

APPLICANT'S REPORT

May 22, 2018

*Special Use Permit Request
1301 North 30th Street, Richmond, Virginia
Map Reference Number: E000-0625/015*

Submitted to:	City of Richmond Department of Planning and Development Review Land Use Administration 900 East Broad Street, Suite 511 Richmond, Virginia 23219
Submitted by:	Baker Development Resources 11 South 12 th Street, Suite 500 Richmond, Virginia 23219

Introduction

The property owner is requesting a special use permit (SUP) for 1301 North 30th Street (“the Property”). The SUP would authorize the rehabilitation of an existing building for use as a corner commercial use and two dwelling units which do not conform to the underlying R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential district zoning requirements applicable to the Property.

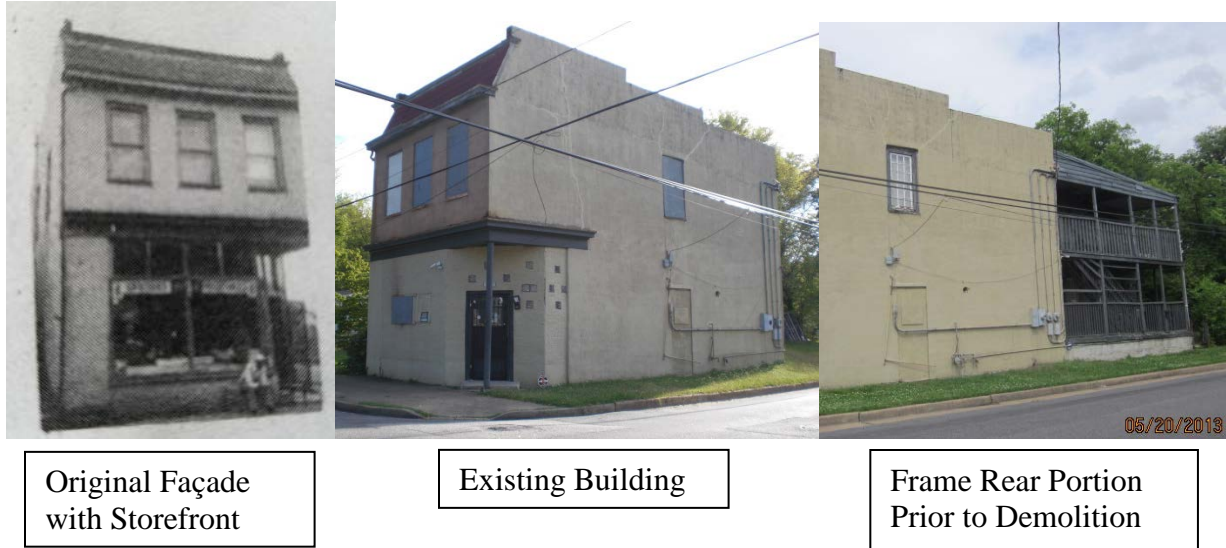
Existing Conditions

SITE DESCRIPTION AND EXISTING LAND USE

The Property is located at the northeast corner of North 30th Street and S Street. The Property is referenced by the City Assessor as tax parcel E000-0625/015. The Property is roughly 22’ wide by 90’ in depth and contains approximately 1,996 square feet of lot area.



The Property is improved with a two-story, parged brick building with a false mansard and a rear sloping roof. According to City Assessor’s records, the building originally included 2,976 square feet of floor area and included a two-story frame building section to the rear of the existing building. In this original configuration, the building was occupied by a first-floor corner commercial use and two dwelling units, as is proposed today. The building’s façade was historically improved with a full storefront, which was enclosed at some point by a previous owner. The building has now been vacant for a number of years with the corner commercial space last occupied by a convenience store in 1994. Most recently, a previous owner demolished the frame portion of the building, leaving 1,676 square feet of floor area.



The properties to the east are vacant. Properties to the north are generally developed with single-family dwellings. The property to the west, across North 30th Street is occupied by a church. Further to the west, lie a mix of single-family attached and detached dwellings and multi-family dwellings within the Beckstoffer's Mill development. To the south across S Street, properties are developed with a single-family dwelling as well as single-family attached dwellings and a three unit multi-family dwelling that were authorized by special use permits.

EXISTING ZONING

The Property is zoned R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential. The surrounding properties are also zoned R-6 with properties further to the west, across 29th Street being zoned R-63 Multi-Family Urban Residential.

MASTER PLAN DESIGNATION

The Master Plan recommends "Single-Family (Medium Density)" for the Property. The Master Plan describes this land use category as follows: "Primary uses are single-family and two-family dwellings, both detached and attached..." which supports the residential component of the request at two dwellings units. There are also a variety of general housing goals contained in the Master Plan Neighborhoods and Housing chapter that are applicable to the residential portion of the request. These goals include, among other things, recognition of the need for the continued creation of market rate rental housing and a desire for neighborhoods to provide a variety of housing choices while remaining economically diverse. The East District Chapter lends support to the rehabilitation of this blighted property by recognizing the issue of vacant and deteriorating housing as a significant issue and noting that, demolition is inappropriate in most instances, given the fact that a majority of the structures in the district are historically and architecturally significant.

In terms of commercial use, the East District Chapter Land Use Policies and Strategies indicate "Within the East District there are numerous isolated single-site commercial uses (either the traditional "corner store" or groupings of businesses in the center of the block). Neighborhood commercial uses traditionally provide needed goods and services to adjacent residents, and when located in multi-story buildings were usually coupled with residential uses above...such uses should be restricted to neighborhood commercial

uses with limitations on operating hours, employees, and signage.” The SUP process represents an appropriate way to accomplish the careful review the of such commercial uses in order to ensure those uses meet a legitimate neighborhood need.

Proposal

PROJECT SUMMARY

The proposed development includes the rehabilitation of the existing building and addition thereto for use as a corner commercial use and two dwelling units, consistent with the original use of the property.

PURPOSE OF REQUEST

The Property was originally developed in 1922, prior to zoning, with a ground floor commercial use and two dwelling units. Over the years, the immediate vicinity was zoned for and developed primarily for residential uses rendering the commercial use as an isolated nonconforming corner commercial use. The current R-6 zoning does not permit the original and proposed use of the Property. Because the building has been vacant for well over two years, any nonconforming rights associated with that use have been lost. The owner now proposes to renovate and enlarge the existing building and to occupy it with a corner commercial use and two dwelling units. This is consistent with the original use of the Property and the use of the Property at the time it became nonconforming. However, due to the demolition of a substantial portion of the building by a previous owner, there is no means by which the nonconforming use, as it originally existed, may be re-established. Therefore, an SUP is required in order to permit the proposed development.

In exchange for the SUP, the intent of this request is to provide two high-quality market rate dwellings and a neighborhood-serving commercial use. The project would remain consistent with historic use of the property while allowing for the rehabilitation of a vacant and blighted structure which is part of the neighborhood fabric. The quality assurances conditioned through the SUP would guarantee a higher quality development than might otherwise be developed by right. They would also ensure an appropriately scaled commercial use that is compatible with and complementary to the surrounding residential neighborhood.

PROJECT DETAILS

The existing two-story structure would be retained and expanded with a two-story rear addition. This would increase the overall floor area from 1,676 square feet to 2,690 square feet of floor area. This compares favorably to the original building configuration which, according to City Assessor's records, included 2,976 square feet of floor area. The original storefront area would be re-established with a new storefront system. The existing building's exterior would be stripped of the concrete parging to expose the existing masonry walls and the proposed addition would be clad in a brick veneer in order to match. Existing historic wood trim would be retained and repainted.

The existing portion of the building would be configured with an 840 square foot commercial tenant space on the first floor and an 800 square foot one-bedroom dwelling on the second floor. The rear addition would be configured as a two-story, 1,050 square foot two-bedroom dwelling. The dwelling floor plans are spacious and modern with open living areas.

The commercial tenant space would be upgraded to meet the expectations of high quality commercial tenants in today's market. The space is intended to be occupied consistent with the intent of the R-63 zoning district regulations which were designed to permit small scale commercial uses that serve day-to-day convenience needs of neighborhood residents. Consistent with the R-63 regulations, the proposed commercial use would be limited in type and scale and would be intended to provide for the convenience of neighborhood residents within walking distance, to respect the primary residential character of the neighborhood and to avoid traffic, parking, noise and other impacts that typically result from uses that draw patrons from outside a neighborhood. At 840 square feet the proposed commercial space would be scaled down significantly and even less impactful when compared to the 1,500 square foot corner commercial uses that are permitted in the R-63 district as a matter of right. To ensure compatibility, the use of the commercial tenant space would be limited to active neighborhood-serving commercial uses, including: retail; office; art galleries; barber shops and beauty salons, including manicure, spa, tanning and similar services; grocery, convenience and specialty food and beverage stores (including retail bakery); laundromats and laundry and dry-cleaning pick-up; and restaurants and other food and beverage establishments. As an alternative, the commercial tenant space could be occupied as a live/work unit.

Findings of Fact

The following are factors indicted in Section 17.11 of the Charter and Section 114-1050.1 of the Zoning Ordinance relative to the approval of special use permits by City Council. The proposed special use permit will not:

- ***Be detrimental to the safety, health, morals and general welfare of the community involved.***

The proposed special use permit will not impact the safety, health, morals and general welfare of the nearby neighborhoods.

- ***Tend to create congestion in streets, roads, alleys and other public ways and places in the area involved.***

The proposed special use permit will not result in significant traffic impacts to nearby residential neighborhoods. The negligible traffic generation associated with two dwelling units and an 840 square foot commercial tenant space will create no congestion on streets, roads, alleys or any other public right of way. The proposed commercial use would be limited in size, type and scale and would be intended to provide for the convenience of neighborhood residents within walking distance and to avoid any traffic or parking concerns.

- ***Create hazards from fire, panic or other dangers.***

The property will be developed in a manner consistent with the requirements of the building code and in accordance with the requirements of Fire and Emergency Services. The City's codes applicable to this development are designed to eliminate such hazards.

- ***Tend to overcrowding of land and cause an undue concentration of population.***

The proposed special use permit will not tend to over crowd the land or create an undue concentration of land.

- *Adversely affect or interfere with public or private schools, parks, playgrounds, water supplies, sewage disposal, transportation or other public requirements, conveniences and improvements.*

The proposed special use permit would not adversely affect the above referenced City services. To the contrary, the proposal would provide positive fiscal (tax) benefits that would enhance the City's ability to provide these services to the proposed development.

- *Interfere with adequate light and air.*

The light and air available to the subject and adjacent properties will not be affected. The building is existing and the proposed addition is consistent with the portion of the building which was only recently demolished. The building is of compatible massing to many of the existing buildings in the vicinity, which are in many cases attached, and will not interfere with the provision of adequate light and air to the adjacent buildings.

Summary

In summary we are enthusiastically seeking approval for this SUP, which would permit the rehabilitation of the existing building and addition thereto. The building renovation and expansion has been thoughtfully designed in order to transform the current blighted and deteriorating structure with a high-quality development. The proposed development would respectfully revive this significant piece of the existing urban fabric which has been long vacant and boarded. This request is a preferable alternative to continued underutilization of the Property.

The request offers compatibility with goals contained within the City's Master Plan and is consistent with the historic use of the property. The request would contribute to the ongoing revitalization of the neighborhood, upgrading the Property while: maintaining a desirable variation in housing style and density in the vicinity; providing for continued economic diversity in housing options within the neighborhood; and allowing for a walkable neighborhood serving commercial use as a compliment to surrounding residential uses. It will help encourage a pedestrian friendly urban streetscape in the vicinity. This would contribute to the vibrancy of the block through the provision of addition street life in the form of pedestrian traffic and restored pedestrian-scaled store-front fenestration. Finally, the quality assurances and improvements and conditions related to the renovation and commercial tenant space as defined by the SUP would guarantee a higher quality development than might otherwise be developed by right and would ensure a modern and appropriately scaled neighborhood-serving commercial use.