



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2015-246: To conditionally rezone the property known as 2825 East Main Street from the M-2 Heavy Industrial District to the B-5 Central Business District, upon certain proffered conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: January 4, 2015

PETITIONER

H. L. Salomonsky
1553 E. Main Street
Richmond, VA 23219

LOCATION

2825 East Main Street

PURPOSE

To conditionally rezone the property known as 2825 East Main Street from M-2 heavy Industrial District to the B-5C Central Business District (Conditional), upon certain proffered conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The subject property at 2825 East Main Street consists of .765-acre parcel, located on the block bounded by East Main Street to the north and east, railroad tracks to the south, and Peach Street to the west. The property is vacant and undeveloped. Libby Hill Park is located across East Main Street from the subject property.

The request is to conditionally rezone the property for the future construction of a multi-family development. The existing zoning designation as M-2 Heavy Industrial does not allow for residential uses. The property is close to much of Tobacco Row, off to the west, and which the bulk of is zoned B-5, including the property immediately to the west, 2823 East Main Street. In addition, the applicant has requested a similar rezoning to B-5C at 2801 East Main Street. The proposed multi-family use is consistent with the B-5 District.

The applicant has proffered the following items to further enhance the future development of the site:

1. There shall be a minimum of one parking space per apartment.
2. The height above the street elevation of Peach Street of elevation 62.0 per the survey by Gene Watson and Associates PC, dated May 20, 2004, shall not exceed 38.0 additional feet except for roof projections allowed by the zoning code for stair towers and elevator towers and various mechanical appurtenances.
3. The predominate exterior of the building shall be glass and brick.

4. There shall be a minimum of one window per apartment.
5. Mechanical equipment on the roof shall be screened.

The Richmond Master Plan designates this property as Mixed-Use. “Primary uses include combinations of office, retail, personal service, general commercial and service uses and, in some cases, multi-family residential and dwelling units above ground floor commercial. Typical zoning classifications that may accommodate this land use category are B-5 and UB (p. 134).”

The subject property was inadvertently omitted from the October 2008 version of the Richmond Downtown Plan, but was subsequently included in the Urban Center Area of the Downtown Character Map as part of the July 2009 amendment to the Richmond Downtown Plan. As such, the foundational elements of the Downtown Plan apply to the subject property, as do the guiding principles of the Urban Center character area. Though the subject property was not included within the bounds of in the Shockoe focus area, the recommendations for the focus area can still inform decisions, since the property is adjacent to the Shockoe Bottom area and an influencing component of the area. With the exception of Libby Hill Park to the north, the subject property is surrounded on three sides by the Shockoe focus area and fronts on Main Street, a main thoroughfare for Shockoe Bottom. Moreover, the subject property sits at the terminus of Cary Street and the buildings comprising Tobacco Row.

The Master Plan also states, “It is anticipated that Shockoe Bottom will continue to evolve as a significant mixed-use District. Renewed interest in Downtown living, spurred by the successful rehabilitation for residential use of a number of industrial buildings in Shockoe Bottom, will most likely continue in key sections of Shockoe Bottom (p. 163).”

Staff finds that the proposed rezoning is consistent with Master Plan’s Mixed-Use recommendation and is consistent with the Plan’s language regarding renewed interest in Downtown living. In addition, the proposed use would be compatible with the surrounding general commercial uses.

The proposed rezoning ordinance will need to be amended due to a clerical error. The ordinance originally stated that the property is zoned M-1. However, the property is actually zoned M-2. The ordinance will need to be amended and continued to correct this oversight.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of the rezoning to B-5C Central Business District (Conditional), subject to the amendment to correct the current zoning of the property.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject property at 2825 East Main Street consists of .765-acre parcel, located on the block bounded by East Main Street to the north and east, railroad tracks to the south, and Peach Street to the west. The property is vacant and undeveloped. Libby Hill Park is located across East Main Street from the subject property.

Proposed Use of the Property

The request is to rezone the property and construct a multi-family development. This proposed use is not permitted in the M-2 District. The proposed use is permitted in the B-5 District.

Master Plan

The Richmond Master Plan designates this property as Mixed-Use. "Primary uses include combinations of office, retail, personal service, general commercial and service uses and, in some cases, multi-family residential and dwelling units above ground floor commercial. Typical zoning classifications that may accommodate this land use category are B-5 and UB (p. 134)."

Zoning & Ordinance Conditions

The proposed multi-family dwellings is not permitted in the M-2 District. The proposed use is permitted in the B-5 District.

The maximum building height in the B-5 District is 5 stories and the parking requirement for multi-family dwellings is 1 space per 4 dwelling units.

The applicant has submitted the following proffers:

1. There shall be a minimum of one parking space per apartment.
2. The height above the street elevation of Peach Street of elevation 62.0 per the survey by Gene Watson and Associates PC, dated May 20, 2004, shall not exceed 38.0 additional feet except for roof projections allowed by the zoning code for stair towers and elevator towers and various mechanical appurtenances.
3. The predominate exterior of the building shall be glass and brick.
4. There shall be a minimum of one window per apartment.
5. Mechanical equipment on the roof shall be screened.

Surrounding Area

The properties to the south are zoned M-2 and contain railroad tracks. The properties to the east are zoned M-2 and are mostly undeveloped. The property to the west is zoned B-5 and is occupied by multi-family apartments. The property to the north is occupied Libby Hill Park.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff has contacted 7th District Council Representative, Cynthia Newbille, and has received no letters of support nor opposition.

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