



Application for **SPECIAL USE PERMIT**

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/>

SUP-023645-2017

Application is hereby submitted for: (check one)

- special use permit, new**
- special use permit, plan amendment**
- special use permit, text only amendment**

**Project Name/Location**

Property Address: 1090 German School Road Date: 09/08/2017  
 Tax Map #: C0050776028 Fee: \$2,400.00  
 Total area of affected site in acres: 3.065

(See **page 6** for fee schedule, please make check payable to the "City of Richmond")

**Zoning**

Current Zoning: R-3 - Residential

Existing Use: Vacant Land

**Proposed Use**

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

Existing Use: Vacant Land

Is this property subject to any previous land use cases?

Yes  No  If Yes, please list the Ordinance Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant/Contact Person:** Bill Carter

Company: The Lawson Companies  
 Mailing Address: 373 Edwin Drive  
 City: Virginia Beach State: VA Zip Code: 23462  
 Telephone: ( 757 ) 499-6161 Fax: ( 757 ) 499-9414  
 Email: bcarter@lawsoncompanies.com

**Property Owner:** Harper Holdings LLC

If Business Entity, name and title of authorized signee: John H. Brandenburg, Sole Member, Manager

(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: 114 W. Eufaula St.  
 City: Norman State: OK Zip Code: 73069  
 Telephone: ( 405 ) 314-6152 Fax: ( 405 ) 458-8132  
 Email: jhburg10@icloud.com

**Property Owner Signature:** [Signature]

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 special use permits)

## **Applicant's Report**

Subject Property: 1090 German School Road

Tax Map Reference No: C0050776028

Dated: September 15, 2017

To: City of Richmond  
Department of Planning and Development Review  
900 East Broad Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Submitted By:

The Lawson Companies  
373 Edwin Drive  
Virginia Beach, VA 23462

### **I. Introduction**

The applicant proposes a ninety-six (96) unit apartment development on the above referenced tract consisting of three residential buildings (four stories each) and a clubhouse/management office building.

### **II. Site**

The subject property, 1090 German School Road, Richmond, Virginia consists of a vacant lot of approximately 3.065 acres located on the west side of German School Road, to the south of nearby Janke Road.

Chippenham Hospital is situated approximately ½ mile to the west, and the Janke Road Food Lion Shopping Center is across German School Road approximately 310 feet from the subject site. Lucille Brown Middle School is in close proximity to the subject property on Janke Road, approximately ¼ of a mile from the proposed apartments.

The surrounding uses to the subject property are overwhelmingly multifamily. The adjacent property to the north is the Heritage Oaks retirement / independent living apartments. North of Heritage Oaks and at the southwest corner of Janke and German School Road are the Monarch Woods Senior Apartments. The western and southern adjacent property consists of the St. John's Woods apartments. Continuing to the south of the subject property after St. John's Woods are the Sts. Cosma and Damianos senior apartments and one single family residence (owned by the owner of St. John's Woods). Across German School Road from the subject property to the east are the Renaissance Apartments serving senior and disabled residents. Also across German School Road and to the south of the Renaissance Apartments are the Westover Terrace Apartments.

The subject property is zoned R-3.

The Midlothian Planning District land use plan indicates multifamily (medium density) (Master Plan, p. 213).

### **III. Proposed Use**

The applicant proposes to develop the subject property into ninety-six (96) rental apartment units in three (3), four story structures of thirty-two (32) units each. A separate one story building will contain amenities for tenants (community room with kitchenette, fitness center, laundry, etc.) and a management office. The property use will be entirely multi-family with no other use (retail, etc.) on the property.

The applicant's development will contain 2 and 3 bedroom units and will be marketed and reserved for working persons and families with incomes of 50% (50% of units) or 60% (50% of units) of Area Median Income (adjusted by household size). This product generally attracts tenants already living and/or working in the area surrounding the subject property ("Primary Market Area") who are currently "rent overburdened", which is defined as having to pay more than 30% of gross monthly income for housing. At least ninety percent (90%) of the apartments will NOT be rent subsidized, but will offer rent levels that are affordable relative to tenants' incomes. In other words, this proposed development will add high-quality, workforce housing that will help meet a key need of the City's housing stock.

### **IV. Design**

The overall building and site design will be consistent with modern multifamily communities and will blend in harmoniously with the surrounding area. Multifamily uses surround the property on three sides, with German School Road on the fourth side. There are significant space buffers between the proposed buildings and the neighboring multifamily buildings on all three sides. Additionally, a tree buffer will remain on the south border and a landscape buffer is proposed on the west border.

The exterior building siding will consist of brick and a durable cementitious material such as Hardi Board or a similar product. The floor plans for each unit type will be spacious and open to meet the demands of the current market. Each unit will have two full baths and full-size washer and dryer hook-ups.

New sidewalks to City standard are proposed along the German School frontage and throughout the site, creating a pleasing arrangement.

The design and construction will be of the highest quality and will meet or exceed all local and national building codes and requirements. Additionally, as VHDA will be a stakeholder in this project, the design and construction standards will adhere to VHDA's strict and robust Minimum Design and Construction Requirements.

Two and three-bedroom accessible units will be included in the community. These units will be designed and constructed to meet all applicable codes and requirements.

## **V. Apartment Amenities**

Site amenities will include a clubhouse with kitchenette, fitness center, laundry facility, playground, outdoor patio area, dog park with pet waste receptacle, on-site office and professional management staff, and covered and uncovered bike parking. Unit amenities will consist of full-size washer and dryer hook-ups, two full baths in every unit, standard kitchen appliance package, and exterior balconies.

The apartments will be EarthCraft certified, meaning that the units will be highly efficient and carry lower cost utility burdens.

## **VI. Appropriateness**

In the context of the existing, larger multifamily uses surrounding the property and how those properties are situated on their sites, and the Master Plan's land use plan calling for medium density multifamily on the subject property, the proposed development is appropriate for this site.

The proposed development adds an important element of high quality, affordable workforce housing into the housing mix in the area which is heavy in senior housing. The proposed project will represent a large investment in the City and help meet a significant demand for housing at a price point that is realistic for working people, including teachers and workers at nearby Chippenham Hospital, among other employers. High quality workforce housing close to the retail center at the Food Lion center on Janke will add customers and retail activity, beneficial to the immediate local economy.

The number of units, height and lot coverage are necessary in order to facilitate financing for the proposed project.

The applicant has met with staff for feedback on three occasions prior to the filing of this application for feedback and comments, and the application incorporates many of those comments. In addition, the applicant has met with the City Council representatives for the 4<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> Districts. Discussions are ongoing about community input, but at this time no materially adverse indications have been received.

## **VII. Findings of Fact**

The proposed special use will NOT;

1. be detrimental to the safety, health, morals and general welfare of the community involved.

There are no detriments of the proposed use to safety, health, morals, and general welfare of the community involved. The proposed use is 100% residential. We anticipate that the provision of adequate, safe, and healthy housing will provide a benefit to the welfare of the community by adding new and improved affordable housing opportunities.

To ensure safety goals are achieved, the development will be managed by a full-time, on-site property manager (maintenance will be on call 24/7). The property manager will be closely overseen by a property management firm versed in compliance and asset management. The developer is a highly regarded and experienced developer and manager of affordable housing, with more than 5,400 units under management at this time. Tenants will be screened in a manner that meets or exceeds industry standards including adequate credit and income and no criminal background of concern. No criminal behavior will be tolerated – breaking the rules or failure to pay rent will result in eviction, thus assuring any deleterious elements do not persist at the development.

2. tend to create congestion in the streets, roads, alleys, and other public ways and places in the area involved.

The site's entrance will be approximately 1000 ft. from GRTC bus stops on Janke Road (4 minute walk per GRTC), thus supporting and buttressing existing public transit use.

Bearing in mind that the larger multifamily projects along German School Road are largely seniors' apartments, additional trip generation as a result of the proposed project would not be expected to overburden existing roadways, and in any event would fall well below the 100 peak hour trip benchmark.

There is no conflict with St. Johns Woods Apartments from a traffic perspective, inasmuch as their entrance is on Janke Road and not on German School Road.

While slightly below the parking ratio that ordinarily would be required for R-53 and at 96 units, the proposed project provides 127 parking spaces at a ratio of 1.32 parking spaces per unit, which is in-line with the developer's parking surveys from its many developments as being adequate for residents and guests.

3. create hazards from fire, panic, or other dangers.

The proposed use is 100% residential. All local, state and federal building codes, including fire and life safety, will be met or exceeded. Specifically, the buildings will have fire sprinklers and smoke detectors in all units and fire alarm pulls in all buildings. All units will be pre-wired for telephone, internet, and cable service, providing multiple means of communication for potential life safety concerns (911, fire alarm, storm warnings, etc). Management policy will not allow grills to be used on balconies/patios – they must be used in open spaces or use the development provided, permanent grills. All detention/retention pond(s) will be fenced as will be playgrounds and tot lots. The site will be developed in accordance with fire code regulations set forth by the City of Richmond to assure easy access for fire and other emergency vehicles.

4. tend to cause overcrowding of land and an undue concentration of population.

At the proposed 96 units necessary for development, the proposed project provides a density of over 1,350 sf for each unit, which compares favorably to the R-53 requirement of at least 1,250 sf per unit.

While the usable open space is somewhat lower than R-53 as a reference, any concern of overcrowding is mitigated by examination of the surrounding adjacent uses, especially those along German School Road. The two larger multifamily developments that would be the most directly relevant to the proposed density are set back considerable distances from the proposed project with intervening parking areas and the like. Taken as a whole, the proposed project fits appropriately into the area.

5. adversely affect or interfere with public or private schools, parks, playgrounds, water supplies, sewage disposal, transportation or other public requirements, conveniences and improvements.

There are no known negative impacts to any local municipal assets or services. The development is expected to attract a large majority of its tenants from the immediate area – i.e., they already live here and are using these assets/services. Specifically:

- Schools. The subject property's proposed entrance will be approximately ¼ miles from to Lucille Brown Middle School. A large majority of the residents are expected to come from the immediate area around the property, and thus families with children are largely already in the school system.
- Parks and playgrounds. The development will provide a playground for its residents, thus reducing any impact to area parks and playgrounds. A dog park area is also proposed and shown on the site plan.
- Water and sewer. Public utilities are available at or near the site, and routine connections to the same will be provided. There is no indication of any unusual problem or of any capacity or public utility adverse impact.
- Transportation. See above
- Other. As a residential development there will be no impact on air pollution coming from the site. Garbage will be picked up on a routine weekly schedule and the garbage receptacles will be surrounded by a privacy screen and setback from German School Road and adjacent properties.

6. interfere with adequate light and air.

As 100% residential, there will be no impact on light access or air quality. As noted, the surrounding uses are multifamily, some of which are of medium to high density. However, those higher density developments are situated towards the centers of generally large sites. The proposed site plan would

result in considerable distances and practical buffers between the subject site's buildings and those nearby. For example, inasmuch as Heritage Oaks is constructed in a cross configuration, the end of the southeastern "cross" faces the subject property, at a distance of approximately 130 feet, and over 200 feet to the southwestern "cross". From the subject property looking east towards the Renaissance Apartments, the distance between the closest apartment building proposed to the Renaissance is approximately 500 feet. St. John's Woods residential structures will be separated from the proposed southern line buildings by between approximately 100 to 150 feet.

Respectfully submitted,

**The Lawson Companies**

By 