



CITY OF RICHMOND

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

Ord. No. 2023-140: To rezone the property known as 1011 Commerce Road from the M-2 Heavy Industrial District to the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: May 15, 2023

PETITIONER

Markham Planning

LOCATION

1011 Commerce Road

PURPOSE

To rezone the properties known as 1011 Commerce Road from the M-2 Heavy Industrial District, to the TOD-1 Transit Oriented Nodal District.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is requesting a Rezoning for Tax Parcel Number S0000388/001, as shown in the 2023 records of the City Assessor, exclude them from the M-2 Heavy Industrial District, and no longer make them subject to the provisions of sections 30-454.1 through 30-454.6 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended, and include it in the TOD-1 Transit Oriented Nodal District, subject to the provisions of sections 30-457.1 through 30-457.10.

Staff finds that the proposal would be consistent with the recommendations of the City's Master Plan pertaining to the Industrial Mixed Use land use categories. This category displays characteristics that align with the TOD-1 zone such as mixed-uses, higher densities, building setbacks and heights, and access management.

Staff also finds that rezoning to TOD-1 will provide development opportunities along a designated Major Mixed-Use Street. These streets seek to provide much higher densities with the goal of creating highly attractive pedestrian environments that are ideal "locations for transit routes and transit stops" (p. 72)

Staff finds that the proposed rezoning is consistent with changing conditions in the area, in which vacant or underutilized parcels, many of which have historically been used for industrial or warehousing purposes, continue to be redeveloped for residential and mixed-use purposes, based on market demand. The existing M-2 zoning designation of the property is not consistent with the Master Plan and development of the property according to M-2 requirements would not be appropriate for the transitioning community.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of the Rezoning request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The properties are located in the Manchester neighborhood between Gordon and Dinwiddie Avenues. The property is a total of 220,849 sq. ft. (5 acres) improved with a one-story, 19,390 sq. ft. warehouse and a one-story, 7,590 sq. ft. office/warehouse, constructed in 1958 and 1983, respectively.

Proposed Use of the Property

Uses permitted within the Transit Oriented Nodal District (TOD-1) zone.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the property as Industrial Mixed Use. This designation is defined as "Formerly traditional industrial areas that are transitioning to mixed-use because of their proximity to growing neighborhoods and changes in market conditions. These areas may still retain some light industrial uses."

Development Style:

A mix of building types with low-scale, post-industrial buildings that are adapted for a new use are adjacent to new taller residential and/or office buildings. These areas allow "maker uses" to continue while encouraging more individuals to live, work, and play in the area. Buildings should have street-oriented façades with windows and door openings along street frontages. New light industrial uses are compatible with residential and office uses, and are attractively buffered. New 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. New driveway entrances are prohibited on priority and principal street frontages and minimal driveway entrances are allowed on secondary streets. Vehicular access to parcels should use alleys where possible. Loading for trucks must be provided off-street. Parking lots and parking areas should be located to the rear of street-facing buildings.

Intensity: Medium- to high-density, three to eight stories.

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

Secondary Uses: Institutional and government.

The property is located on a designated Great Street within Major Mixed Use Street typology. The streets are to have the following characteristics:

- Carry high volumes of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles, through commercial and mixed-use areas.
- Prioritize use and density-scaled sidewalks and crosswalks

- Require form elements, such as buildings to the street with parking in the rear, as well as building windows and entrances on the street
- Incorporate streetscape features, such as trees, benches, and trash receptacles
- Ideal locations for transit routes and transit stops
- Prioritize the curbside for walking, bicycling, transit, and short-term parking access and loading for local shops and restaurants

The current zoning for the properties is M-2 Heavy Industrial District. The surrounding land uses include primarily light industrial uses.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The property is currently zoned M-2. There are three buildings on site; 2 are vacant and deteriorating, and the final building was built in 1983 and has a Certificate of Occupancy for a warehouse and office space. Those uses are currently permitted in the M-2 district. There are no yard requirements applicable to the property currently.

Surrounding Area

Adjacent and nearby properties are a combination of M-1, M-2, and TOD-1 zones. The surrounding area is a mix of commercial offices, warehouses, and light industrial properties.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area property owners and residents and the Oak Grove Civic Association about this application. To this date, staff has not received any correspondence of opposition or support for this application.

Staff Contact: Jonathan Brown, PDR, Land Use Division, 804-646-5734