



## CITY OF RICHMOND

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

**Ord. No. 2014-121:** To authorize the special use of the property known as 1650 Overbrook Road for the purpose of authorizing multifamily dwellings with up to two hundred and five (205) dwelling units and other site amenities, upon certain terms and conditions.

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**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Land Use Administration  
**Date:** November 3, 2014

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#### **PETITIONER**

H. L. Salomonsky  
Overbrook LLC  
1553 E. Main St., Richmond, VA 23219

#### **LOCATION**

1650 Overbrook Road

#### **PURPOSE**

To authorize the special use of the property known as 1650 Overbrook Road for the purpose of authorizing multifamily dwellings with up to two hundred and five (205) dwelling units and other site amenities, upon certain terms and conditions.

#### **SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

The subject property is an improved lot of 6.44 acres located on the block bounded by Overbrook Road to the south, Hermitage Road to the west, and a private alley running the length of the northern boundary. The primary masonry structure has a building footprint of 110,851 square feet and varies in building height between approximately 18 feet and 35 feet. A second masonry structure is located at the corner of Overbrook Road and Hermitage Road and it has a building footprint of 2,392 square feet. Located next to this building is one-story metal building 1,532 square feet in size.

The larger building was used historically as an old tobacco warehouse. The applicant proposes developing up to 205 dwelling units and providing 282 total parking spaces. Site amenities include a swimming pool and an outdoor recreation area. In addition, the proposed ordinance authorizes office uses accessory to multi-family and principal uses permitted in the B-6 Mixed-Use District to allow the one-story masonry building at the corner of Overbrook Road and Hermitage Road to be used as a leasing office. The metal building would be removed.

The property is currently zoned M-1 Light Industrial, which does not permit the proposed multifamily use of the property. The City of Richmond's Master Plan, adopted in 2001, also designates the subject property for "industrial" development. The property has most recently been used for furniture sales.

Staff notes that the proposal does address the City's goal of creating new higher quality housing targeted toward market rate rentals as is evidenced by the unit sizes and amenities. Staff notes that, given the large land area associated with the project, the resulting density is lesser than many similar adaptive re-use projects that have received approval. This proposal would also provide adequate on-site parking for the proposed use and significant right-of-way and site improvements, including the installation of sidewalks and street trees along Overbrook.

Furthermore, the proposal uses architectural designs that ensures all dwelling units have windows and access to natural light as necessary to meet the Planning Commission's Windowless Dwelling Unit Resolution.

The renovation of the Todd Ham building and the Stove Works buildings at the corner of Hermitage and Leigh Streets indicates that this location is a desirable alternative to nearby residential areas such as Carver and the Fan District. These properties, also zoned industrial and designated by the Master Plan as Industrial, were approved by special use permit. The proposed residential use at 1650 Overbrook Road is consistent with these previously approved and similarly situated building renovations in the surrounding area.

Staff finds that the City Charter conditions relative to the granting of special use permits were found to have been met in the approval of the similarly situated properties and would also be met for the subject property. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the special use permit request.

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## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **Site Description**

The subject property is an improved lot of 6.44 acres located on the block bounded by Overbrook Road to the south, Hermitage Road to the west, and a private alley running the length of the northern boundary. The primary masonry structure has a building footprint of 110,851 square feet and varies in building height between approximately 18 feet and 35 feet. A second masonry structure is located at the corner of Overbrook Road and Hermitage Road and it has a building footprint of 2,392 square feet. Located next to this building is one-story metal building 1,532 square feet in size.

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

The larger building was used historically as an old tobacco warehouse. The applicant proposes developing up to 205 dwelling units and providing 282 total parking spaces. Site amenities include a swimming pool and an outdoor recreation area. The one-story masonry building at the corner of Overbrook Road and Hermitage Road is designated to be used as a leasing office. The metal building would be removed.

## **Master Plan**

The City of Richmond's Master Plan, adopted in 2001, also designates the subject property for "industrial" development. In keeping with the industrial zoning and Master Plan land use designation, the property has most recently been used for furniture sales.

For the Near West Planning District, The Master Plan states that "There are a number of vacant industrial and commercial properties within the District, many of which are within or adjacent to residential neighborhoods. Creative reuse strategies for these buildings or sites are needed" (p. 229).

## **Zoning & Ordinance Conditions**

The property is currently zoned M-1 Light Industrial, which does not permit the proposed multifamily use of the property. The M-1 District prohibits conversion of an existing building to residential use.

The proposed development would have at least one parking space per dwelling unit. No loading spaces are required for dwelling uses in the M-1 District.

The entire parking lot, including that portion on the north side of the property abutting a private alley, is proposed to contain landscaped islands planted with trees. The placement of landscaped islands relative to the number of parking spaces exceeds Zoning Code requirements.

The project exceeds the landscaping requirements of the district. On the Overbrook Road side of the building, the applicant proposes a ten foot (10') wide planter located within the property line separating the entire parking lot, (except for egress points), from a new five foot (5') wide concrete sidewalk to be located in the public right-of way and which abuts a seven foot (7') wide swath of land, also in the public right-of way, containing new street trees planted forty feet (40') apart to be located between the sidewalk and the street along its entire length.

On the Hermitage Road side of the building, landscaping also exceeds that required in the M-1 District by providing buffers planted with street trees ranging in width from ten feet (10') to twenty-three feet (23').

On the Hardy Street side of the building, a wide amenity area is proposed between the parking lot and the street measuring, in an arch, from twenty-eight feet (28') in width to ninety-five feet (95') in width.

The proposed renovated structure will be approximately thirty-four feet (34') in height to the parapet which is under the forty-five foot (45') height allowance for the M-1 District.

The proposed ordinance authorizes office uses accessory to multi-family and principal uses permitted in the B-6 Mixed-Use District to allow the one-story masonry building at the corner of Overbrook Road and Hermitage Road to be used as a leasing office. The metal building would be removed.

**Surrounding Area**

The properties to the north across a private alley and to the east is zoned M-1 Light Industrial and are occupied by the Richmond SPCA, warehousing, and general offices. The properties to the south across Overbrook Road are zoned M-2 Heavy Industrial District and are occupied by general offices, warehousing, Hardywood Brewery, Hermitage Investment Group, and A. H. Harris and Sons, a construction supply company. The property to the west, across Hermitage Road is zoned M-2 and is occupied by the Richmond Ambulance Authority.

**Neighborhood Participation**

Staff has contacted 2nd District Council Representative, Charles Samuels and has received no letters of support. Staff has received one letter of opposition from Mr. Charles Pool.

**Staff Contact:** Willy Thompson, Senior Planner, (804) 646-5734