



July 21, 2021

Mr. Kevin Vonck, Acting Director
Department of Planning & Development Review
900 East Broad Street, Suite 511
Richmond, VA 23219
kevin.vonck@richmondgov.com

RE: Applicant's Report for a Community Unit Plan Final Plan Amendment at 2100 Sheila Lane

Dear Mr. Vonck,

Please accept this letter as the Applicant's Report for the Community Unit Plan (CUP) final plan amendment application for the property at 2100 Sheila Lane. With this application the property owner, Mike Hanky of Courthouse Land LLC, is petitioning the City Planning Commission for a CUP final plan amendment to authorize the development of a self-storage facility at Chippenham Forest Square.

Documents submitted as part of this application contain in detail the proposed layout of the site, architecture of the building, as well as the character of the proposed improvements. Therefore, we are requesting that these final plan amendments are approved in accordance with the preliminary plan that was adopted by Planning Commission and City Council (Ord. No 2018-322) and in accordance with Sec. 30-456.9 of the Zoning Ordinance.

Site

This currently vacant property is located in the Huguenot Planning District off Forest Hill Avenue at the end of Sheila Lane. The property has a land area of 7.75 acres and is part of the 63-acre Chippenham Forest Square Community Unit Plan that was approved by City Council in 1995. Currently, Chippenham Forest Square is developed as a shopping area with large retailers including a Walmart Super Center, and a Lowes Home Improvement Center, and numerous smaller retailers, restaurants, and other commercial, and service establishments.

Zoning and CUP Ordinance Conditions

The property is located in an R-2 Single-Family Residential district. Ordinance No. 95-198-192 authorized a Community Unity Plan on the site in 1995 and has been amended several times since then. The latest amendment was adopted by City Council in 2018 via Ordinance No. 2018-322. While the R-2 district prohibits any commercial uses, the CUP ordinance authorizes a wide variety of commercial uses for the property and details requirements for floor area, building height, parking, screening, signage,

and other regulations specific to the CUP. Ord No. 2018-322 amended the CUP to include self-storage facilities as a permitted use.

Proposal

The plans for the self-storage facility approved with Ord 2018-322 show a configuration with multiple buildings. We propose to amend these plans and develop a self-storage facility with a single 123,975 SF, three-story building with parking and loading areas. The overall design and materials for this building are substantially similar to the proposal under Ord. 2018-322. In addition, all features of the development including building height, floor area, parking, landscaping, signage will meet the regulations of the CUP. The proposed self-storage facility is permitted under the existing CUP ordinance.

Prior to the selection of Chippenham Forest Square as the development site, we explored the possibility of development on two other sites along Forest Hill Avenue. As part of our due diligence, we reached out to the surrounding neighborhoods and property owners for input. Because we understand the potential impact of the proposed development on the community, we sincerely appreciated and considered the input we received from the stakeholders. Their significant opposition to the development of each of the two sites convinced us that the proposed development would be better suited elsewhere.

Following a thorough search for a viable development site, and after careful consideration and analysis, we concluded that Chippenham Forest Square is the ideal location for the proposed self-storage facility. In 2018, as part of the last CUP amendment, we had positive discussions with stakeholders in the area, including a cooperative infrastructure agreement with an adjacent property owner that will significantly reduce the development's impact to the City and environment. As a result, we believe that the proposed development will produce the lowest negative impact to surrounding properties while contributing positively to the community for the following reasons:

- 1) The site is the last undeveloped parcel at Chippenham Forest Square and is currently a wooded and vacant lot. Like many other underutilized properties in the City, the site is currently used as an area to conduct illegal activities that are detrimental to the surrounding community. The proposal would transform this underutilized property into a modern, well-maintained, and secure state-of-the-art self-storage facility that will increase the public safety for the surrounding community.
- 2) To the north and east of the property is the existing shopping area that is part of Chippenham Forest Square. To the south is a rail line and a large wooded and undeveloped area in Chesterfield County. The proposed self-storage facility would integrate well as part of the shopping area by providing a new commercial service and complement the existing businesses by not creating additional competition. In addition, the self-storage facility would potentially attract new customers for the existing businesses who may not otherwise visit the shopping area.
- 3) The self-storage facility is a much less intense use than other uses permitted by the CUP ordinance such as big-box retailers, bars and restaurants, or entertainment facility such as clubs or theaters. The alternative development of the site for these other uses would likely create substantially more traffic, congestion, and noise than the self-storage facility.
- 4) To the west of the property is an existing multifamily residential area. While any commercial development would impact these residents, we propose to create a 40-foot wide, landscape

buffer, as required by the CUP ordinance, along the western edge of the property that will mitigate any impact to the residents to a negligible level.

- 5) Impacts to the environment and City infrastructure will also be minimized. After meeting with City staff from DPU and surrounding property owners, we have agreed to replace initial plans for a septic system for sanitation with an agreement to use the pump station for the apartment complex to the west to connect to existing sanitary sewers. This cooperation between our development team, surrounding property owners, and DPU will lead to a much more sustainable development that will ultimately benefit the entire community.

Richmond 300 Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the property for Destination Mixed-Use and recommends higher-density, transit-oriented development encouraged on vacant or underutilized sites. New development should be urban in form, may be of larger scale than existing context, and, where relevant, should pay special attention to the historic character of the existing context. Development should enhance the public realm and create a sense of place. Many buildings are vertically mixed-use. Developments continue or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity (page 64).

City Charter Conditions

This is a unique opportunity to bring new commercial service a vacant portion of the Chippenham Forest Square CUP. We trust that you will agree with us that this proposed development meets the City Charter criteria and the City Code criteria for the granting of CUPs as the project will adequately safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the occupants of the adjoining and surrounding property; will not unreasonably impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent property; will not unreasonably increase congestion in streets; will not unreasonably 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.

Thank you for your consideration of this application. Please feel free to contact me at lory@markhamplanning.com or (804) 248-2561 if you have any questions or require additional materials to process the application.

Very Truly Yours,



Lory Markham

Enclosures

cc: The Honorable Kristen Nye Larson
Matthew Ebinger, Secretary to the City Planning Commission



Application for: **COMMUNITY UNIT PLAN**

Department of Planning and Development Review
Land Use Administration Division
900 E. Broad Street, Room 511
Richmond, Virginia 23219
(804) 646-6304
<http://www.richmondgov.com/>

Application is hereby submitted for: (check one)

- preliminary plan
- preliminary plan admendment
- Final Plan
- Final Plan Admenment

Project Name/Location

Property Address: 2100 Sheila Lane, Richmond, VA 23225 Date: July 21, 2021
Tax Map #: C0030177022 Fee: \$1,500.00
Total area of affected site in acres: 7.75

(See page 7 for fee schedule, please make check payable to the "City of Richmond")

Zoning

Current Zoning: R-2
Existing Use: Vacant

Proposed Use

(Please include a detailed description of the proposed use in the required applicant's report)

3-story indoor self-storage facility with parking and loading area.
Existing Use: Vacant

Is this property subject to any previous land use cases?

Yes No If Yes, please list the Ordinance Number: 2008-322, 2018-322

Applicant/Contact Person: Lory Markham / Markham Planning
Company: Markham Planning
Mailing Address: 23 W Broad St, Suite 304
City: Richmond State: VA Zip Code: 23220
Telephone: (804) 248-2561 Fax: ()
Email: lory@markhamplanning.com

Property Owner: COURTHOUSE LAND LLC
If Business Entity, name and title of authorized signee: Mike Hanky

(The person or persons executing or attesting the execution of this Application on behalf of the Company certifies that he or she has or have been duly authorized and empowered to so execute or attest.)

Mailing Address: 8500 BELL CREEK RD
City: MECHANICSVILLE, VA State: VA Zip Code: 23116
Telephone: () Fax: ()
Email: MIKEHANKY@SRMFRE.com

Property Owner Signature: Michael C Hanky

The names, addresses, telephone numbers and signatures of all owners of the property are required. Please attach additional sheets as needed. If a legal representative signs for a property owner, please attach an executed power of attorney. **Faxed or photocopied signatures will not be accepted.**

NOTE: Please attach the required plans, checklist, and a check for the application fee (see Filing Procedures for community unit plans)