



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2014-76: To authorize the special use of the property known as 933 German School Road for the purpose of permitting a greenhouse, a plant nursery and the sale of yard and garden materials, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: May 19, 2014

PETITIONER

Cynthia Powell
919 German School Road
Richmond, Virginia 23225

LOCATION

933 German School Road

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 933 German School Road for the purpose of permitting a greenhouse, a plant nursery and the sale of yard and garden materials, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The subject property is located on the north side of German School Road between Glenway Drive and a parcel with a single-family dwelling. The parcel is vacant and consists of approximately 23,740 square feet of land. The applicant is proposing to use the property as a greenhouse and plant nursery for the sale of yard and garden materials. The subject property is located in the B-1 Neighborhood Business zoning district which does not permit the greenhouse and plant nursery uses or the sale of yard and garden materials.

The conditions of the proposed ordinance would limit uses for the commercial space on the property to a greenhouse and plant nursery use for the sale of yard and garden materials and those uses permitted in the B-1 Neighborhood Business zoning district. As per normal parking requirements, four spaces would be required for the business and therefore the applicant is proposing to provide four spaces on site. The ordinance would require that parking be provided in accordance with the normal zoning requirements, and these requirements will still be in place should the commercial use be converted to a use permitted in the B-1 zoning district in the future.

In order to reduce possible land use conflicts between the proposed greenhouse and plant nursery use, the proposed ordinance would limit hours of operation to 10am to 6pm Sunday through Friday and 8am to 6pm on Saturday. In addition, the ordinance would provide a 10 foot buffer around the perimeter of the property. Moreover, the ordinance would limit any new signage to that permitted in the B-1 zoning district.

The City of Richmond's Master Plan characterizes the subject property as being in the Single Family (low density) zoning district. This area is distinguished by single-family and two-family dwellings, both detached and attached, at densities of 8 to 20 units per acre. The Plan also states that single family areas should have supportive uses such as schools, places of worship, neighborhood parks and recreation facilities.

Overall, the Midlothian district is predominantly residential, however there are commercial corridors throughout the district. Some of the smaller commercial corridor include Elkhardt Road, Warwick Road, Carnation Street, and German School Road. Staff finds that the proposed commercial use of the property, the limitation on operating hours, and the proposed building and landscaping improvements will help meet the needs of the surrounding neighborhood for a greenhouse commercial use.

With the proposed ordinance conditions, staff further finds that the safeguards contained within the City Charter, relative to the granting of Special Use Permits, are met. Therefore, staff recommends approval.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject property is located on the north side of German School Road between Glenway Drive and a parcel with a single-family dwelling. The parcel is vacant and consists of approximately 23,740 square feet of land. The applicant is proposing to use the property as a greenhouse and plant nursery for the sale of yard and garden materials. The subject property is located in the B-1 Neighborhood Business zoning district which does not permit the greenhouse and plant nursery use or the sale of yard and garden materials.

Proposed Use of the Property

The applicant is proposing an ordinance to authorize the special use of the property known as 933 German School Road for the purpose of permitting a greenhouse, a plant nursery and the sale of yard and garden materials, upon certain terms and conditions.

Master Plan

The subject property is located in the Midlothian Planning District as defined by the Master Plan, which recommends Single Family low density a use for the property. This area is distinguished by single-family and two-family dwellings, both detached and attached, at densities of 8 to 20 units per acre. The Plan also states that single family areas should have supportive uses such as schools, places of worship, neighborhood parks and recreation facilities. Typical zoning classifications that are recommended for this area include the R-5A, R-6 and R-7.

Zoning & Ordinance Conditions

The subject property is located in the B-1 Neighborhood Business zoning district, which does not permit the greenhouse and plant nursery use or the sale of yard and garden materials, therefore the applicant is proposing an ordinance for the purpose of permitting a greenhouse, a plant nursery and the sale of yard and garden materials. The applicant has

proffered the following conditions; the hours of operation shall be limited to 10am to 6pm Sunday through Friday and 8am to 6pm on Saturday, a total of four (4) on-site parking spaces shall be provide for the use of the property substantially as shown on the attached plans, and that landscaping shall be provided within the 10 feet buffer along German School Road and shall meet the landscaping criteria set forth to the provisions of section 114-710.13.b.1 "buffer A" of the Code of the City of Richmond (2004). In addition any proposed signage must meet the requirements of the B-1 zoning district. Moreover, the uses for the commercial space would be limited to the proposed greenhouse and those uses permitted in the B-1 Neighborhood Business zoning district.

Surrounding Area

The surrounding properties to the north, west, and south of the proposed development are located in the R-3 Single Family Residential zoning district. The property to the east is located in the R-4 Single Family Residential zoning district. Situated on these properties to the west is a vacant and heavily vegetated parcel and to the north, east, and south are single-family dwellings.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff has received a signed petition of support with ten signatures. Staff has not received any letters of opposition at this time.

Staff Contact: Leigh V. Kelley, (804) 646-6384