



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

PCR 2014-009: To authorize a Preliminary Community Unit Plan permitting the development of a residential community not to exceed three hundred (300) dwelling units on approximately 21.76 acres of land located at 1501 and 1611 North 31st Street, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: January 5, 2015

PETITIONER

Colleen BonnickLewis, The Community Builders, Inc.
Derek McDaniels, Northstar Development Advisors, LLC

PROEPRTY OWNER

City of Richmond

LOCATION

1501 and 1611 North 31st Street (the Old Armstrong High School site)

PURPOSE

To authorize a Preliminary Community Unit Plan permitting the development of a residential community not to exceed three hundred (300) dwelling units on approximately 21.76 acres of land located at 1501 and 1611 North 31st Street, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The subject properties are located in the North Church Hill neighborhood on North 31st Street between its intersections with Kuhn Street and Nine Mile Road. The properties are approximately 21.76 acres in area and are improved with the old Armstrong High School building, a stormwater detention basin and park facilities, including athletic fields, basketball courts, tennis courts and playground equipment.

The properties are located in the City's R-5 Single-Family Residential zoning district, which permits single-family development subject to meeting certain lot area, lot width and setback requirements. The proposed development would consist of a maximum of 300 dwelling units, open space and a community center. The dwelling units would be configured as single-family and multifamily dwellings. The single-family dwellings would not meet the lot area, lot width and setback requirements of the existing R-5 zoning district and the multifamily component is not a permitted use under the existing R-5 zoning district.

The proposed Preliminary Community Unit Plan (CUP) would allow the properties to be developed as single-family attached, single-family detached dwellings and multi-family dwellings. The proposed ordinance would require a minimum of 50 single-family dwellings and set a maximum 250 multi-family dwelling units to be developed on the properties. The

multifamily would be configured in three different building types; apartment buildings (max of 2 buildings and 110 units), stacked flats (max of 43 buildings and 86 units) and townhouses (minimum of 54, maximum of 80 buildings and units).

The Land Use Plan of the City of Richmond's Master Plan designates the subject properties for Public & Open Space land use. Primary uses in this land use category include "publicly owned and operated parks, recreation areas, open spaces, schools, libraries, cemeteries and other government and public service facilities (p. 135). This designation reflects how the properties are currently used. The proposal is primarily residential in character with a proposed density of approximately 14 units per acre.

The ordinance would require public street and infrastructure improvements to be made to serve the development. The residential lots would all be service by alleys and have parking accessed from the rear of the lots. On-street parking, curb, gutter, street trees and sidewalks would be required throughout the development.

Staff finds that the proposed pattern of development is consistent with the historical development pattern in North Church Hill, including the proposed setbacks, the provision of alleys, front porches and the street sections with sidewalks and on-street parking.

Staff also finds that the design, arrangement and character of the multifamily units as townhomes and stacked flats on bulk parcels is similar to that of the surrounding single-family development and allows for future subdivision to create single-family lots and the opportunity for home ownership.

Staff finds that the development proposed by the Preliminary Community Unit Plan will adequately safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the occupants of the adjoining and surrounding properties, will not unreasonably impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent properties, will not unreasonably increase congestion in streets and will not increase public danger from fire or otherwise unreasonably affect public safety and will not diminish or impair the established values of property in surrounding areas. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the proposed Preliminary Community Unit Plan.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject properties are located in the North Church Hill neighborhood on North 31st Street between its intersections with Kuhn Street and Nine Mile Road. The properties are approximately 21.76 acres in area and are improved with the old Armstrong High School building, a stormwater detention basin and park facilities, including athletic fields, basketball courts, tennis courts and playground equipment.

Proposed Use of the Property

The proposed Preliminary Community Unit Plan (CUP) would allow the properties to be developed with a maximum of 300 dwelling units, developed as single-family attached, single-family detached dwellings and multi-family dwellings substantially as depicted on the plans attached to the ordinance.

Master Plan

The Land Use Plan of the City of Richmond's Master Plan designates the subject properties for Public & Open Space land use. Primary uses in this land use category include "publicly owned and operated parks, recreation areas, open spaces, schools, libraries, cemeteries and other government and public service facilities (p. 135). This designation reflects how the properties are currently used. The proposal is primarily residential in character with a proposed density of approximately 14 units per acre.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The properties are located in the City's R-5 Single-Family Residential zoning district, which permits single-family development subject to meeting certain lot area, lot width and setback requirements. The proposed development would consist of a maximum of 300 dwelling units, open space and a community center. The dwelling units would be configured as single-family and multifamily dwellings. The single-family dwellings would not meet the lot area (6,000 sq. ft.), lot width (50') and setback (25' front yard) requirements of the existing R-5 zoning district and the multifamily component is not a permitted use under the existing R-5 zoning district.

The proposed ordinance would require a minimum of 50 single-family dwellings and set a maximum 250 multi-family dwelling units to be developed on the properties. The ordinance would allow the development to occur in phases as long as each phase includes a minimum of 16% of the units developed as single-family. The multifamily would be configured in three different building types and in no case would the total number of multifamily dwelling units exceed 250; apartment buildings (max of 2 buildings and 110 units), stacked flats (max of 43 buildings and 86 units) and townhouses (minimum of 54, maximum of 80 buildings and units). The number of units in the stacked flats may decrease and be replaced by units in townhouses; however, the number of overall multifamily units cannot be more than 250.

The ordinance would also authorize a management and leasing office with community meeting space on individual parcel at the entrance to the development along 31st Street. Open space would be provided in several locations throughout the development.

The standards for the different unit and building types would be as follows:

	Multifamily Building	Buildings on Bulk Lots	Single Family	Community Center
Minimum Lot Area	-	-	1600 sq. ft.	17,500 sq.ft.
Minimum Lot Area per Unit	-	1200 sq. ft.	1600 sq. ft	-
Maximum FAR	1.2	-	-	-
Minimum Yard Setback	Front: 10 ft. Side: 7 ft. Rear: 7 ft.	Front: 10 ft. Side: 6 ft. Rear: 20 ft.	Front: 10 ft. Side: 6 ft. Rear: 20 ft.	Front: 10 ft. Side: 6 ft. Rear: 20 ft.
Maximum Lot Coverage	70%	40%	55%	25%

Overall Max Height (limited to 2 stories along 31 st Street)	3 Stories maximum	3 Stories maximum	Principal: 3 Stories maximum	2 Stories maximum
Off Street Parking	0.4 space/du	1 space/du	2 space/du	None
Minimum dwelling Size	600 sq. ft.	600 sq. ft.	-	-

The ordinance would require public street and infrastructure improvements to be made to serve the development. The residential lots would all be service by alleys and have parking accessed from the rear of the lots. On-street parking, curb, gutter, street trees and sidewalks would be required throughout the development.

Surrounding Area

The surrounding properties to the east and west are also located in the R-5 zoning district. The properties to the west are occupied by single-family residential uses. Oakwood Cemetery is located to the east. The properties to the north along Nine Mile Road are located in the B-2 zoning district and are occupied by a mix of commercial uses. The properties to the south are located in the R-5 and R-53 zoning districts and are occupied by single-family residential uses.

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