



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2023-139: To rezone the properties known as 1100 Semmes Avenue and 411 West 12th Street from the B-6 Mixed-Use Business District to the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District, the property known as 1100 McDonough Street from the R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential District to the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District, and the property known as 1000 Semmes Avenue from the RF-2 Riverfront District to the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District. (6th District)

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

PETITIONER

Markham Planning

LOCATION

1000 Semmes Avenue, 1100 Semmes Avenue, 411 West 12th Street, and 1100 McDonough Street

PURPOSE

To rezone the properties known as 1000 Semmes Avenue, 1100 Semmes Avenue, 411 West 12th Street, and 1100 McDonough Street from the RF-1 Riverfront, B-6 Mixed-Use Business, and the R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential Districts, respectively, to the TOD-1 Transit Oriented Nodal District.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is requesting a Rezoning for Tax Parcel Numbers S0000045/009, S0000065/001, S0000065/024, and S0000064/008, as shown in the 2023 records of the City Assessor, and exclude them from the RF-1 Riverfront, B-6 Mixed-Use Business, and the R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential Districts, respectively, and no longer make them subject to the provisions of sections 30-447.1 through 30-447.9, 30-434.1 through 30-434.5, and 30-444.1 through 30-444.8, respectively, of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended, and include each of them 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 Destination and Neighborhood Mixed-Use land use categories. Both of these categories display characteristics that align with the TOD-1 zone such as mixed-uses, higher densities, building setbacks and heights, and access management.

Staff further finds that TOD-1 aligns well with the objectives of the Richmond 300 Plan designated National/Regional Priority Growth Node. These nodes are recognized as requiring zoning which allows for relatively high density, mixed-use development similar to that of TOD-1. Though 1100 McDonough Street does not have frontage on a major street, it is contiguous to the Destination mixed use area along Semmes, and is also located within this node.

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.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of the rezoning request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The properties are located in the Manchester neighborhood between Perry and Semmes Streets. The properties together are a total of 239,529 sq. ft. (5.5 acres) improved with a nine-story, 225,918 sq. ft. office building at 1000 Semmes Avenue, constructed in 1974.

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 1000 and 1100 Semmes Avenue, and 411 West 12th Street, as Destination Mixed-Use. This designation is defined 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:

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.

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan also designates a future land use for 1100 McDonough Street as Neighborhood Mixed Use. This designation is defined as "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. 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 multi-family buildings (10+units), retail/office/personal service, institutional, cultural, 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

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The proposal is to rezone approximately 5.51 acres at the above referenced properties from RF-2 (Riverfront District), B-6 (Mixed Use District), and R-63 (Multifamily Urban Residential District), to TOD-1 (Transit-Oriented Nodal). One of the parcels, 1000 Semmes is improved with a 9-story building constructed in 1974 that contain offices for TForce Freight while the other three parcels are improved with surface parking areas serving the office building. No detailed plans for development or proffers were submitted with the rezoning.

Surrounding Area

All adjacent and nearby properties are located within the same RF-2, B-6, and R-63 zones from which the application is seeking a change to TOD-1. The surrounding area is a mix of commercial offices, single-family housing, and recently developed mixed-use buildings.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents and property owners and the Manchester Alliance neighborhood association about this application. To this date, staff has not received any correspondence of opposition or support for this application.

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