



## CITY OF RICHMOND

### Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

**Ord. No. 2018-137:** To rezone the property known as 127 North 17th Street from the M-1 Light Industrial District to the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District.

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**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Land Use Administration  
**Date:** May 21, 2018

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#### **PETITIONER**

Lory Markham, Markham Planning

#### **LOCATION**

127 North 17<sup>th</sup> Street

#### **PURPOSE**

To rezone the property known as 127 North 17th Street from the M-1 Light Industrial District to the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District.

#### **SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

The applicant is requesting to rezone the property at the southeast corner of North 17th Street and East Grace Street from the existing M-1 Light Industrial District to the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District, in order to develop a hotel on the property pursuant to the form based regulations of the TOD-1 district.

Staff finds that the subject property is located at a corner site and within the commercial corridor area surrounding the East Franklin Street and East Grace Street corridors between Main Street Station and South 18<sup>th</sup> Street. The proposed rezoning would allow a mix of uses, including neighborhood-oriented uses, as recommended by the Pulse Corridor Plan for Neighborhood Mixed-Use areas.

Staff further finds that the subject property is adjacent to a Corridor Mixed-Use area along East Franklin and East Main Streets, and half a block from the Corridor Mixed-Use area along East Broad Street. The immediate vicinity of the subject property is not primarily residential and can be viewed as an area of transition between the Neighborhood Mixed-Use and Corridor Mixed-Use areas. As such, the proposed rezoning would facilitate the redevelopment of the site as recommended by the Pulse Corridor Plan for Neighborhood Mixed-Use and Corridor Mixed-Use areas, and the Main Street Station Area.

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Staff finds the proposed rezoning would meet the intent of the TOD-1 district in that the subject property is located within the Main Street Station Area (which includes the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Farmers' Market site), which is developing as a node of high activity located near transit service. Moreover, the redevelopment of the subject property would contribute to the ongoing place-making efforts being accomplished within the Main Street Station Area.

Therefore staff recommends approval of the rezoning request.

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## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **Site Description**

The property is approximately 0.62 acres in area and is currently improved with a vacant industrial building and surface parking. The site has most recently been used as a bakery facility operated by the Weiman's Bakery Company. The property is located in the Shockoe Bottom neighborhood at the southeast corner of North 17<sup>th</sup> Street and East Grace Street.

### **Proposed Use of the Property**

The applicant intends to construct a new hotel on the property that would comply with the TOD-1 zoning district regulations.

### **Master Plan**

The City's Pulse Corridor Plan recommends Neighborhood Mixed-Use land use for the subject property. Neighborhood Mixed-use areas are cohesive districts that provide a mix of uses, but with a larger amount of residential uses than other mixed-use districts. They are an urban, walkable environment with limited neighborhood-oriented uses incorporated along key commercial corridors and at corner sites. The recommended height of development is 2 to 8 stories, depending on the neighborhood (p. 31).

The subject property is located within the Main Street Station Area. According to the Pulse Corridor Plan, Nodal Mixed-Uses near Main Street Station allow for intense development with active ground-floor uses near the multi-modal heart of the Richmond Region. The Corridor Mixed-Uses along E. Broad and E. Main Streets encourage the redevelopment of surface parking lots and underutilized buildings into higher-density buildings that focus on creating walkable environments with active ground floors, appropriate streetscape, and minimal driveway entrances. Neighborhood Mixed-Uses in the surrounding area help maintain the existing

residential and mixed uses found in the area, mainly in the form of repurposed warehouses, and allow for appropriate infill development (p. 104).

The subject property is adjacent to a Corridor Mixed-Use area along East Franklin and East Main Streets, and half a block from the Corridor Mixed-Use area along East Broad Street. Such areas, as defined by the Pulse Corridor Plan, are found along major, traditionally commercial corridors like Broad and East Main Streets, and envisioned to provide for medium-density pedestrian- and transit-oriented infill development to fill “missing teeth” of the of the corridor fabric. The recommended height of development is 2 to 10 stories with additional height where appropriate (p. 31).

### **Zoning and Ordinance Conditions**

The subject property is currently located in M-1 Light Industrial District, which permits a wide variety of commercial, industrial and service uses. The proposed rezoning to the TOD-1 district regulations would allow for a mix of uses regulated by form-based code provisions.

The intent of the TOD-1 district is to encourage dense, walkable transit-oriented development consistent with the objectives of the master plan and to promote enhancement of the character of this development along principal corridors, at key gateways, and at nodes of high activity located near transit service, bicycle infrastructure, and pedestrian-friendly streetscapes. The district regulations are also intended to safeguard the character of adjoining properties by only being applied in areas that meet the criteria above, with buffering by setbacks and screening or transitional districts to lower intensity residential areas.

The district regulations are intended to encourage redevelopment and place-making, including adaptive reuse of underutilized buildings, to create a high-quality urban realm. They are intended to improve streetscape character by providing continuity of building setbacks, to enhance public safety by encouraging an active pedestrian environment consistent with the mixed-use character of the district by providing for windows in building facades along street frontages, and to promote an environment that is safe for walking and biking.

The TOD-1 regulations allow for a mix of uses and specify standards for maximum front yard setbacks, useable open space for dwelling uses, screening of parking areas and refuse areas, location of parking areas, and building façade fenestration. The minimum building height is 2 stories, the maximum building 12 is twelve stories.

Hotels within the TOD-1 district are required to have a portion of the ground floor be dedicated to non-hotel uses, such as retail or restaurant uses. A plan of development is also required for hotels

within the TOD-1 district. The plan of development would be reviewed to assure compliance with the TOD-1 district and Pulse Corridor Plan and would be approved by the Director of Planning and Development Review.

### **Surrounding Area**

Property to the east and west of the subject property is located in the same M-1 Light Industrial District as the subject property. Properties to the north and south are located in the B-5 Central Business District.

Properties to the north and west are improved primarily with surface parking areas. A mix of commercial, mixed-use, industrial, office, vacant, and multi-family residential land uses is present to the south and east of the subject property. This property is in close proximity to Main Street Station and the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Farmers' Market site, as well as City's canal walk area.

### **Neighborhood Participation**

A letter in support of the proposed rezoning has been received from the Shockoe Partnership.

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