



CITY OF RICHMOND

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

UDC 2018-33 Final Location, Character and Extent Review of a Modular Building at William Fox Elementary School (2300 Hanover Avenue)

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: July 30, 2018

PETITIONER

Bobby Hathaway – Richmond Public Schools

LOCATION

2300 Hanover Avenue (William Fox Elementary School)

PURPOSE

Final Location, Character and Extent Review of a Modular Building at William Fox Elementary School (2300 Hanover Avenue)

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

William Fox Elementary has a functional capacity of 480 students. During 2017/2018 the enrollment numbers were at 530. Classroom sizes are averaging 25:1. RPS functional classrooms are 18:1-19:1. RPS expects enrollment numbers to remain consistent at 530 for the next two to three years.

This project would provide two temporary modular classrooms in an effort to reduce classroom sizes. Work is scheduled to be substantially completed by the first week of school. The School Administration is currently working with the City of Richmond to build three new schools.

The proposed modular classrooms are subject to location character, and extent review as “public buildings or structures” in accordance with Section 17.07 of the City Charter. This project was not reviewed by the Urban Design Committee because the Planning Commission, in an October 2016 resolution, exempted modular classrooms from Urban Design Committee review for location, character, and extent to expedite the review process.

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission approve the Final Location, Character and Extent Item, with the following conditions:

1. Additional landscaping or other screening shall be provided, as approved by the Director of Planning and Development Review, for the proposed modular classrooms and covered deck walkway.
 2. A new tree with a caliper of at least 2.5 inches shall be planted on the property to offset the existing tree that was removed for this project.
 3. The wood used in the construction of the covered deck walkway and canopy shall be finished with paint, stain, or similar materials.
-

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The property is a part of the Richmond Public School system and is currently improved with the Fox Elementary School building, a play area, and open space. The 3 acre parcel is located in The Fan neighborhood and encompasses the block bound by Hanover Avenue, North Stafford Avenue, Stuart Avenue, and Strawberry Street.

Proposal

The installation of a 2-classroom building, with restrooms, which will add to the capacity of Fox Elementary. The temporary classroom building will be approximately 24' x 68' in size, located behind the left rear of the school building (on the North Stafford Avenue side of the property), and connected to the school building via ADA ramps and elevated walkways covered with a canopy.

The modular classrooms will have the following exterior characteristics:

- Exterior lighting will be installed under the walkway canopy and over each door
- Hardipanel beige exterior siding
- Contrasting hard trim
- White EPDM roof
- Steel doors with half lite glass

Per the applicant's report, once enrollment numbers decrease to the RPS functional level, or a plan to address the overcrowding has been implemented, and space in the permanent building is available, the temporary modular buildings will be removed. This includes all associated walkways and utilities. The site will be returned to its original condition.

Master Plan

The property is located in the City's Near West Planning District. The City of Richmond's current Master Plan designates a future land use category for the subject property as Public & Open Space. Primary uses for this category "...include publicly owned and operated parks, recreation areas, open spaces, schools, libraries, cemeteries and other government and public service facilities. Also included are environmentally sensitive areas and scenic areas where urban development should not occur. Typically, this category depicts larger scale uses or open spaces, while small-scale facilities are incorporated within the predominant surrounding land use designations" (p. 135).

Zoning

The current zoning for the subject property is R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential, which allows libraries, museums, schools, parks and recreational facilities owned or operated by any governmental agency.

Surrounding Area

Surrounding properties are also located in the R-6 district and are improved with a mix of uses but are primarily single-family, two-family, and multi-family residential uses, with some commercial uses present as well.

Staff Contact: Matthew J. Ebinger, AICP, Principal Planner – Land Use Administration
804-646-6308