



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2016-133: To amend and reordain Ord. No. 80-103-90, adopted Jun. 16, 1980, as previously amended by Ord. No. 2003-26-24, adopted Feb. 10, 2003, and Ord. No. 2007-264-231, adopted Oct. 22, 2007, which authorized the expansion of the existing day nursery, in the property known as 1617 Monument Avenue, to authorize expansion of the existing day nursery and accessory parking in the property known as 1617 Monument Avenue, 1627 Monument Avenue, and 1627 Rear Monument Avenue, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: May 16, 2016

PETITIONER

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Roth Doner Jackson Gibbons Conclin, PLC

LOCATION

1617 Monument Avenue
1627 Monument Avenue
1627 Rear Monument Avenue

PURPOSE

To amend and reordain Ord. No. 80-103-90, adopted Jun. 16, 1980, as previously amended by Ord. No. 2003-26-24, adopted Feb. 10, 2003, and Ord. No. 2007-264-231, adopted Oct. 22, 2007, which authorized the expansion of the existing day nursery, in the property known as 1617 Monument Avenue, to authorize expansion of the existing day nursery and accessory parking in the property known as 1617 Monument Avenue, 1627 Monument Avenue, and 1627 Rear Monument Avenue, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The current special use permit encumbers a 0.448 acre (19,514 SF) parcel of land (1617 Monument Avenue) improved with a three story building constructed, per tax assessment records, in 1910, an 18 space surface parking area, and an outdoor play area consisting of approximately 2,500 SF. The special use permit also encumbers a portion of 1627 Rear Monument Avenue, which is improved with a surface parking area and is provided access via an alley known as Lombardy Place.

If amended, the special use permit would be expanded to include an adjacent 0.517 acre (22,521 SF) parcel of land (1627 Monument Avenue) improved with a church constructed, per tax assessment records, in 1920. Both 1617 and 1627 Monument Avenue have frontage on Monument Avenue and the alley Lombardy Place, between North Allen Avenue and North Lombardy Street, in The Fan neighborhood of the Near West planning district. 1617 and 1627 Monument Avenue are also located within the Monument Avenue City Old & Historic District.

Currently, the first floor and a portion of the third floor of 1617 Monument Avenue are authorized for day nursery use with a maximum of 71 children (45 on the first floor; 26 on the third floor) and eight staff members; the second floor and remaining portion of the third floor are authorized for specified office uses.

The amendment to the special use permit would authorize the first floor of 1617 Monument Avenue and portions of the basement, first, and second floors of 1627 Monument Avenue for day nursery use with a maximum of 136 children (40 at 1617 Monument Avenue; 96 at 1627 Monument Avenue) and a sufficient number of staff members as required by the Virginia Department of Social Services (approximately 34). The second and third floors of 1617 Monument would be authorized for specified office uses.

The expanded day nursery use would not meet the zoning standards for such a use, particularly the square footage of outdoor play area per child provided on the site. A special use permit amendment is therefore required.

Staff finds that the proposed amendment would reduce the day nursery use at 1617 Monument Avenue and re-establish office use therein as authorized by the previous special use permit. The expansion of the day nursery into the church building at 1627 Monument Avenue would be an accessory use supported by the underlying zoning.

Staff further finds the outdoor play area would continue to be buffered from adjacent residential uses by church facilities to the east and west, a mid-block surface parking area to the south and the Monument Avenue right-of-way to the north. Given the restrictions on the occupancy of the play area, it is adequate to accommodate the day care expansion.

Staff further finds that the proposed expansion should not cause an undue burden on the existing supply of on-street parking. Moreover, the hours of operation of the office and day nursery will continue to be limited to avoid conflicts with residential uses.

Staff further finds that with the conditions of the ordinance, the safeguards contained within the City Charter, relative to the granting of special use permits, are met. Staff therefore recommends approval of the proposed special use permit amendment.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject property consists of: 1. A 0.448 acre (19,514 SF) parcel of land (1617 Monument Avenue) improved with a three story building constructed, per tax assessment records, in 1910, an 18 space surface parking area, and an outdoor play area consisting of approximately 2,500 SF, 2. A portion of 1627 Rear Monument Avenue, which is improved with a surface parking area and is provided access via an alley known as Lombardy Place, and 3. A 0.517 acre (22,521 SF) parcel of land (1627 Monument Avenue) improved with a church constructed, per tax assessment records, in 1920.

Proposed Use of the Property

The amendment to the special use permit would authorize the first floor of 1617 Monument Avenue and portions of the basement, first, and second floors of 1627 Monument Avenue for day nursery use with a maximum of 136 children (40 at 1617 Monument Avenue; 96 at 1627 Monument Avenue) and a sufficient number of staff members as required by the Virginia Department of Social Services (approximately 34). The second and third floors of 1617 Monument would be authorized for specified office uses.

Master Plan

The City of Richmond's Master Plan recommends Single-family (Medium Density) land use for the property. The Master Plan defines the primary uses for this category as single family and two family detached and attached dwellings at densities of 8 to 20 units per acre, and includes residential support uses such as schools, places of worship, and neighborhood parks, among others (p. 133).

Zoning & Ordinance Conditions

The properties are zoned in the R-6 – Single-Family Attached Residential District and the day nursery use does not meet the zoning standards for such a use in the R-6 district. As referenced above, 1617 Monument Avenue is subject to a special use permit (Ordinance No. 2007-264-231) which authorized a previous expansion of the day nursery use.

The special use permit amendment would impose conditions on the property, including:

Authorization of the first floor of 1617 Monument Avenue and portions of the basement, first, and second floors of 1627 Monument Avenue for day nursery use with a maximum of 136 children (40 at 1617 Monument Avenue; 96 at 1627 Monument Avenue) and a sufficient number of staff members as required by the Virginia Department of Social Services. The second and third floors of 1617 Monument would be authorized for specified office uses.

17 off-street parking spaces shall be provided at 1617 Monument Avenue and 23 off-street overflow parking spaces at 1627 Rear Monument Avenue.

The use of the outdoor play area shall be limited to a maximum of 30 children at a time.

The day nursery hours of operation open to the public shall be limited to 6:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m., Monday through Friday. The office hours of operation open to the public shall be limited to 8:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., Monday through Saturday.

The day nursery shall be overseen by the Virginia Department of Social Services.

There shall be no exterior alterations or additions to the existing building and parking area except for those shown on the Plans and except for normal repair and maintenance. Approval of this special use shall not eliminate the requirements for certificates of appropriateness, issued by the Commission of Architectural Review, for any improvements made to the properties.

Facilities for the collection of refuse and recycling items shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of the Department of Public Works and the screening and enclosure standards of the Zoning Ordinance.

Existing landscaping and proposed site improvements including an outdoor play area shall be retained or provided, substantially as shown on the Plans and as approved by the Commission of Architectural Review.

Identification of the premises shall be limited to one sign, not exceeding six square feet in area, mounted flat on a vertical surface of the western or southern side of the building.

Surrounding Area

All surrounding properties are located within the same R-6 zoning district as the subject property. A mix of single-, two-, and multi-family residential land uses are present in the area, with commercial, office, mixed-use, and institutional land uses being present as well.

Neighborhood Participation

Letters from the Fan District Association and Monument Avenue Preservation Society were received, indicating no position has been taken regarding the proposed amendment.

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