



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2015-099: To amend Ord. No. 91-243-232, adopted July 22, 1992, which authorized the use of real estate, property known as 501 N. 2nd Street, for the purposes of constructing a four-story office building, together with accessory parking, to permit medical office uses, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: May 18, 2015

PETITIONER

Ralph L. Axsell, Jr.
Williams Mullen
200 South 10th Street, Suite 1600
Richmond, VA 23219

LOCATION

501 North 2nd Street

PURPOSE

To amend Ord. No. 91-243-232, adopted July 22, 1992, which authorized the use of real estate, property known as 501 N. 2nd Street, for the purposes of constructing a four-story office building, together with accessory parking, to permit medical office uses, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The subject property is located on the northeast side of the intersection of East Clay Street and North 2nd Street in the Jackson Ward neighborhood. The parcel contains 0.93 acres of land is occupied by a four-story office building and surface parking. The United Network for Organ Sharing owns and has offices in the building.

The applicant proposes to amend Ord. No. 91-243-232 for purposes of authorizing medical office use on the property. The proposed medical office use is a permitted principal use in the B-2 district but was excluded by the original ordinance. The applicant plans to lease a portion of the building to a medical office tenant. The remainder of the building would continue to be occupied by United Network for Organ Sharing.

In addition, the proposed ordinance amends the parking requirements for the office uses on the property. The amendments require that not less than a total of 145 parking spaces be provided to serve the building with not less than 57 of those spaces being provided on site. The existing ordinance required that not less than a total of 139 parking spaces be provided with 57 of those

spaces being provided on site. The proposed ordinance amendment also stipulates that the off-premises general office parking spaces be located within 1,000 foot radius from the front door of the building. Normal off-premises parking requirements allow for a 300 foot radius.

For all medical office uses, which zoning interprets as office uses catering to patients, the required parking will be provided on-site, not to exceed 34 spaces, and if more spaces are required, they shall be provided within a 350-foot radius.

The Richmond Downtown Plan designates this area as Urban Core Area. “The Urban Core Area is the most urban Character Area. This area is characterized by high density, an intense mix of uses, and civic buildings of regional significance, distributed along urban blocks with wide sidewalks, regular street tree plantings, and buildings that front the street” (p. 3.27). In addition the Downtown Plan addresses parking in the Urban Core Area, stating, “Parking is located on-street, or mid-block in lined parking garages. If rear alleys exist, parking is accessed from the alley. Parking can also be located within a quarter-mile of the lot it serves” (p. 3.27).

The inclusion of medical office uses is compatible with the historical use of the property since 1991. The original special use permit did not include plans for retail uses but was supported because the proposed office building would bring workers into the area to stimulate service activity on 2nd Street. The present proposal to add medical office uses would no less help stimulate activity in the area and is in keeping with the 1991 special use permit. Furthermore, the applicant has agreed to parking conditions which assure the anticipated patient parking is provided on-site.

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 Downtown Plan and B-2 zoning district. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the special use permit request, as amended.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject property is located on the block bounded by East Leigh Street to the north, North 3rd Street to the east, East Clay Street to the south, and North 2nd Street to the west. The parcel contains 0.93 acres of land is occupied by a four-story office building and surface parking. The current owner and user of the building is United Network for Organ Sharing.

Proposed Use of the Property

The applicant proposes to amend Ord. No. 91-243-232 for purposes of authorizing medical office use on the property. The proposed medical office use is a permitted principal use in the B-2 district but was excluded by the original ordinance. The applicant plans to lease a portion of the building to a health and medical services tenant. The remainder of the building would be occupied by United Network for Organ Sharing.

In addition, the proposed ordinance would amend the parking requirements for the office uses on the property. The amendments would require that not less than a total of 145 parking spaces be provided to serve the building with not less than 57 of those spaces being provided on site. The off-premises parking spaces shall be located within 1,000 foot radius from the front door of the building.

For all medical office uses, which zoning interprets as office uses catering to patients, the required parking shall be provided on-site, not to exceed 34 spaces, and if more spaces are required, those spaces shall be provided within a 350-foot radius.

Master Plan

The Richmond Downtown Plan designates this area as Urban Core Area. “The Urban Core Area is the most urban Character Area. This area is characterized by high density, an intense mix of uses, and civic buildings of regional significance, distributed along urban blocks with wide sidewalks, regular street tree plantings, and buildings that front the street” (p. 3.27). In addition the Downtown Plan addresses parking in the Urban Core Area, stating, “Parking is located on-street, or mid-block in lined parking garages. If rear alleys exist, parking is accessed from the alley. Parking can also be located within a quarter-mile of the lot it serves” (p. 3.27).

Zoning & Ordinance Conditions

In 1992, City Council adopted Ord. No. 91-243-232, which authorized the use of the property for a four-story office building. However the ordinance did not permit medical office uses and therefore an amendment to the existing ordinance is needed for the proposal.

In addition, the proposed ordinance would amend the parking requirements for the office uses on the property. The amendments would require that not less than a total of 145 parking spaces be provided to serve the building with not less than 57 of those spaces being provided on site. The off-premises parking spaces shall be located within 1,000 foot radius from the front door of the building.

For all medical office uses, which zoning interprets as office uses catering to patients, the required parking shall be provided on-site, not to exceed 34 spaces, and if more spaces are required, they shall be provided within a 350-foot radius.

Surrounding Area

The subject property is located on the northeast side of the intersection of East Clay Street and North 2nd Street in the Jackson Ward neighborhood. The surrounding properties are developed with a mix of office, commercial, and residential uses. Surrounding zoning districts include B-2, R0-2 Residential Office, R-63 Multi-family Urban Residential, and B-4 Central Business District.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff has received one letter of support from the Historic Jackson Ward Association.

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

