



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

ORD. 2015-202: To rezone certain properties along Meadowbridge Road, East Brookland Park Boulevard, Second Avenue, and Dill Avenue to the UB and UB-2 Urban Business Districts and to designate the PE-8 Meadowbridge Road and Six Points Parking Exempt Overlay District.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: October 5, 2015

PETITIONER

City of Richmond
900 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

LOCATION

Properties along portions of Meadowbridge Road, East Brookland Park Boulevard, Second Avenue, and Dill Avenue.

PURPOSE

To rezone 62 properties along Meadowbridge Road and East Brookland Park Boulevard corridors.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The rezoning would revise the City's Zoning District Map of 2008 in the area known as Six Points, generally consisting of the Meadowbridge Road corridor from Maryland Avenue to the intersection with East Brookland Park Boulevard, Second Avenue, and Dill Avenue. The rezoning would directly affect 62 properties by proposing changes to zoning districts and adding these properties to a parking exempt overlay district. The proposed zoning districts are UB and UB-2, both Urban Business Districts.

The area under consideration for changes to the zoning includes corridor of Meadowbridge Road and the intersection of Meadowbridge Road, East Brookland Park Boulevard, Second Avenue, and Dill Avenue. There are a mix of uses and zoning districts throughout the subject area and it is characterized as a predominantly commercial environment in proximity to residential neighborhoods.

In addition, the proposal would add the properties being rezoned to a parking exempt overlay district. The intent of the parking exempt overlay district is to provide relief from the off-street parking requirements for certain uses so as to facilitate the development and redevelopment of economically depressed, older, urban commercial districts characterized by a substantial number of vacant and deteriorated structures. With the exception of certain high-intensity uses, off-street parking is generally not needed for most uses in these areas because of high vacancy rates, availability of on-street parking, considerable walk-in trade due to proximity to residential areas and available public transportation.

The Commission approved a companion Resolution of Intent to Amend the Zoning Ordinance and the Zoning Map at the July 20, 2015 Meeting. That was the first step for any City-initiated change to the Zoning Ordinance; this is the next step consisting of the ordinance itself. The ordinance and proposed zoning map is included in the agenda package for consideration. Staff recommends approval of the proposed zoning changes.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Background

The rezoning would revise the City's Zoning District Map of 2008 in the area known as Six Points, generally consisting of the Meadowbridge Road corridor from Maryland Avenue to the intersection with East Brookland Park Boulevard, Second Avenue, and Dill Avenue. The rezoning would directly affect 62 properties by proposing changes to zoning districts and adding these properties to a parking exempt overlay district. The proposed zoning districts are UB and UB-2, both Urban Business Districts.

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The predominant zoning along the Meadowbridge Road corridor is currently B-3 General Business District. Also included in the proposed rezoning are properties currently zoned R-5 Single-Family Residential, and B-2 Community Business District.

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The Zoning Ordinance identifies specific uses that have no parking requirements when located within buildings existing on the effective date of the adoption of an exempt overlay district. Some of these uses include retail and office uses.

The City's Master Plan primarily recommends Neighborhood Commercial for the properties proposed for rezoning to Urban Business. Specific to the Meadowbridge commercial corridor, the Plan states, "The Meadowbridge Road commercial corridor is appropriate for pedestrian-oriented neighborhood commercial uses. Auto-related businesses should be discouraged, as should uses that require outside storage. Further expansion beyond the existing boundaries of Maryland Avenue to the north and 4th Avenue to the south should be discouraged. Revitalization efforts should promote the area

as a neighborhood commercial district, emphasizing traditional pedestrian-oriented goods and services over more recent and inappropriate auto-related land uses” (p.259).

Master Plan

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Existing and Proposed Zoning

UB Urban Business District

A UB zone permits multi-family, office, personal service, restaurant, and retail uses. The intent of the district is to encourage business areas with densely developed pedestrian-oriented shopping character, compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods, and with minimal disruption from vehicle-oriented land uses. This district is intended to promote continuity of storefront character along principal street frontages. Drive-up facilities are not permitted. The UB zone allows for residential uses above or to the rear of the first floor in conjunction with other permitted uses as long as the area dedicated to residential use does not exceed three times the area dedicated to the other permitted use. The maximum height allowed in the UB zone is 28 feet.

UB-2 Urban Business District

A UB-2 zone permits multi-family, office, personal service, restaurant, and retail uses. The intent of this district is to encourage business areas with mixed uses and a densely developed pedestrian-oriented urban shopping character, compatible with adjacent residential neighborhoods, and with minimal disruption from vehicle-oriented land uses and features that would detract safe, convenient and economically viable pedestrian environment. Drive-up facilities are not permitted. The UB-2 zone allows for residential uses above the ground floor or to the rear of the first floor in conjunction with other permitted uses as long as the area dedicated to residential use does not exceed three times the area dedicated to the other permitted use. The maximum height allowed in the UB-2 zone is 3 stories, with 4 stories being permitted in certain cases.

B-2 Community Business District (proposed to be removed)

A B-2 zone permits multi-family, auto service centers, office, personal service, restaurant, and retail uses. This districts is intended to apply business areas that serve a number of neighborhoods and exceed the strict individual neighborhood orientation of B-1. A broader range of uses is allowed with less restrictive limits on intensity and signage. Additional drive-up and vehicle-oriented uses are permitted, in addition to entertainment uses and limited wholesale and service activities. The maximum height allowed in the B-2 zone is 35 feet.

B-3 General Business District (proposed to be removed)

A B-3 zone permits multi-family, auto, office, personal service, restaurant, and retail uses. The intent of this district is to be applied to highway-oriented business areas and areas that are accessible to, and serve the needs of an entire section of the City. Sign limitations are minimal. In addition to uses permitted in other commercial zoning districts, B-3 permits auto sales and auto repair, wholesale and distribution activities and research facilities. The maximum height allowed in the B-3 zone is 35 feet.

R-5 Single-Family Attached Residential District (proposed to be removed)

An R-5 zone is a residential zoning district that allows single-family detached dwellings. New single-family detached structures on newly created lots require a minimum lot width of 50 feet and a lot area of 6,000 square feet. The maximum lot coverage required for new single-family detached dwellings for this district is 35%.

Comparison of Relevant Zoning District Regulations¹

Regulation	B-2 District	B-3 District	UB District	UB-2 District
Height	35'	35' with allowance up to 60' in certain cases	28'	2 story minimum; 3 story maximum with allowance for 4 stories in certain cases
Front Yard Setback	25' minimum	None required	None required; 15' maximum	None required; 15' maximum
Side Yard ²	None to 10'minimum	None to 10'minimum	None to 10'minimum	None to 10'minimum
Rear Yard ²	None to 20' minimum	None to 20' minimum	None to 20' minimum	None to 20' minimum
Parking	1 off-street space per 4 dwelling units (none for 3 units); other parking requirements are based on the proposed use; shared parking allowed	1 off-street space per 4 dwelling units (none for 3 units); other parking requirements are based on the proposed use; shared parking allowed	1 off-street space per 4 dwelling units (none for 3 units); other parking requirements are based on the proposed use; shared parking allowed	1 off-street space per 4 dwelling units (none for 3 units); other parking requirements are based on the proposed use; shared parking allowed

¹Includes excerpts and interpretations from the City of Richmond Zoning Ordinance. Persons with specific zoning issues should always consult the Zoning Office.

²Side yard, lot width, and lot area requirements vary within the residential districts based on the intensity of the use (single-family as opposed to two-family or multi-family and detached units as opposed to attached units) and adjacent zoning districts.

Public Participation

Staff attended Councilwoman Robertson's town hall meeting on June 16, 2015 and presented the proposed changes to the community. Approximately 20 people attended the meeting and were generally supportive of the proposed changes. Some concern was expressed by residents regarding the current number of illegal boarding houses in the area.

Subsequently staff sent notices to over 900 property owners, business owners and residents for a public meeting that was held on July 14, 2015. Approximately 35 people attended this meeting.

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