



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2017-204: To authorize the special use of a portion of the property known as 1500 North Lombardy Street for the purpose of a freestanding sign, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: November 6, 2017

PETITIONER

David Gordon – Virginia Union University

LOCATION

1500 North Lombardy Street

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of a portion of the property known as 1500 North Lombardy Street for the purpose of a freestanding sign, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is proposing to construct a new freestanding sign on the campus of Virginia Union University, at the corner of Brook Road and North Lombardy Street. The sign exceeds the dimension requirements for freestanding signs in the I District, therefore a special use permit is required.

Staff finds that the proposal signage is a reasonable request for an established institutional use in the City.

Staff further 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.

Therefore staff recommends approval of the Special Use Permit request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The proposed monument sign is located in the Virginia Union University campus on the corner of Brook Road and North Lombardy Street. The subject property consists of an existing institution within a 27.2 acre parcel of land improved with approximately 14 buildings. The property is located in the Virginia Union neighborhood within the City's North Planning District.

Proposed Use of the Property

The applicant is proposing to construct a new freestanding sign.

Master Plan

The City of Richmond's current Master Plan designates the subject property for Institutional uses which include, "...places of worship, private schools, universities, museums, hospitals and other care facilities. Typically this land use category depicts larger scale uses, while small-scale uses of this type are incorporated within the predominant surrounding land use designations. Typical zoning classification that may accommodate this land use category: I-Institutional."(City of Richmond, Master Plan, p. 135)

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

This property is currently zoned I (Institutional).

Conditions will be imposed by the special use permit ordinance, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be a freestanding sign, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- The dimensions of the sign shall not exceed the dimensions shown on the Plans.
- Materials and colors for the freestanding sign shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.
- The freestanding sign shall be internally illuminated and shall not be an animated sign.

Surrounding Area

Adjacent and nearby properties include a broad range of zoning categories including M-1 (Light Industrial), B-3 (General Business), R-5 (Single Family Residential), and R-53 (Multi-Family Residential). The surrounding properties are a combination of medium and large tract light industrial uses with some small scale commercial properties along North Lombardy Street toward the intersection with Chamberlayne Avenue. The campus of Virginia Union University occupies much of Lombardy Street South towards Interstate 95.

Neighborhood Participation

No letters of support or opposition have been received from the community or neighboring property owners for this application.

Staff Contact: Jonathan Brown, PDR, Land Use Administration (646-5734)