



## CITY OF RICHMOND

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

**Ord. No. 2016-261:** To authorize the special use of a portion of the property known as 1407 Cummings Drive for the purpose of a residential use with up to 40 units accessory to a vocational school and other permitted principal uses on the property, upon certain terms and conditions.

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**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Land Use Administration  
**Date:** November 7, 2016

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#### **PETITIONER**

Basim Mansour c/o William J. Pantele, Esq.

#### **LOCATION**

1407 Cummings Drive

#### **PURPOSE**

To authorize residential use with up to 40 units accessory to a vocational school and other permitted principal uses at 1407 Cummings Drive.

#### **SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

The subject property consists of a 9.25 acre parcel of land improved with approximately 273,000 square feet of industrial buildings containing call center and warehouse/distribution uses. The applicant is proposing to redevelop the approximately 20,000 sf, six story tower structure on the Cummings Road frontage into an accessory residential facility to serve the student enrolled in the vocational school. The residential facility is not permitted in the M-1 district.

The City of Richmond's Master Plan recommends industrial land use for the property. The Master Plan defines the primary uses for this category as "a wide variety of manufacturing, processing, research and development, warehousing, distribution office warehouse and service uses. Office, retail and other uses that complement industrial areas are often secondary support uses" (p. 135).

Staff finds that with the ordinance conditions the safeguards contained within the City Charter, relative to the granting of Special Use Permits, are met. Specifically, staff finds that the proposed use would not be detrimental to the general welfare of the community involved and would not create congestion in the streets in the area involved. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the special use permit request.

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## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **Site Description**

The subject property consists of a 9.25 acre parcel of land improved with approximately 273,000 square feet of industrial buildings containing call center and warehouse/distribution uses. The property is located in The Diamond neighborhood of the Near West planning district and is bound by Interstate 95/64, Cummings Drive, and Durham Street. There is a six story tower containing approximately 20,000 of the total and fronts on Cummings Drive.

Michael and Sons Services, Inc. currently operates a 15,000 sf central warehouse and distribution facility, and a 10,000 sf call center for 24/7 service calls. Additionally, other warehouse and distribution users and a third-party, unrelated call center occupy a further 185,000 sf of the main former manufacturing facility.

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

The applicant proposes the creation of a professional vocational school, a use permitted by-right in M-1 district. This school will occupy 19,000 sf in the remaining bay of the main warehouse structure, and will be used to train and hone the skills of the students through four distinct classroom areas. The vocational school program will include a twelve (12) week regimen of attending classes and labs at the school, supplemented by six (6) weeks of off-site field training. The design of the program is to qualify the students for Commonwealth of Virginia DPOR "Journeyman" status.

The applicant is proposing to redevelop the approximately 20,000 sf, six story tower structure on the Cummings Road frontage into an accessory residential facility to serve the student enrolled in the vocational school. The residential facility is not permitted in the M-1 district. Floors 1-4 are planned to contain 8 dormitory-style units on each floor, with two bedrooms in each unit, for a total of this style of 32 units and 64 beds. Each of floors 5 and 6 are planned to contain 4 apartments, consisting of three 1 bedroom units and one 2 bedroom unit, for a total of this style of 8 units and 10 beds. In the aggregate, there would be 40 units and 74 beds.

### **Master Plan**

The City of Richmond's Master Plan recommends industrial land use for the property. The Master Plan defines the primary uses for this category as "a wide variety of manufacturing, processing, research and development, warehousing, distribution office warehouse and service uses. Office, retail and other uses that complement industrial areas are often secondary support uses" (p. 135).

### **Zoning & Ordinance Conditions**

The property is located in the M-1 Light Industrial zoning district, which does not permit the proposed residential uses. The special use permit would authorize the following use under the following conditions:

A residential use with up to 40 units accessory to a vocational school and other permitted principal uses on the Property and shall be located within the six-story tower portion of the existing building located on the Property. The first through the fourth floors shall consist of a residential use in the form of a dormitory with a capacity of no more than 16 beds per floor. The fifth and sixth floors shall consist of a multifamily dwelling containing no more than eight dwelling units, substantially as shown on the Plans.

1. The residential uses shall not be available to the general public and shall only be available to students of a vocational school located on the Property and persons directly related to the business or operation of other permitted principal uses on the Property. Residence by students shall only take place for the duration of programs of the vocational school, and residence by persons directly related to the business or operation of other permitted principal uses shall only take place for periods of no more than one week.
2. The residential uses shall be served by no fewer than 18 parking spaces located on the Property or within a radius of 500 feet.
3. All mechanical equipment serving the Special Use shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.

### **Surrounding Area**

The subject property and all adjacent properties are within the same M-1 Light Industrial Zoning District that encompasses much of the area. Industrial land use predominates the area.

### **Neighborhood Participation**

Staff has received two letters of support and no letters of opposition regarding this request.

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