



## CITY OF RICHMOND

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

**Ord. No. 2022-229:** To authorize the special use of the property known as 501 North Allen Avenue for the purpose of a hotel use and ground floor commercial use, upon certain terms and conditions, and to repeal Ord. No. 98-115-182, adopted Jun. 8, 1998.

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**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Land Use Administration  
**Date:** September 19, 2022

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#### **PETITIONER**

Mark Kronenthal, representing the applicant

#### **LOCATION**

501 North Allen Avenue

#### **PURPOSE**

To authorize the special use of the property known as 501 North Allen Avenue for the purpose of a hotel use and ground floor commercial use, upon certain terms and conditions, and to repeal Ord. No. 98-115-182, adopted Jun. 8, 1998.

#### **SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit which would allow for hotel and ground floor commercial use within the R-48 Multi-Family Residential District, on a lot with an overall size of 0.048 acres with existing building of roughly 35,000 square feet. Commercial uses are not permitted within the R 48 Residential zone. A Special Use Permit is therefore required.

Staff finds that the proposal would be an appropriate adaptive-reuse of a significant historic building, consistent with the recommendations of the City's Master Plan future land use designation of Neighborhood Mixed-Use. The designation includes neighborhoods of primarily residential uses mixed with commercial uses. The proposed ground floor commercial uses are consistent with the suggestion that in historic neighborhoods, small scale commercial uses are permitted and that "buildings engage with the street" which can be achieved by the introduction of active commercial uses included in this application.

Staff further finds that the proposal would not pose an undue burden on the availability of on-street parking in the area with the inclusion of onsite parking and the applicant's agreement to provide valet parking to offsite parking.

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.

## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **Site Description**

The property is located in the Fan neighborhood at 501 North Allen Avenue, between West Grace Street and Monument Avenue. The property is currently a 19,600 sq. ft. (0.45 acre) parcel of land that contains an existing building known as the Shenandoah Building, constructed around 1905, and previously including multi-family and adult care uses, but is currently vacant.

### **Proposed Use of the Property**

The applicant is requesting to renovate the existing building to include a hotel of 75 rooms, restaurant, and bar. The exterior façade of the building will not be physically altered, although signage is proposed to be placed on the building. Outdoor patio seating is proposed at the base of the building on an existing patio. The hotel will use off-site valet parking along with on-site parking located to the rear of the building.

### **Master Plan**

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Residential. This designation is defined as a "Existing or new highly-walkable urban neighborhoods that are predominantly residential with a small, but critical, percentage of parcels providing retail, office, personal service, and institutional uses."

**Development Style:** These areas feature a variety of building types that are close to one another and create a unified street wall. The building size, density, and zoning districts for these areas vary depending on historical densities and neighborhood characteristics. Future development should generally complement existing context. Setbacks, plazas, and parks create a sense of place and community gathering areas. New developments on larger parcels continue or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity within the neighborhood and to adjacent neighborhoods. In historic neighborhoods, small-scale commercial uses exist today or should be allowed to reestablish. In new neighborhoods, small scale commercial buildings should be introduced.

**Ground Floor:** Regardless of use, buildings should engage the street with features such as street oriented façades with windows and door openings along street frontages. Appropriate setbacks, open space, front porches, elevated ground floors, and other features that provide a sense of privacy should be provided for residential uses.

**Mobility:** Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated. Bike parking is provided. New driveways are prohibited on Priority and Principal Street frontages. Vehicular

access to parcels should use alleys wherever possible. Parking areas should be located to the rear of street-facing buildings.

Intensity: Building heights are generally two to four stories. Buildings taller than four stories may be found along major streets (see Street Typologies Map). Parcels are generally between 1,500 and 5,000 sq. ft.

Primary Uses: Single-family houses, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, small multi-family buildings (typically 3-10 units), and open space.

Secondary Uses: Large multifamily buildings (10+units), retail/office/personal service, institutional, cultural, and government.

## **Zoning**

In response to the SUP request for the above-referenced property, Zoning Administration offers the following comments:

### Zoning and Use:

The subject property is zoned R-48 Multi-Family Residential district and is subject to a Special Use Permit approval (Ord. No. 98-115-182). This proposal is to renovate the interior of the building for conversion from an adult care residence (54 units) into a hotel containing 75 guest rooms with ground floor restaurant space. A hotel and restaurant uses are not permitted principal uses in the R-48 district and a Special Use Permit is required to be adopted by City Council to authorize this use.

### Feature Requirements:

Lot area, lot width, lot coverage, height, and yard requirements are only applicable to permitted principal and accessory uses.

### Parking:

The applicants report states that twenty-four (24) parking spaces will be provided onsite. The survey submitted with the application only shows twenty-three (23) parking spaces (see Fig. 1). It is also noted in the applicants report that the property will provide valet parking services offsite.

The project is located in the Monument Avenue City Old and Historic District. The Committee of Architectural Review (CAR) approved all proposed changes on April 27, 2022.

CAR provided the following conditions:

1. Final sign specification, including design and colors, be submitted for administrative review and approval, and that all signs hardware be installed in a way that does not damage

existing historic material, and that the applicant adhere to any additional sign regulations required by the SUP;

2. The canopies be installed in a way that does not damage existing historic material, final design and color submitted to Staff for administrative review and approval;
3. Final window schedule be submitted for administrative review and approval;
4. And, any additional conditions subsequently imposed by DHR Part II approval be submitted to CAR Staff for administrative review and approval.

Development conditions will be imposed by the special use permit ordinance, including:

3(a) The Special Use of the Property shall be as a hotel use and ground floor commercial use, substantially as shown on the Plans. Commercial uses allowed on the ground floor shall be defined as those permitted on corner lots in the R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential District pursuant to section 30-419.3 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended.

(b) The hotel use shall contain no more than 75 lodging rooms.

(c) The Owner shall provide off-site valet parking for the Special Use.

(d) No fewer than 24 off-street parking spaces shall be provided on the Property for the Special Use, substantially as shown on the Plans. Off-street parking for no fewer than 50 vehicles shall be provided outside of the Property.

(e) The Property may be used for outdoor dining, substantially as shown on the Plans, between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 10:00 p.m. Occupancy of the outdoor dining area shall not exceed 56 persons or the maximum capacity allowed by the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code, whichever is less. No live music shall be permitted in the outdoor dining area. No less than two covered trash containers shall be provided for the outdoor dining area.

(f) Subject to the requirements of the Commission of Architectural Review, signage substantially as shown on the Plans shall be permitted in addition to signage permitted in all districts pursuant to section 30-505 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended.

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

(h) All building materials, elevations, and site improvements shall be substantially as shown on the Plans, subject to the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness by the Commission of Architectural Review.

(i) Retail sale of alcohol, for on-premises or off-premises consumption, may take place within the building and within the outdoor dining areas, subject to the regulations of the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority, or its successor agency.

### **Surrounding Area**

The subject property is zoned R-48 Multi-Family Residential District. Properties to the immediate north, west, and east are zoned R-48 Multifamily Residential and to the immediate south, R-6 Single family Attached Residential. B-6 Mixed Use Business is located one block to the north, along Broad Street.

The subject property is located approximately three blocks from the Alison Street GRTC Pulse station and approximately five blocks from the VCU and VUU station.

### **Neighborhood Participation**

The City notified area residents and property owners along with the Fan District Association, Historic West Grace Street Association, Monument Avenue Preservation Society, and the Fan Area Business Alliance about this application. The Historic West Grace Street Association, Fan District Association, and Monument Avenue Preservation Society have provided written support of the project.

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