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To: Urban Design Committee  
From: Planning and Preservation Division  
Date: February 5, 2015  
RE: **Final Location, Character and Extent review of a new salt dome to be constructed at 500 Forest Lawn Drive; UDC No. 2015-04**

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**I. APPLICANT**

Lacy Salomone, Department of Public Works

**II. LOCATION**

500 Forest Lawn Drive (Pine Camp)

**Property Owners:**

City of Richmond

**III. PURPOSE**

The application is for final location, character and extent review of a new salt dome to be constructed at 500 Forest Lawn Drive.

**IV. SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

This is a request to construct a new salt dome on a portion of the property at 500 Forest Lawn Drive. The new structure will be a replacement for the existing salt dome presently located at the Parker Field property on Hermitage Road just north of Rhoadmiller Street. Parker Field is in the process of undergoing a makeover through demolition and relocation of existing structures, parking lots and utilities in order to make way for the future development of that property.

The property on which the salt dome will be constructed is also home to several City storage buildings and yards, the City's Urban Forestry division, the existing Police Department K-9 facility (soon to be replaced), a K-9 training area, and the Northside dog park. This site will only be used during or in preparation of inclement weather. Staff is supportive of the relocation of the salt dome to this site, noting that the dome is being constructed in an area that will rarely be visited by the citizenry. Staff finds the proposal to be generally consistent with the recommendations of the Urban Design Guidelines. Therefore, it is Staff's position that the Urban Design Committee should recommend that the Planning Commission grant final approval as submitted.

**Staff Contact:**

Jeff Eastman, (804) 646-6348

**V. FINDINGS OF FACT**

**a. Site Description and Surrounding Context**

The subject property is located at the intersection of Old Brook Road and Azalea Avenue and is zoned R-5 (Single-family residential). The public face of the property is the City's Pine Camp Arts and Community Center, however, the heavily wooded 103.8 acre property extends southward behind the Henderson Sports Complex and is also home to several City storage buildings and yards,

the City's Urban Forestry division, the existing Police Department (RPD) K-9 facility (soon to be replaced), a K-9 training area, and the Northside dog park.

The northern and eastern property lines are also the border between the City and the County of Henrico. The area of Henrico County to the north is developed with single-family residential uses, while the area to the east contains the Forest Lawn Cemetery. At the southern tip of the subject property is the City's Washington Park neighborhood, also zoned R-5 and developed with single-family detached dwellings. To the west of the subject property are the City's John Marshall High School and Henderson Middle School.

**b. Scope of Review**

The project is subject to location, character, and extent review as a "public building" under Section 17.07 of the City Charter.

**c. UDC Review History**

The UDC reviewed and the Planning Commission approved the construction of a new Richmond Police Department K-9 building on another portion of this large property in November 2014. There have also been numerous projects reviewed in the past that relate to Pine Camp.

**d. Project Description**

This is a request to construct a new salt dome on a portion of the property at 500 Forest Lawn Drive. The new structure will be a replacement for the existing salt dome presently located at the Parker Field property on Hermitage Road just north of Rhoadmiller Street. Parker Field is in the process of undergoing a makeover through demolition and relocation of existing structures, parking lots and utilities in order to make way for the future development of that property.

The new salt dome will be similar to the existing structure at Parker Field, consisting of a 6' tall reinforced concrete wall, 82' in diameter with a domed structure atop the wall made of treated timber panels covered with an asphalt shingle roof. The overall height of the dome is 45'6". The dome holds salt used to treat roadways in the winter. A sand stockpile is located outside, to the south of the dome, and room has been provided on the site for an area to mix the sand and the salt. Any or all of the materials could be used depending on the weather conditions at the time of treatment.

The site is currently used as a storage yard and is composed of gravel and hard-packed dirt. There is an existing, 8' tall chain link perimeter fence with two openings on Forest Lawn Drive, one of which will remain in place and the other of which will be relocated. The majority of the site will be paved with asphalt to provide room for the trucks that deliver and spread the sand and salt on the roads to circulate through the chain link fence, receive material and exit the site. The layout also enables a tractor trailer to navigate the site and deliver salt to the interior of the dome. Two parking spaces are provided in the northwest corner of the site. A dry swale BMP (best management practice) for water quantity and water quality requirements, located at the southeast corner of the site, is also included as part of the improvements associated with the project.

Site landscaping is primarily focused along Forest Lawn Drive on the exterior of the perimeter fence and consists mainly of two evergreen species: Eastern Red

Cedar (13 plants) and Dwarf Wax Myrtle (42 plants). There are also two groupings of evergreen Sweet Bay Magnolias, each containing three trees, at the northern and southern ends of the site adjacent to Forest Lawn Drive. The non-paved portions of the site will be planted with a low growing meadow grass mix, and the interior edge of the BMP will be planted with switchgrass.

Site lighting will be provided by dark bronze Lithonia Lighting KAD LED luminaires with color temperatures of 3000k, mounted atop 20' tall, dark bronze square poles. These are the same fixtures and specifications that are being utilized for the site lighting at the Richmond Police Department K-9 facility to the north of this site.

The estimated budget for the project is \$430,000, which is provided through the Boulevard/Parker Field Redevelopment CIP funding. Construction is slated to begin in April 2015, and the facility is expected to open by August 2015.

**e. Master Plan**

The subject corridor is located within the North Planning District as defined by the citywide Master Plan, which recommends Public and Open Space uses for the subject property, a designation that includes publicly owned and operated parks, recreation areas, open spaces and other government and public service facilities (page 135). There is no language in the Plan specific to the subject property or the proposed improvements.

**f. Urban Design Guidelines**

The Urban Design Guidelines are primarily concerned with buildings that are open to the public, however, an apt recommendation to this project is that "building materials should be aesthetically and structurally durable, of high quality, and require little maintenance" (page 17). In regards to landscaping, the Guidelines note that landscape plans should "include diverse plant species, including evergreen, flowering and shade tree species combined with shrubs, ground covers and annual and perennial plantings" (page 10). Lastly, the guidelines express support for low-impact development, the goal of which is to "mimic a site's predevelopment hydrology by using design techniques that infiltrate, filter, store, evaporate, and detain runoff close to its source" (page 11).

**VII. ATTACHMENTS**

- a. Vicinity Map**
- b. Application & Summary**
- c. Plans**