



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/>

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: 4204 Hermitage Road, Richmond, Virginia 23227 Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Tax Map #: N0170228007 & 8019 Fee: \$2,400.00

Total area of affected site in acres: 5.351 acres

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

**Zoning**

Current Zoning: R-53 - Residential (Multi-Family)

Existing Use: Community Center/Club

**Proposed Use**

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

Performing arts and education center including public performances for children and families.

Existing Use: Community Center/Club

Is this property subject to any previous land use cases?

Yes

No

If Yes, please list the Ordinance Number: No. 2007-314-281

**Applicant/Contact Person:** Brian K. Jackson

Company: Hirschler Fleischer

Mailing Address: 2100 E. Cary Street

City: Richmond State: VA Zip Code: 23227

Telephone: (804) 771-9545 Fax: (804) 644-0957

Email: bjackson@hirschlerlaw.com

**Property Owner:** Richmond Lodge of Perfection A&ASR TR

If Business Entity, name and title of authorized signee: Sam Dunn, Owner's Representative

(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: 7735 Willow Dance Road

City: Mechanicsville State: Virginia Zip Code: 23111

Telephone: (804) 370-1861 Fax: ( )

Email: Samdunnoakstoneproperties@gmail.com

**Property Owner Signature:** Sam Dunn PERSONAL REPRESENTATIVE A&ASR

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)

## **Special Use Permit Applicant's Report**

4204 Hermitage Road, Richmond, VA 23227  
Tax Map Parcel IDs: N0170228007 and N0170228019

### INTRODUCTION

Virginia Repertory Theatre is the contract purchaser of approximately 5.351 acres of land located at 4204 Hermitage Road (the "Property") owned by Richmond Lodge of Perfection A&ASR TR (collectively, referred to herein as the "Applicant"). The Property includes an approximately 45,500 square foot assembly building, formerly the Scottish Rite Temple, and an approximately 4,500 square foot office building, currently the Scottish Rite Childhood Language Center. The Property is located on the Northside of Richmond, east of Bryan Park in the Bellevue neighborhood. The assembly building contains a six hundred fifty (650) seat theatre, commercial kitchen, and banquet hall with seating for four hundred fifty (450) people. Additionally, the Property includes two hundred thirty-seven (237) lined off street parking spaces.

The Applicant is a nonprofit, professional theatre company that provides performance venues and programming in Central Virginia. It plans to use the Property as an arts and education center to serve metro Richmond's children, families, and schools. Its primary uses will include performance focused programming for kids and their families, a meeting space for community groups, and a rentable commercial kitchen space and dining hall (the "Project"). On weekdays, the hours of operation will be from 8:00 a.m. to 8 p.m.; and on weekends, the hours of operation will be from noon to 10 p.m.

The Property is located within the Hermitage Road City Old & Historic District. However, no changes will be made to the exterior of the building. Further, the Project will not require a more intense use.

### PROPOSED USE AND SPECIAL USE PERMIT REQUEST

The Property is zoned R-53 Residential (Multi-Family) District.

Currently, there is a Special Use Permit in place which allows the office building to operate as a children's audiology clinic. That Special Use Permit will continue to exist. The Applicant is requesting a new Special Use Permit ("SUP") to allow for the use of both buildings on the Property as an arts and education center for children, families, and schools. As a whole, this facility will include performance focused programming, a meeting space for community groups, and the preparation and serving of food in its commercial kitchen. The performance focused programming will include: weekend ticketed live performances for children and their families, along with options for before or after show meals, weekday student matinee performances for school groups, before or after performance character lunches or dinners, after-school theatre classes for school age children, talkbacks with cast members, occasional overnight camps for scouting groups, theatre camps for students from Pre-K thru 12th grade, collaborative programming with the existing Childhood Learning Center, and a seasonal production of the Gospel Nativity. The Property will also be the home location for Virginia Repertory Theatre's Community Health +

Wellness programs that utilize live theatre to address child and adult abuse prevention, audio-described theatre programming for the visually impaired, and modified programming for children on the autism spectrum. The Applicant will also provide the community with office support for education, touring, and provide opportunities to use its performance space.

### EXISTING PROPERTY AND SURROUNDING AREA

The Property forms the western margin of the Bellevue neighborhood. The Bellevue neighborhood is roughly a mile long by half a mile wide, bounded on the east by Brook Road, on the west by Hermitage Road, on the north by Westbrook Avenue, and on the south by West Laburnum Avenue. While the neighborhood is mostly made up of single-family residential homes dating to the 1920s and a few duplexes, it has institutional uses on the west side of the neighborhood along I-95 and small commercial districts on the south side of the 1200 block of Bellevue Avenue and on both sides of the 4000 block of MacArthur Avenue. Currently, the institutional uses to the west include the Community School, Linwood Holton Elementary School, and Acca Shriners' Center. The Property is located on a 5.351 acre parcel of land and is bordered by I-95 to the west, Hermitage Road to the east, and Acca Shriners' Center to the south.

The Property's close proximity to Linwood Holton Elementary School, the Community School, and a residential neighborhood will allow the Project to provide entertaining and educational programming to school aged children and their families as well as opportunities for collaboration with local schools and community groups.

### THE RICHMOND 300 PLAN

The Property is in the Bellevue neighborhood in Northside. The Richmond 300 Plan designates the Property's future use as Institutional, a future use category which calls for the redevelopment of buildings owned by institution(s) that are connected by an engaging character that create a campus-like environment. The primary use for an Institutional use category includes cultural, government, and open space, while secondary uses include retail space, office space, and personal service. Art and performance focused programming will likely inspire public art opportunities in the Bellevue neighborhood and help elevate the neighborhoods' unique character.

### PROPOSED USE

The proposed use of the Property, as described herein, is compatible with the surrounding area and an appropriate use for the site. This art and education center is in line with the Property's "Institutional" future use designation in the Richmond 300 Plan, as its collaboration with surrounding schools will result in the expansion of a campus-like environment that focuses on the education and creative expression of the children in the community.

The Project will not generate more traffic than the Scottish Rite Temple. Any traffic will be easily absorbed by the surrounding road network. Hermitage Road is a median-separated four-lane road running northwest toward I-95 and southeast toward Westwood Avenue. Additionally, the Property has two hundred thirty (230) lined off street parking spaces.

## SUITABILITY OF REZONING and FINDINGS OF FACT

The following are factors listed in Section 30-1050.1 of the Zoning Ordinance to be considered with the review of special use permit applications.

*The proposed SUP will:*

- *NOT be detrimental to the safety, health, morals, and general welfare of the community.*

The Project will provide the opportunity to maintain the Bellevue neighborhood's institutional campus and provide programming to the neighborhood residents. This arts and education center will enhance the community's safety, health, morals and general welfare.

- *NOT tend to create congestion in streets, roads, alleys, and other public ways and places in the area.*

The infrastructure and road systems in place have ample capacity to handle the proposed use. The existing parking lot circulation is also adequate to support this Project, as there are three access points onto the Property, one for emergency vehicles, one for ingress, and the other for egress.

- *NOT create hazards from fire, panic or other dangers.*

The Project is in compliance with applicable building and fire safety codes and energy conservation requirements.

- *NOT tend to overcrowding of land and cause an undue concentration of population.*

There will be no construction that will impact density.

- *NOT adversely affect or interfere with public or private schools, parks, playgrounds, water supplies, sewage disposal, transportation or other public requirements, conveniences and improvements.*

The above-referenced City services will not be adversely affected by the proposed use of the Project. Utilities and infrastructure are in place and adequate for the proposed use. The proposed reuse of the Property will enhance the area without affecting existing public facilities. Additionally, the Project will positively contribute to the area schools and businesses by bringing additional programming, support, and collaborative efforts to the neighborhood that will not adversely impact sewage and storm water systems, transportation or other governmental services.

- *NOT interfere with adequate light and air.*

The Property is in a location with ample air, light and space components. The light and air available to the Property and adjacent properties will not change if the SUP is granted.

## COMMUNITY SUPPORT FOR REZONING

The Applicant plans to present the SUP application materials to the Bellevue Civic Association, the Hermitage Road Historic District Association, and to Councilwoman Ann-Frances Lambert.

## CONCLUSION

This Project will bring a community asset to the Bellevue neighborhood which conforms with the Richmond 300 Plan. This Project will provide valuable programming, six new jobs, a \$208,000.00 increase in ticket revenue, and \$15,000.00 in additional admission tax in the first year. Additionally, it will be a highly visible symbol of art and culture in North Richmond contributing to the area's evolution and thereby furthering the City's aspirations for this neighborhood.

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