



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

ORD. 2022-017: To rezone certain properties along West Broad Street from the B-2 Community Business District, B-3 General Business District, R-53 Multifamily Residential District, R-73 Multifamily Residential District, RO-1 Residential-Office District, and RO-2 Residential-Office District to the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District, and to designate certain street blocks as “priority streets” and certain street blocks as “street-oriented commercial streets” along and near West Broad Street.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Department of Planning and Development Review
Date: February 4, 2022

PETITIONER

City of Richmond
900 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

LOCATION

West Broad Street, generally west of I-195 to the City boundary.

PURPOSE

To amend the official zoning map for the purpose of rezoning certain properties and to update Priority Street and Street-Oriented Commercial designations along West Broad Street.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

This Ordinance would revise the City’s official zoning map for the purpose of rezoning certain properties along West Broad Street to match the Future Land Use Plan, vision, and recommendations envisioned in the Richmond 300 Master Plan and the Pulse Corridor Plan. At a broad level, the changes in zoning would allow for more residential and commercial uses at higher densities and in a form that supports walkable urbanism.

Staff recommends approval of the ordinance.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Background

The Richmond 300 Master Plan sets forth recommendations and policy to guide the future growth of the city. One main recommendation of the plan is to rezone the city in accordance with the Future Land Use Plan. Two nodes are identified along W. Broad Street at Staples Mill Road and Malvern Avenue, with the potential to transform into a more active and dense area of the city, and

in turn generate significant value to the surrounding neighborhoods and the city overall. Rezoning this area in alignment with the Future Land Use Plan is noted as a primary next step to achieve the vision of these areas.

Master Plan

The Richmond 300 Master Plan describes the future vision of the Broad and Staples Mill node as being, in part, “a walkable Node with new, denser, mixed-use buildings, and streetscape improvements along Broad [that] transform Broad Street into a truly Great Street.”

The Richmond 300 Master Plan describes the future vision of the Broad and Malvern node as being, “no longer a “dead spot” between Scott’s Addition and Willow Lawn; but rather a place with multi-family residential options mixed with retail and offices. New development supports walkable, bikeable, and transit-ready environment to support a new Pulse BRT Station at Malvern and Broad.”

The Future Land Use Plan designates the area around the Broad and Staples Mill node as “Destination Mixed-Use,” which is described as being, “key gateways featuring prominent destinations, such as retail, sports venues, and large employers, as well as housing and open space. Located at the convergence of several modes of transportation, including Pulse BRT or other planned transit improvements.” Future development is envisioned to be mixed-use in nature, at higher-density, and transit-oriented, with ground floor uses that engage and enliven the street. Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated.

The Future Land Use Plan designates property along W. Broad Street east of Chantilly Street as “Corridor Mixed-Use,” which is described as, “major commercial corridors and envisioned to provide for medium- to medium-high-density pedestrian- and transit-oriented development.” Future development is envisioned to be mixed, either horizontally in several buildings on a block or vertically within the same building. Developments continue to introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity. Building heights generally range between two to ten stories. Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated.

Existing and Proposed Zoning

Existing zoning along W. Broad Street is mainly comprised of B-3 General Business. Existing zoning along Staples Mill Road, Kent Road, and N. Hamilton Street is a comprised of various zoning districts such as RO-1 Residential-Office, RO-2 Residential-Office, B-2 Community Business, R-53 Multifamily Residential and R-73 Multifamily Residential. These districts allow for only limited development with height limits of new buildings capped at 35’ in most cases.

The proposed zoning for this area along and near W. Broad Street consists of TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal. This zoning district would allow more uses, as well as appropriate scale and design for new buildings that would further the vision of this area of the city as set forth in the Richmond 300 Master Plan.

The TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District allows a mix of retail and service uses, as well as residential dwelling units. New buildings are required to be a minimum of two stories and a maximum of 12 stories. Form-based requirements exist for fenestration details, the location of driveways and parking areas, and landscaping of parking areas. No off-street parking requirements exist for uses except hotels and motels and residential dwelling units for buildings with more than 16 units, above which one off-street parking space is required for every two dwelling units.

Street oriented commercial frontage and priority street designations are proposed to be designated in this area. W. Broad Street is proposed to be designated as street-oriented commercial frontage, meaning that new developments would be required to provide that a minimum of one third, or 1,000 square feet, of the floor area of the ground floor of new buildings have a principal uses other than dwelling units of a depth not less than 20 feet.

Priority street designations are proposed on W. Broad Street, Staples Mill Road, Kent Road, and N. Hamilton Street. The priority street designation would apply the form based requirements of principal street frontages when a building has multiple street frontages, and includes fenestration requirements, parking being located behind buildings, and limits to driveways across such streets when other access is available.

Public Engagement

In addition to the robust public engagement that was undertaken during the development of the Richmond 300 Master Plan, a virtual public meeting was held to discuss the proposed rezoning on October 20, 2021. Property owners were directly mailed notifications of the meetings beforehand, which were also promoted on the Richmond 300 email list. There were approximately 20 public attendees at the meeting. A second, smaller meeting was held with the residents of the Monument Avenue Park Civic Association on October 27, 2021. Feedback on the proposed rezoning has been generally positive and any specific concerns from property owners have been adequately addressed.

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