



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2015-092: To authorize the special use of the property known as 1817 East Main Street for the purpose of authorizing up to seventy-eight (78) multi-family dwelling units, accessory parking, and use(s) permitted in the B-5 Central Business District, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: May 4, 2015

PETITIONER

H. L. Salomonsky
Historic Housing LLC
1553 E. Main Street
Richmond, VA 23219

LOCATION

1817 East Main Street

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 1817 East Main Street for the purpose of authorizing up to seventy-eight (78) multi-family dwelling units, accessory parking, and use(s) permitted in the B-5 Central Business District, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant proposes to develop an eight-story apartment building with up to seventy-six (76) multi-family dwelling units. The building would be located along 19th Street. In addition, the applicant proposes to develop a two-story mixed-use building on East Main Street, which would contain commercial uses permitted in the B-5 Central Business District on the first floor and up to two (2) dwelling units on the second floor. For the eight-story building, the one-bedroom apartments would range in size from 670 to 800 square feet; the two-bedroom units would be approximately 1,110 square feet; and the two-story units along 19th Street would range from 850 to 1,100 square feet.

The applicant has also agreed to certain conditions regarding the proposed mixed-use building on East Main Street. Some of the conditions include that a maximum of two dwelling units would be permitted on the second floor only. Each dwelling unit would have at least one window. The building would be constructed of glass and predominantly brick and be no less than two stories in height. The building design would be subject to the approval of the Director of Planning and Development Review prior to issuance of a building permit, and the final occupancy of the eight-story building on South 19th Street would not be issued until a building permit application has been filed for the building located on East Main Street and construction has commenced.

The Richmond Downtown Plan designates this area as Urban Center Area. “The Urban Center Area is characterized by higher density, mixed-use development, typically arranged on a fine-grained street network, with wide sidewalks, regular tree planting, and minimal setbacks” (p. 3.25).

The Downtown Plan also identifies the portion of the property along East Main Street on the illustrative map as being appropriate for "infill buildings that create a continuous street frontage and respect the character of the neighborhood with similar massing and architectural elements.” The applicant proposes a two-story building with commercial uses on the first floor and residential uses on the second floor. The building would be designed to architecturally correspond with the existing two-story buildings along East Main Street.

Staff finds that the applicant is meeting the standard parking requirement of one space per dwelling unit for the eight-story building. There would be nineteen (19) parking spaces on-site and a minimum of fifty-five (57) off-premises parking spaces.

The Downtown Plan recommends ground-floor and street facing uses, which the applicant is providing along South 19th Street with either first-floor apartments or the option to fill these spaces with commercial uses permitted in the B-5 Central Business District. In addition, staff finds the proposed eight-story height to be consistent in height with other multi-family structures along East Cary Street, which include building heights ranging from six to seven stories.

Finally, staff finds that the provision of a useable open space on the roof and on-site storage units for resident use only will enhance the quality of life for the residents of the building.

Staff further finds that the proposal does meet the City Charter criteria for the granting of special use permits. Specifically, the proposal would not be detrimental to the safety, health, morals and general welfare of the community established by the City’s Master Plan. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the special use permit request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject property is located on the block bounded by East Main Street to the north, S. 19th Street to the east, E. Cary Street to the south, and S. 18th Street to the west. The property is currently occupied by surface parking and contains approximately 0.305 acre of land area.

Proposed Use of the Property

The applicant proposes to develop an eight-story apartment building with up to seventy-six (76) multi-family dwelling units. The building would be located along 19th Street. In addition, the applicant proposes to develop a two-story mixed-use building on East Main Street, which would contain commercial uses permitted in the B-5 Central Business District on the first floor and up to two (2) dwelling units on the second floor.

Master Plan

The Richmond Downtown Plan designates this area as Urban Center Area. "The Urban Center Area is characterized by higher density, mixed-use development, typically arranged on a fine-grained street network, with wide sidewalks, regular tree planting, and minimal setbacks" (p. 3.25).

The Downtown Plan identifies the portion of the property along East Main Street on the illustrative map as being appropriate for "infill buildings that create a continuous street frontage and respect the character of the neighborhood with similar massing and architectural elements."

Zoning & Ordinance Conditions

The property is zoned M-1 Light Industrial District. The applicant proposes up to seventy-eight (78) multi-family dwelling units and uses permitted in the B-5 Central Business District. Dwelling units are not permitted principal uses in the M-1 district. Therefore, a special use permit is required.

A minimum of one (1) parking space per dwelling unit in the building located on South 19th Street would be required. There would be nineteen (19) parking spaces on-site and a minimum of fifty-five (57) off-premises parking spaces.

The applicant has also agreed to certain conditions regarding the proposed mixed-use building on East Main Street. Some of the conditions include that a maximum of two dwelling units would be permitted on the second floor only. Each dwelling unit would have at least one window. The building would be constructed of glass and predominantly brick and be no less than two stories in height. The building design would be subject to the approval of the Director of Planning and Development Review prior to issuance of a building permit, and the final occupancy of the eight-story building on South 19th Street would not be issued until a building permit application has been filed for the building located on East Main Street and construction has commenced.

Surrounding Area

The surrounding properties are located in the City's Shockoe Bottom and are a mix of commercial, office, retail, and residential uses. To the west of the subject property is surface parking and a three-story nightclub fronting on South 18th Street, which is zoned B-5 Central Business. To the north are two-story commercial buildings fronting on East Main Street at the corner of South 19th Street, which are zoned M-1 Light Industrial. Properties to the east and south are zoned B-5 and M-1 and are occupied by three to eight-story warehouse buildings that have been converted to commercial, office and residential uses.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff has received no letters of support or opposition.

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