pedestrian safety improvements adjacent to the site or within the adjacent ROW, related minor changes to any potentially approved plans to be approved by Staff as needed.	

## Findings of Fact

Site Description	The site is located in the Upper Shockoe Valley neighborhood on the east side of Oliver Hill Way, south of Fairfield Way. The site is zoned M-2 - Heavy Industrial, and the property consists of roughly 11.172 acres, or 486,655 square feet. The property currently contains the City Jail, operated by the Sheriff's Office, and associated parking lot. Commercial and industrial uses are located adjacent to the site along Oliver Hill Way with residential to the rear of the site, although grade difference and tree stand creates a significant buffer.
Scope of Review	The project is subject to location, character, and extent review under section 17.05 and 17.07 of the Richmond City Charter
Prior Approvals	The Applicant has requested that this application be reviewed at FINAL approval rather than go through CONCEPT first. Staff sees no issue with doing so, the plans are relatively simple and the location is already used as a Public Safety Facility.
Project Description	<p>The applicant proposes to construct a new 2 story, 22,850 sq. ft. facility and adjacent parking deck to replace the current Police Precinct 1 (currently located on a different site). The new buildings will be located in the existing parking lot of the existing City Jail. The proposed parking deck will only be accessible by employees.</p> <p>The Applicant states in the narrative:</p> <p><i>"The new Police Station #1 will be built at the current Justice Center property, located at 1701 Fairfield Way, with proximity to the intersection of Oliver Hill Way and Fairfield Way. The City feels this property represents the most ideal location for constructing the new Police Station #1 facility, which is designed to accommodate the police department's current and future program space and staffing needs, and will provide the facility and environment necessary for the station staff to be readily available and well prepared to assist citizens in need at any given moment.</i></p> <p><i>The location relative to Oliver Hill Way maintains views of the Justice Center main entrance, flagpoles, and courtyard and allows visitor parking in close proximity to the building. A new vehicular entry will be added to the site from Oliver Hill Way; this entry allows access to the secure parking garage and the Sheriff's parking lot."</i></p> <p><i>"The New Police Station #1 will continue to serve as a 'cornerstone' to the surrounding community. The architectural design includes a prominent main public entrance design feature, with clerestory windows and a large sloped roof structure that conveys a strong civic presence. The suspended canopy structure above the main entry doors and use of architectural pavers offers well-defined 'pedestrian friendly' entrance plaza."</i></p> <p><i>"The City intends for this facility to be designed and constructed as a high-performance green building, with a target to achieve USGBC - LEED 'Silver' level certification."</i></p> <p>Staff finds that the project includes quality architecture that is in character for the surrounding neighborhood and the general expectations for Civic building in the City of Richmond. The site improvements are also high quality and sustainability is a consideration in the design as they aim for LEED Silver designation.</p> <p>Staff suggests further detail be provided on how pedestrians access the Police Station and Jail from the Parking Deck. Currently, no sidewalk or interior access is indicated. Staff believes revisions to the plans to facilitate such access will be relatively minor and, as such, suggests that Staff could approve the changes after the UDC and CPC hearings.</p> <p>Staff suggests that further visual interest should be provided on the proposed parking deck as visible from Oliver Hill Way. Specifically in relation to the white panels shown at the top of the structure both facing Oliver Hill Way and facing south. Staff believes that minor revisions to the architecture could address this issues, even providing different tones of paint or additional scoring in the concrete to introduce further vertical or horizontal lines would be adequate. Because of the minor effect of such changes, it is suggested that Staff could approve the changes after the UDC and CPC hearings.</p> <p>Lastly, Staff suggests that the City should explore pedestrian improvements to the ROW and the intersection adjacent to this site. With the increased use of this site, increased development in the general vicinity, and existing strongly auto-oriented design of the street - minor improvements such as crosswalks will go a long way</p>

	<p>to improving safety. <u>These considerations are outside of this project scope, however, and cannot be asked to be included in this approval.</u> To the extent that such improvements may (or may not) affect the proposed plans, Staff suggests that such changes would be minor and should be allowed to be approved by Staff. If major changes are proposed- Staff, of course, would bring the amendment back to the UDC and CPC for their approval.</p> <p><b>Staff recommends APPROVAL with recommended conditions.</b></p>
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## Urban Design Guidelines and Master Plan

	Text	Staff Analysis
<b>Master Plan</b>		
	<p><b>P.70: Future Land Use Designation: Industrial</b>  <i>Primary Uses: Industrial and open space.</i>  <i>Secondary Uses: Retail/office/personal service.</i></p>	<p>The application is an expansion of the exiting use. And the current/proposed use are substantially consistent with the allowed non-governmental uses onsite.</p>
<b>Big Moves: Realign City Facilities</b>	<p><i>Vision: Equity, Sustainability, and Beauty</i>  <i>Sustainability - City facilities can help showcase green building features.</i>  <i>Thriving Environment: City-owned buildings and land are opportunities for energy retrofits and green infrastructure to further Goals 15 and 16, as well as locations for new parks, urban agriculture, and resiliency hubs to further Goal 17.</i></p>	<p><b>Big Moves: Realign City Facilities</b>  The building will be designed to qualify for LEED Silver.</p>
	<p><b>Objective 17.7</b> Increase and enhance biodiversity</p> <p><i>b. Increase the prevalence of native plant species and plants for healthy pollinator communities at public facilities</i></p> <p><i>c. Implement the RVA Clean Water strategy to use 80% native plants in new landscaping at public facilities by 2023.</i></p> <p><i>g. Encourage bird houses, bat houses, and other structures that provide important and safe shelters for wildlife.</i></p> <p><b>Objective 17.8</b> Reduce light pollution.</p> <p><i>b. Install hooded light fixtures on public rights-of-way and buildings to reduce light pollution and reduce effect on nocturnal species.</i></p>	<p><b>Master Plan Objectives</b>  Native species are proposed for use in landscaping.  <u>Outdoor lighting be sensitive to light pollution or dark-skies compliant.</u></p>
<b>Urban Design Guidelines</b>		

<p><b>LANDSCAPING – Page 10</b></p>	<p><i>Plantings should be compatible with and relate to surrounding landscapes. Site landscaping should complement and soften new construction and building architecture. Plant materials should create spaces by providing walls and canopies in outdoor areas. In addition, landscaping should provide a sense of scale and seasonal interest. Species diversity, plant selection, and long term maintenance should be considered.</i></p>	<p><b>LANDSCAPING</b></p> <p>A landscaping plan is provided with several trees and flower beds as well as maintain existing trees along the street.</p>
<p><b>BUILDING PROPORTION – Page 15</b></p>	<p><i>Building massing should be compatible with the surrounding uses; although, important public buildings may require larger sizes. Visual impact can be minimized via design techniques such as setbacks or varying surface and roof planes. Height and roof design should be sensitive to surrounding uses, but may be taller on corners to frame access to the block.</i></p>	<p><b>Architecture</b></p> <p>The proposed architecture is consistent with civic architecture throughout the City and consistent with the many different examples of massing throughout the Oliver Hill Way corridor.</p>
<p><b>FAÇADE DESIGN. – Page 18</b></p>	<p><i>Building materials should be compatible with surrounding uses and not cause visual confusion by using numerous different materials on a single façade. Material quality and design should complement those on the existing building and be sufficiently durable and sustainable.</i></p> <p><i>Building design should take cues from the surrounding area. An easily recognizable, inviting and accessible entrance should be included and ground level design should be comfortable for the pedestrian. Large expanses of blank or undifferentiated wall are not appropriate building elevations, especially at the street level. Access for users of differing mobilities should be included; handicap ramps or other handicap considerations should be incorporated into the façade design and to a high design quality.</i></p>	<p>The proposed architecture is consistent with civic architecture throughout the City and consistent with the many different examples of architecture throughout the Oliver Hill Way corridor.</p>