



To: Urban Design Committee
From: Planning & Preservation Division
Date: February 9, 2017
RE: **Final Location, Character and Extent review of improvements to James River Park Headquarters; UDC No. 2017-01**

I. APPLICANT

Nathan Burrell, Park Manager, James River Park System

II. LOCATION

4001 Riverside Drive

Property Owner:

City of Richmond Recreation & Parks

III. PURPOSE

The application is for final location, character, and extent review of two new warehouses to help with storage and programming needs as part of James River Park Headquarters at the Reedy Creek Facility.

IV. SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds the proposed improvements efficient, sustainable and that they further the recommendations of the Urban Design Guidelines for environmental quality and is consistent with the recommendations from conceptual review. The project sets a new standard for sustainable construction in public facilities, meets critical needs to secure equipment, and fits with the aesthetic of the existing JRPS headquarters building. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the project as submitted.

Staff Contacts:

Josh Son (804) 646-3741

V. FINDINGS OF FACT

a. Site Description and Surrounding Context

The site includes current sub-par storage facilities near the James River Park System headquarters building at Reedy Creek.

b. Scope of Review

The proposed project is subject to general location, character, and extent review under Section 17.07 of the City Charter as identification for a "public building".

c. UDC Review History

In 1969, the Urban Design Committee reviewed a series of structures associated with riverfront improvements and James River Park System.

After a quick series of questions about the conservation easement governing the property with the applicant as well as one of the holders of the conservation

easement, this item passed as part of the consent agenda at the October 17th, 2016 Planning Commission meeting.

d. Project Description

The James River Park Headquarters at Reedy Creek houses three distinct divisions of park staff: Park Operations, Park Programming, and Trails/Greenway Maintenance. Park Programming and Trails/Greenway Maintenance both have significant storage and facilities needs that the current facility cannot accommodate; equipment is inadequately screened and stored. The proposed new maintenance warehouse will eliminate the need for the shipping containers currently on site and house the majority of maintenance equipment and materials indoors. The outdoor programming warehouse will contain equipment for all programs, including bikes, kayaks, and other related equipment.

As part of the overall conservation easement for James River Park, the project design has a special emphasis on sustainable construction. Green roofs, water storage systems, bio-retention areas, and pervious paving will all be incorporated into the project in an effort to decrease overall impervious surface cover. Native species are proposed as landscaping and for replanting in areas disturbed as part of the project. Only seven trees are planned for removal with strict preservation measures for the remaining trees in proximity of construction activity. To offset removal of these seven trees, the landscape plan proposes a replacement ratio of greater than 2:1 with Virginia native species.

The plan calls for construction of two warehouse structures and a small outbuilding. Materials will be board and batten plywood, stained in earth tones, with several metal roll up bay doors, as well as painted steel standard-sized doors. There will be building-mounted pendant lighting, as well as corrugated polycarbonate siding to allow natural light into the buildings. Metal screens will provide ventilation. The site plan goes into detail with the distribution across the site, including green features. The education building will be to the west of the main facility, with the maintenance building to the east. Images of materials samples are also included.

e. Master Plan

The subject property and adjacent rights-of-way were just outside the boundaries of the Riverfront Plan; the Master Plan identifies the James River Park System as a key part of the Old South area (265). James River Park System is also part of a conservation easement that provides additional limitations on development, including impervious surface, within the boundaries of the easement.

f. Urban Design Guidelines

The Public Park section of the Urban Design Guidelines notes that “public parks are integral to the quality of life found in any urban landscape. Parks should respond to the environment in which they are located and should be designed in accordance with their intended use” (page 9). Additionally, “A preference should be given towards materials and construction techniques which improve energy efficiency and water/soil quality. (page 9). The Guidelines are also very supportive of low-impact development and green building practices (page 10, 11).

- VII. ATTACHMENTS**
- a. Vicinity Map**
 - b. Application**
 - c. Plans**