



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review ***Staff Report***

Ord. No. 2022-212 - To authorize the special use of the properties known as 1117 North Arthur Ashe Boulevard, 1119 North Arthur Ashe Boulevard, and 1201 North Arthur Ashe Boulevard for the purpose of a mixed-use building containing dwelling units, amenity space, commercial space, and structured parking spaces, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: July 18, 2022

PETITIONER

Amelia Wehunt – Timmons Group

LOCATION

1117, 1119, and 1201 North Arthur Ashe Boulevard

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the properties known as 1201 North Arthur Ashe Boulevard, 1119 North Arthur Ashe Boulevard, and 1117 North Arthur Ashe Boulevard, for the purpose of a mixed-use building that does not meet all feature requirements of the underlying zoning, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The proposal is to construct an 8-story mixed-use building containing ground-floor retail, up to 305 dwelling units, and 296 structured parking spaces. The proposed mixed-use building does not meet all feature requirements of the underlying TOD-1 - Transit-Oriented Nodal District. A special use permit is, therefore, required.

Staff finds that the proposed development would be consistent with the intent of the TOD-1 District and Richmond 300 land use recommendations, and that the zoning requirements waived by this special use permit would not adversely impact the development or surrounding neighborhood.

Staff finds that the proposal would not pose an undue burden on the availability of on-street parking in the area due to the provision of on-site structured parking and bike parking, and availability of mass transit in the area.

Staff finds that with the ordinance conditions, the safeguards contained within the City Charter relative to the granting of Special Use Permits are met. Specifically, staff finds that the proposed use would not be detrimental to the general welfare of the community involved and would not create congestion in the streets in the area involved.

Therefore staff recommends approval of the Special Use Permit request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject property consists of three parcels of land: 1201 North Arthur Ashe Boulevard (aka 1203 Arthur Ashe Boulevard), 1119 North Arthur Ashe Boulevard, and 1117 North Arthur Ashe Boulevard. The parcels are located on the east side of North Arthur Ashe Boulevard, between West Leigh Street and West Broad Street, in the Greater Scotts Addition area.

PROPOSED USE FOR THE PROPERTY

The proposal is to construct an 8-story mixed-use building containing ground-floor retail, up to 305 dwelling units, and 296 structured parking spaces.

MASTER PLAN – Destination Mixed-Use

The Richmond 300 master plan recommends Destination Mixed-Use Land Use for the subject property, which is described as:

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.

Development Style: Higher-density, transit-oriented development encouraged on vacant or underutilized sites. New development should be urban in form, may be of larger scale than existing context, and, where relevant, should pay special attention to the historic character of the existing context. Development should enhance the public realm and create a sense of place. Many buildings are vertically mixed-use. Developments continue or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity.

Ground Floor: Ground floor uses engage with, and enliven, the street. Monolithic walls are discouraged, while windows, doors, storefronts, and other features that allow transparency and interaction between building and street are encouraged. Active commercial ground floor uses are required on street-oriented commercial frontages.

Mobility: Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated. Bike parking is provided. Driveway entrances are required to be off alleys whenever possible; new driveways are prohibited on priority and principal street frontages. Surface parking is prohibited as a principal use; when surface parking is provided as an accessory use, it should be located to the rear of buildings and screened. Parking requirements are reduced to allow more market-based parking strategies, including shared parking.

Intensity: Buildings typically a minimum height of five stories.

Primary Uses: Retail/office/personal service, multi-family residential, cultural, and open space.

Secondary Uses: Institutional and government. (p. 64)

The subject property is also located within the Greater Scott's National/Regional Node (Priority Growth Node).

ZONING

The zoning of the subject property is TOD-1 - Transit-Oriented Nodal District. The intent of the District is to encourage dense, walkable transit-oriented development consistent with the objectives of the master plan and to promote enhancement of the character of this development along principal corridors, at key gateways, and at nodes of high activity located near transit service, bicycle infrastructure, and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes. The district regulations are also intended to safeguard the character of adjoining properties by only being applied in areas that meet the criteria above, with buffering by setbacks and screening or transitional districts to lower intensity residential areas. The district regulations are intended to encourage redevelopment and place-making, including adaptive reuse of underutilized buildings, to create a high-quality urban realm. They are intended to improve streetscape character by providing continuity of building setbacks, to enhance public safety by encouraging an active pedestrian environment consistent with the mixed-use character of the district by providing for windows in building façades along street frontages, and to promote an environment that is safe for walking and biking.

The proposed mixed-use building does not meet all feature requirements of the underlying TOD-1, including:

-Section 30-457.2(18)(a): No portion of such structure located along a principal street frontage or a priority street frontage shall be used for parking or related circulation of vehicles, but such portion shall be devoted to other permitted principal uses which shall have a depth of not less than 20 feet along the principal street frontage or priority street frontage or to means of pedestrian or vehicle access, provided that vehicle access along any principal street frontage or priority street frontage shall be permitted only when no alley or other street frontage is available for adequate access.

-Section 30-457.8(a): Location of parking and circulation areas. Areas devoted to the parking or circulation of vehicles shall not be located between the main building on a lot and the street line, nor shall such areas be located closer to the street than the main building on the lot. On a lot having more than one street frontage, this subsection shall apply along the principal street frontage of the lot as defined in Section 30-1220 as well as any designated priority street frontage.

If adopted, the special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

(a) The Special Use of the Property shall be as a mixed-use building containing dwelling units, amenity space, commercial space, and structured parking spaces, substantially as shown on the Plans. The Special Use may contain areas devoted to the parking or circulation of vehicles between the main building and the street line, substantially as shown on the Plans. Structured parking may be located within the building, substantially as shown on the Plans.

(b) The number of parking spaces provided on the Property shall not be less than the number of parking spaces required by the underlying zoning district.

(c) All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.

SURROUNDING AREA

Surrounding properties are located within the same TOD-1 District as the subject property. A mix of commercial, office, mixed-use, institutional, residential, and industrial land uses are present in the vicinity.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents, property owners, and the Great Scott's Addition Association of the proposed Special Use Permit. Staff has not received any letters of support or opposition for this application.

Staff Contact:

Matthew Ebinger, Planning Commission Secretary, Land Use Administration, 804-646-6304