



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2021-027: To amend Ord. No. 2020-142, adopted Jul. 27, 2020, which authorized the special use of the properties known as 1705, 1707, and 1711 Westover Hills Boulevard, and 4922 New Kent Road for the purpose of retail, office, and commercial uses accessory to an existing church, to allow a sign, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: March 1, 2021

PETITIONER

Westover Hills United Methodist Church (WHUMC)

LOCATION

1705, 1701, 1711 Westover Hills Boulevard and 4922 New Kent Road.

PURPOSE

To amend Ord. No. 2020-142, adopted Jul. 27, 2020, which authorized the special use of the properties known as 1705, 1707, and 1711 Westover Hills Boulevard, and 4922 New Kent Road for the purpose of retail, office, and commercial uses accessory to an existing church, to allow a sign, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The subject properties are in the R-5 Single-Family Residential zoning district. Ord.2020-142 authorized certain uses of the properties that are not permitted in the R-5 District. The installation of a sign pertaining to those uses, specifically a retail bakery/coffee shop, was not authorized by the current special use permit. The applicant wishes to install a sign. A special use permit amendment is therefore required.

Staff finds the proposed sign dimensions to be appropriate and that the sign would benefit a use supported by staff and the Planning Commission when the special use permit was first proposed.

Staff 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 amendment would not be detrimental to the general welfare of the community involved and would not create congestion in the streets in the area involved.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of this special use permit amendment request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject properties total 1.762 acres comprise the Westover Hills Methodist Church, parsonage, and associated property, located on Westover Hills Boulevard between New Kent Road and King William Road, in the Forest Hill Neighborhood.

Proposed Use of Property

The special use authorized by Ordinance 2020-142 authorized the use of the church kitchen for the training of interns in culinary arts, and the use of the parsonage as a retail bakery/coffee shop that will sell items produced by the interns. The proposed sign will be for the retail bakery use on the property.

Master Plan

The Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the subject property for residential land use, which is described as neighborhoods consisting primarily of single-family houses on large- or medium-sized lots more homogeneous in nature.

Primary uses are single-family houses, accessory dwelling units and open space.

Institutional and cultural facilities are indicated as secondary uses.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The subject property is located in the R-5 Single-Family Residential District. Zoning ordinance section 30-410.2 – Permitted Accessory Uses and Structures does not list commercial accessory uses as permitted uses and these uses were authorized as a special use when Ordinance No. 2020-142 was approved on July 27, 2020.

Zoning Administration provided the following comments:

The proposal is to install a freestanding sign (4.44 square feet) for a retail store (bakery) which was authorized by the Special Use Permit (Ordinance No. 2020-142). This Special Use Permit, adopted on July 27, 2020, did not authorize any signage for the proposed retail store. The sign face measures 4.44 square feet and is located on a 6' wooden post. The property is located in the R-5 (Single-Family Residential) district and has an area of approximately 13,275 square feet (0.305 acres). Freestanding signs typically permitted in the R-5 zoning district shall not exceed 32 square feet in area or eight feet in height. The proposed freestanding sign on the subject property is approximately fifteen feet (15') from the street line along Westover Hills Boulevard.

The proposed amendment would modify existing conditions on the property to include provisions for the proposed sign:

(d) A sign not exceeding six feet in height with a two-sided sign face not exceeding 32 by 20 inches in dimension and illuminated by ground-level spotlights shall be permitted on the Property.

Surrounding Area

All properties surrounding the subject property are located within the same R-5 Single-Family Residential zoning district. Within the area of the subject property, properties are improved with single-family detached dwellings.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified the Westover Hills Neighborhood Association and adjacent residents and property owners. No letters of opposition or support have been received.

Staff Contact

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