



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2024-311: To authorize the special use of property known as 5790 Hull Street Road for the purpose of (i) an automotive repair and automotive parts sales facility and (ii) a grocery, convenience, and specialty food store, upon certain terms and conditions, and to repeal Ord. No. 89-246-231, adopted Sept. 11, 1989, and all amendatory ordinances thereto. (9th District).

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: December 3, 2024

PETITIONER

MCA Ventures, LLC

LOCATION

5790 Hull Street Road

PURPOSE

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to repeal Ord. No. 89-246-23, which authorized an automotive repair and automotive parts sales facility. This new special use permit would continue to allow an automotive repair and automotive parts sales facility, and would also permit the operation of a convenience store in the existing front office space. Neither the existing automotive use nor the convenience store is a permitted use within the RO-1 Residential Office. Therefore, a Special Use Permit is requested to permit the proposed uses.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposal is consistent with recommendations of the Richmond 300 Master Plan for corridor mixed-uses, which lists retail and personal services as appropriate primary uses.

Staff finds that the proposed use is consistent with the Richmond 300 Master and is compatible with other uses along the corridor.

Staff concludes that the proposed ordinance conditions substantially satisfy the safeguards established in the City Charter concerning the granting of Special Use Permits. Specifically, staff finds that the proposed special 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 requested Special Use Permit.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The property is in the Swanson neighborhood on the northern side of Hull Street Road. The property contains 2.67 acres and is improved with a 9,763 square foot commercial structure that houses an automotive service business.

Proposed Use of the Property

A convenience store, in addition to the existing automotive use.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Corridor Mixed-Use, which is "found along major commercial corridors and envisioned to provide for medium-to-medium high-density pedestrian and transit-oriented development.

Development Style: The building size, density, and zoning districts for these areas may vary significantly depending on historical densities and neighborhood characteristics. Future development should generally complement existing context. Uses may be mixed horizontally in several buildings on a block or vertically within the same building. Developments continue introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity.

Ground Floor: Ground floor uses engage with, and enliven, the street. Monolithic walls are discouraged, while windows, doors, storefronts, and other features that allow transparency and interaction between building and street are encouraged. Active commercial ground floor uses are required on street-oriented commercial frontage.

Mobility: Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated. Bike parking is provided. Driveway entrances are required to be off alleys whenever possible; new driveways are prohibited on priority and principal streets. Parking areas are located within the structure and to the rear of buildings and require screening; shared parking requirements are encouraged.

Intensity: Buildings generally ranging from two to ten stories, based on street widths, and depending on the historic context and stepping down in height adjacent to residential areas. New buildings that are taller than historical buildings should step back from the build-to line after matching the height of the predominant cornice line of the block.

Primary Uses: Retail/office/personal service, multi-family residential, cultural, and open space.

Secondary Uses: Single-family houses, institutional, and government."

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

Zoning Administration provided the following comments:

The proposed use of the front ground floor of the existing building is as a convenience store. Sec. 30-424.1. – Convenience stores are not a permitted use in the RO-1 district. RO-1 Feature Requirements: No exterior construction is proposed. Additional Comments: While the auto repair business already authorized is a more intense use than a grocery/convenience store, adding a second business will increase traffic further. A limitation on hours of operation from the grocery/convenience store should be considered, such as not to be operated between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.

Staff recommends the approval of the requested special use permit with the following conditions:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as (i) an automotive repair and automotive parts sales facility and (ii) a grocery, convenience, and specialty food store.
- The grocery, convenience, and specialty food store shall be located within the existing structure, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- The grocery, convenience, and specialty food store shall not operate between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m.
- All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.

Surrounding Area

The current zoning for the subject property is RO-1 Residential Office. The surrounding properties on Hull Street Road contain commercial uses. The rear of the property abuts a single-family detached dwelling.

Neighborhood Participation

The property is not located within an area represented by a civic association. Letters of notification have been sent to nearby property owners, and a sign noting this request was placed on the property. To date, staff has not received any public comment on this request.

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