



December 27, 2017

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 Special Use Permit Application at 2318 Grove Avenue (Updated)

Dear Mr. Olinger,

Please accept this letter as the Applicant's Report for the Special Use Permit (SUP) application for 2318 Grove Avenue. With this application, Joe Cafarella, owner of Ms. Babs' Day Nursery, is petitioning the City Council for authorization to use their property at 2318 Grove Avenue for the purposes of operating a day nursery use. Currently, the R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential zoning district does not permit a day nursery use on this property.

#### *Site*

The property is located north of Grove Avenue on the block bounded by North Stafford Avenue to the west and Strawberry Street to the east. Directly across Grove Avenue to the south is the existing Ms. Babs' Day Nursery, which received a special use permit in 2014 (Ord. No. 2014-222-204) to expand the nonconforming day nursery. This request is to expand the existing day nursery to include the property at 2318 Grove Avenue. The property at 2318 Grove Avenue is comprised of .101 acres (4421 square feet). The existing building, constructed in 1922, is a two-story residential structure that has been historically used as a two-family dwelling. The building has approximately 2,876 square feet in finished floor area and a basement that 1,418 square feet in area. There is a detached garage in the rear that is approximately 500 square feet in size.

#### *Proposal*

The applicant proposes to expand the existing operations of Ms. Babs' Day Nursery by using the building at 2318 Grove Avenue. The use of this property would be for a 16-month to 26-month old toddler classroom downstairs and a pre-k class room upstairs for a maximum of 30 children. The basement would be used as an arts and ceramics room. The rear of the property, including the garage would be used for outdoor and recreational space.

The current Ms. Babs' Day Nursery has approximately 5000 square feet, which holds up to 75 children. Current enrollment is around 60-65 students for the purposes of maintaining lower teacher to student ratios. The infant and pre-k classes are experiencing a significant lack of space for the school's desired programming. By moving part of the toddler class and entire pre-k class into 2318 Grove Avenue, Ms. Babs' would be able to maintain their excellent quality of care and education built on the foundations of low teacher to student ratios and low-stress teaching environments. The total number of

students affiliated with Ms. Babs' Day Nursery (2319 and 2318 Grove Avenue) would be approximately 80 to 85. children. There would be 6 teachers affiliated with the new operations at 2318 Grove Avenue, though some of these teachers would float between both 2319 and 2318 Grove Ave..

#### *Zoning and Ordinance Conditions*

The zoning is R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential, which does not permit the proposed day nursery use. The applicant will provide adequate outdoor play area per child and the outdoor play area will be screened by a continuous opaque fence of at least four feet in height. The total number of employees working at 2318 Grove Avenue would be 6. The applicant respectfully request that the 3 parking spaces normally required be waived by the special use permit ordinance.

#### *Master Plan*

The City's 2001 Master Plan recommends Single-Family (medium density) for the property, which may include single and two-family dwellings with densities up to 20 units per acre. It also includes residential support uses such as schools, places of worship, neighborhood parks and recreation facilities, and limited public and semi-public uses. The property is currently adjoined by residential uses to the west and east and sits across from the existing Ms. Babs' Day Nursery. One block to the north is the location of William Fox Elementary School and two blocks to the west is North Robinson Street which is occupied by a mix of commercial uses, including the Retreat Doctors Hospital and a number of restaurants and office uses. The Master Plan encourages maintaining existing values in the near west end area and Ms. Babs' has demonstrated its tremendous value to the neighborhood. Allowing for the expanded use of Ms. Babs' at 2318 Grove Avenue would further enhance that value and only add to the numerous neighborhood amenities afforded to the citizens of the Fan District.

#### *City Charter Conditions*

This is an ideal opportunity in the City's Near West End area to utilize a property in need of much repair for the community's benefit. We trust that you will agree with us that this day nursery use meets the City Charter criteria as the project will not (i) be detrimental to the safety, health, morals and general welfare of the community involved; (ii) tend to create congestion in streets, roads, alleys and other public ways and places in the area involved; (iii) create hazards from fire, panic or other dangers; (iv) tend to overcrowding of land and cause an undue concentration of population; (v) adversely affect or interfere with public or private schools, parks, playgrounds, water supplies, sewage disposal, transportation or other public requirements, conveniences and improvements; or (vi) interfere with adequate light and air.

Thank you for your consideration of this application. Please feel free to contact me at [willy.thompson@markhamplanning.com](mailto:willy.thompson@markhamplanning.com) or (540) 383-4320 if you have any questions or require additional materials to process the application.

Very Truly Yours,  
Willy Thompson, AICP

Enclosures

cc: The Honorable Kimberly Gray  
Matthew Ebinger, Secretary to the City Planning Commission

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