



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2015-195: To authorize the special use of the property known as 4300 West Broad Street for the purpose of a warehouse use with an excess of 20,000 square feet in area dedicated to storage of goods, upon certain terms and conditions.

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

PETITIONER

James W. Theobald
Hirschler Fleischer

LOCATION

4300 West Broad Street

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 4300 West Broad Street for the purpose of a warehouse use with an excess of 20,000 square feet in area dedicated to storage of goods, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant has requested a special use permit to authorize the expansion of an existing warehouse use (i.e., mini storage facility) which would exceed the 20,000 square feet threshold. The subject property is zoned in the B-3 General Business District, which does not allow warehouse use with an excess of 20,000 square feet in area dedicated to storage of goods (Zoning Ord. Sec. 114-438.1(58)). A special use permit is therefore required.

Staff finds that the proposed expansion of an existing use and redevelopment of an underutilized portion of the property is consistent with the Master Plan and the B-3 designation. The property is located along a commercial corridor and will not encroach into residential areas in the vicinity.

Staff further finds that with the conditions of the ordinance, the safeguards contained within the City Charter, relative to the granting of special use permits, are met. Staff therefore recommends approval of the proposed special use permit.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject property is located at 4300 West Broad Street within the Sauer's Gardens neighborhood and Far West planning district of the City of Richmond. A portion of the property is also located within the County of Henrico. The City portion of the property

consists of 0.847 acres (36,895 sq. ft.) and the County portion consists of 1.836 acres (79,976 sq. ft.) for a total of 2.683 acres (116,871 sq. ft.) of land.

The property is improved with a mini storage building built, per tax assessment records, in 2013, and containing 23,670 sq. ft. of storage space (3,670 sq. ft. of which will not be used until the special use permit is approved) and 1,500 sq. ft. of accessory office space within City limits; an additional 105,720 sq. ft. of storage space is located within Henrico County. The property is also improved with a vacant automobile sales/rental facility that would be replaced by a second mini storage building containing 20,463 sq. ft. of storage area within City limits and 21,612 sq. ft. of storage area within Henrico County. In total, 44,133 sq. ft. of area dedicated to storage of goods is proposed for the subject property within City limits and 127,332 sq. ft. within Henrico County.

Proposed Use of the Property

The applicant has requested a special use permit to authorize the expansion of an existing warehouse use (i.e., mini storage facility) which would exceed the 20,000 square feet threshold.

Master Plan

The Land Use Plan of the City of Richmond's Master Plan designates the subject property for General Commercial land use. Primary uses in this category include a broad range of office, retail, general commercial, wholesale and service uses, typically located along major transportation corridors and serving large portions of the City, the region or the traveling public. Land uses in this category are typically of larger scale and intensity than Community Commercial uses, and may not always be highly compatible with residential areas. The typical zoning classification that may accommodate this land use category is B 3 (p. 135).

In regards to the Broad Street corridor within the Far West planning district, the Master Plan states "commercial development and activities on Broad Street...have a tendency to negatively impact adjacent residential neighborhoods with encroaching traffic, parking demand, and noise" (p. 179). "The Broad Street commercial corridor should not be allowed to encroach into adjacent neighborhoods" and "should not include those [uses] inappropriate to the area or in direct conflict with existing uses". However, "Broad Street, from I-95 to the City limits should remain a commercial (primarily retail) corridor" (p. 180). In addition, the property is located along the proposed Broad Street bus rapid transit line.

Zoning & Ordinance Conditions

The subject property is zoned in the B-3 General Business District, which does not allow warehouse use with an excess of 20,000 square feet in area dedicated to storage of goods (Zoning Ord. Sec. 114 438.1(58)).

The special use permit ordinance conditions limit the use of a warehouse use with an excess of 20,000 square feet in area dedicated to storage of goods served by eleven on-site parking spaces, substantially as shown on the Plans.

Freestanding and wall signage on the property shall not exceed an aggregate of 400 square feet in area.

Evidence shall be provided that the County of Henrico has approved the portion of this development that lies within the boundaries of the County of Henrico.

Building materials and landscaping shall be as shown on the Plans.

Mechanical equipment and facilities for the collection of refuse shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from adjacent properties and public streets.

Surrounding Area

Commercial land use predominates the Broad Street corridor in the vicinity of the subject property, with some office and industrial uses being present as well. Residential use predominates the area south and west of the corridor.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified the Sauer's Garden Civic Association and Councilman Baliles of the request. A letter was received from the Sauer's Garden Civic Association indicating that no position has been taken regarding this proposal.

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