



January 23, 2019

Mr. Mark Olinger, Director  
Department of Planning & Development Review  
900 East Broad Street, Suite 511  
Richmond, VA 23219  
[Mark.Olinger@richmondgov.com](mailto:Mark.Olinger@richmondgov.com)

RE: Applicant's Report for Rezoning of 500 and 512 Hull Street

Dear Mr. Olinger,

Please accept this letter as the Applicant's Report for the Rezoning application for 500 and 512 Hull Street from the B-7 Mixed-use Business zoning district to the B-4 Central Business zoning district. With this application, Port RVA LLC and 512 Hull Street LLC are petitioning the City Council to rezone the two properties from the existing zoning regulations, which restrict the development of the existing surface parking at 512 Hull Street. This application proposes to zone the properties into the B-4 district. This will allow for the development of the existing surface parking to a mix of uses under the urban mixed-use form-based regulations found in the B-4 district.

#### *Properties*

The proposed rezoning would rezone two properties fronting on Hull Street between E 5<sup>th</sup> and E 6<sup>th</sup> Streets. The properties together are comprised of 1.42 acres. 500 Hull Street is improved with a mixed-use development containing ground floor commercial uses, covered parking and 102 dwelling units constructed in 2015/2016. During approval, Port RVA added residential units along 5<sup>th</sup> Street, which necessitated the relocation of the required parking under the B-7 regulations to be placed on the adjacent lot at 512 Hull Street. This encumbered that property with 34 surface parking spaces and the proposed rezoning would unencumber 512 Hull Street and allow the surface parking lot to be developed with a vibrant, mixed-use project. The 512 Hull Street is also improved with other accessory uses to the development at 500 Hull, including a pool and trash enclosure, which would continue to be provided in a shared arrangement with any future development.

#### *Zoning Regulations & Background*

The properties are currently located in B-7 Mixed Use Business zoning district. 500 Hull Street was developed in 2015/2016 under the existing B-7 district with accessory uses located at 512 Hull Street. In 2017, City Council authorized a special use permit for a mixed-use development at 512 Hull Street. This special use permit specifically required 215 on-site parking spaces (34 for Port RVA and 181 for 512 Hull Street) to be located in a structured parking deck. Additionally, the special use permit required the development to substantially comply with specific plans and to begin with the application of a building permit by September 11, 2019.

The owner's intention is to redevelop the surface parking area at 512 Hull Street with a mixed-use development consistent with what was approved via the special use permit and the B-4 regulations. The mixed-use development would continue to share parking and amenities with the existing development at 500 Hull Street.

In 2009 the City included Manchester in the Downtown Plan for the first time and subsequently rezoned the subject and surrounding properties. This is when the B-7 was put in place on the 500 block of Hull Street and adjacent properties. The B-7 district is a mixed-use industrial district and was intended to be a transitional district that would slowly be replaced as the area transitioned from an industrial neighborhood to more of a mixed-use residential neighborhood. This transition has occurred in much of Manchester including the properties across Hull Street that have been rezoned to B-5 and the properties to the south and east that have all been rezoned to B-4.

This application requests the removal of the transitional B-7 district so that these properties will be treated like the surrounding properties in terms of parking requirements, letting the market determine how much parking is desirable. The inclusion of the properties to the B-4 Central Business district will allow for the redevelopment of the surface parking areas within the form-based regulations of the B-4 district. This will allow for a more vibrant neighborhood and streetscape along these four blocks in Manchester.

#### *Master Plan / Downtown Plan*

The properties were included in the 2009 Downtown Plan, which recommends that they be developed consistent with the Urban Center Character Area. The Urban Center Character Area calls for higher density, mixed-use development, typically arranged on a fine-grained street network, with wide sidewalks, regular tree planting, and minimal setbacks.

Specifically addressing Manchester, the Downtown Plan states, "Manchester will benefit greatly from new construction and the infill of its many vacant properties. Such infill will introduce new energy to the district by increasing the residential population, repairing the streetscape, and enhancing safety by providing 'eyes on the street'." (page 4.33)

The more recently developed Riverfront Plan designates the portion of the subject properties included in the plan for future development, stating, "The Plan anticipates incremental redevelopment of under-utilized parcels and languishing former industrial sites. Development strategies should favor mixed use, with an emphasis on street level retail, where appropriate. The fundamental emphasis of redevelopment along the Riverfront is to intensify pedestrian activity at street level through infill development with sufficient density to be an attractor and destination of activity. Greater density reinforces urban character, provides for an increase in pedestrian activity, resulting in a safer and more vibrant city." (p. 11).

The type of development and mix of uses that would be permitted under the proposed B-4 district is consistent with the recommendations found for the area in the Downtown Plan and the density supported by the Riverfront Plan.

*City Charter Conditions*

Given the recommendations in the City's Downtown Plan, we trust that you will agree with us that the development of the site would be better suited under the regulations in the B-4 Central Business district and that the rezoning meets the City Charter considerations to be observed in the alteration of zoning regulations.

Thank you for your consideration of this application. Please feel free to contact me at [lory@markhamplanning.com](mailto:lory@markhamplanning.com) or (804) 248-2561 if you have any questions or require additional materials to process the application.

Very Truly Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Lory Markham', written in a cursive style.

Lory Markham

Enclosures

cc: The Honorable Ellen Robertson  
Matthew Ebinger, Secretary to the City Planning Commission