



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2014-158: To authorize the special use of the property known as 6400 Jahnke Road for the purpose of authorizing certain identification signage, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: September 2, 2014

PETITIONER

Jeffrey Geiger
Hirschler Fleischer
PO Box 500, Richmond, VA 23218

LOCATION

6400 Jahnke Road

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 6400 Jahnke Road for the purpose of authorizing certain identification, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The subject property is located at 6400 Jahnke Road and is zoned R-2 Single-Family Residential District. The applicant proposes to construct a monument sign at the intersection of Jahnke Road and the proposed German School Road extended. The proposed sign will be approximately 11 feet wide and two feet in height with a masonry base approximately 30 feet wide and 6 feet in height. The sign will be accompanied by low growing landscaping and be externally illuminated.

The Richmond Master Plan designates this property as a Single-Family (Low Density) Housing Opportunity Area (HOA). "This designation indicates that the site is appropriate for residential development consistent with the underlying land use plan designation of single family residential. However, the HOA designation indicates that these specific sites are also appropriate for higher density residential development, provided that specific objectives and conditions described for each location can be met" (p.212). General objectives required under the HOA are access with minimal impact, objective design review, and adequate buffering to lower density residential neighborhoods. More specifically, this particular HOA allows for higher densities if, "additional open space or protection of some of the natural environment can be provided" (p.212).

The proposed sign is considered off-premises signage, which is not permitted in the existing R-2 zoning. It is also not permitted in proposed R-53 zoning that the owner is requesting as part of a separate rezoning application. Off-premises signage or billboards are not consistent with the Master Plan's single-family land use designation and would fail to contribute to the convenient, attractive, and harmonious community, the sign ordinance intends.

Staff finds that the City Charter conditions relative to the granting of special use permits has not been met. Therefore, staff recommends denial of the special use permit request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject property is located at 6400 Jahnke Road and is zoned R-2 Single-Family Residential District.

Proposed Use of the Property

The applicant proposes to construct a monument sign at the intersection of Jahnke Road and the proposed German School Road extended. The proposed sign will be approximately 11 feet wide and two feet in height with a masonry base approximately 30 feet wide and 6 feet in height. The sign will be accompanied by low growing landscaping and be externally illuminated.

Master Plan

The Richmond Master Plan designates this property as a Single-Family (Low Density) Housing Opportunity Area (HOA). "This designation indicates that the site is appropriate for residential development consistent with the underlying land use plan designation of single family residential. However, the HOA designation indicates that these specific sites are also appropriate for higher density residential development, provided that specific objectives and conditions described for each location can be met" (p.212). General objectives required under the HOA are access with minimal impact, objective design review, and adequate buffering to lower density residential neighborhoods. More specifically, this particular HOA allows for higher densities if, "additional open space or protection of some of the natural environment can be provided" (p.212).

Zoning & Ordinance Conditions

The proposed sign is considered off-premises signage, which is considered a billboard. Neither the existing R-2 zoning nor the proposed R-53 and R-7 zoning permit billboard signage.

Surrounding Area

The properties to the north are zoned R-3 Single-Family Residential and are occupied by low-density single-family residences. The property to the east is zoned R-2 and is occupied by Lucille M. Brown Middle School. The properties to the south, across Jahnke Road, are zoned R-3 Single-Family Residential and are occupied by Food Lion. The property immediately south, is zoned R-43 Multifamily Residential is and occupied by Bramblewood Estates Apartments.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff has contacted 4th District Council Representative, Kathy Graziano, Forest Hill-Bliley Road Neighborhood Association, Westover South and Woods Civic Association, and Westlake Hill Neighborhood and has received no letters of support or opposition.

Staff Contact: Willy Thompson, Senior Planner, (804) 646-5734