



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2018-303: To rezone the properties known as 710 and 712 West Fells Street, 1705 and 1705½ Chamberlayne Avenue, and a portion of the property known as 1707 Chamberlayne Avenue from the M-1 Light Industrial District to the B-6 Mixed-Use Business District; and a portion of the property known as 1707 Chamberlayne Avenue and the properties known as 1716 and 1718 Roane Street from the R-53 Multifamily Residential District to the B-6 Mixed-Use Business District.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: December 3, 2018

PETITIONER

Lory Markham – Markham Planning

LOCATION

1705 Chamberlayne Avenue; 1705½ Chamberlayne Avenue; 1707 Chamberlayne Avenue
710 West Fells Street; 712 West Fells Street
1716 Roane Street; 1718 Roane Street

PURPOSE

To rezone the properties known as 710 and 712 West Fells Street, 1705 and 1705½ Chamberlayne Avenue, and a portion of the property known as 1707 Chamberlayne Avenue from the M-1 Light Industrial District to the B-6 Mixed-Use Business District; and a portion of the property known as 1707 Chamberlayne Avenue and the properties known as 1716 and 1718 Roane Street from the R-53 Multi-Family Residential District to the B-6 Mixed-Use Business District.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is proposing to rezone seven properties located within the M-1 Light Industrial District and the R-53 Multi-Family Residential District to the B-6 Mixed-Use District in order to allow residential development.

Staff finds the proposed zoning district to be appropriate for the property and would contribute to the revitalization of the area. The proposed rezoning of the properties would enable infill development that restores the urban form consistent with established Richmond neighborhoods.

Staff finds the rezoning would be consistent with the Master Plan objectives to promote enhancement of the city's primary transportation corridors and would enable a residential density that supports commercial uses in the area, as supported by the VUU/Chamberlayne Neighborhood Plan.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of this rezoning request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The seven properties are contiguous and comprise a total of 1.497 acres and are located in the Chamberlayne Industrial Center neighborhood, in the block bound by School Street, Roane Street, West Fells Street and Chamberlayne Avenue. 1705 ½ and 1707 Chamberlayne Avenue contain a paved parking area and a 784 square foot building. 1705 Chamberlayne Avenue contains a dilapidated 5,690 square foot warehouse and retail structure. Two properties located at 1716 and 1718 Roane Street are vacant and are being used for vehicle storage. The properties located at 710 and 712 West Fells are unimproved.

Proposed Use of Property

The applicant is proposing a development containing multifamily residential use.

Master Plan

The City of Richmond's current Master Plan designates a future land use category for the subject properties as Community Commercial. Primary uses for this category "...include office, retail, personal service and other commercial and service uses, intended to provide the shopping and service needs of residents of a number of nearby neighborhoods or a section of the City. As compared to Neighborhood Commercial, this category includes a broader range of uses of greater scale and intensity, with greater vehicular access and orientation, but that are also compatible with nearby residential areas. Typical zoning classifications that may accommodate this land use category: B-2, UB, and UB-2." (City of Richmond Master Plan, p. 134.)

The more recent VUU/Chamberlayne Neighborhood Plan (adopted September 2015) recommends Community Commercial land use for the portion of the subject property currently zoned M-1, and recommends Multi-Family Residential land use for the portion of the subject property zoned R-53. The Plan recommends UB-2 or B-6 zoning to accomplish Community Commercial land use, and R-63 zoning to accomplish Multi-Family Residential land use.

The VUU/Chamberlayne Neighborhood Plan addresses this section of Chamberlayne Avenue, noting that large blocks with vacant or low-density commercial uses should be redeveloped into higher-density mixed use buildings. Ground floor commercial uses could include a grocery store. Apartments located in the upper floors would be highly desirable. Street improvements combined with redevelopment will transform this part of Chamberlayne from a highway to an attractive urban boulevard. (VUU/Chamberlayne Neighborhood Plan, p. 35.)

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current Zoning Districts for the properties are M-1 Light Industrial and R-53 Multi-Family Residential. These zoning classifications are inconsistent with the recommendations made in the VUU/Chamberlayne Neighborhood Plan. Sec. 30-444.1 of the zoning ordinance, states that the intent of the B-6 Mixed-Use Business District is to encourage appropriate infill development on undeveloped land and to enable redevelopment of properties where continuation of current uses or adaptive reuse is not feasible, depending on the character and needs of particular areas.

The district regulations are also intended to safeguard the character of adjoining properties, to maintain existing streetscape character by providing continuity of building setbacks and heights, to enhance public safety and encourage an active pedestrian environment appropriate to the mixed use character of the district by providing for windows in building facades along street frontages, and to promote an environment that is conducive to preservation of important historic, architectural and cultural features that may exist within the district.

Finally, the district regulations are intended to ensure adequate accessible parking and safe vehicular and pedestrian circulation, to facilitate a streetscape with minimum setbacks along principal street frontages and to provide for limited interruption by driveways and vehicular traffic across public sidewalk areas along principal street frontages.

Thus, the B-6 Mixed-Use Business District is consistent with the VUU/Chamberlayne Neighborhood Plan.

If rezoned to the B-6 Mixed-Use Business District, as proposed, the development requirements of the B-6 district, including permitted uses, setbacks, screening, parking areas, height, and building façade fenestration, would apply to the property.

Surrounding Area

Properties to the north, south and west of the subject property are located in the M-1 Light Industrial District. The property adjacent to the east is located in the R-53 Multi-Family Residential District. A mix of commercial, vacant, office, and multi-family residential land uses are located in the vicinity.

Neighborhood Participation

The applicant and staff attended a meeting of the Chamberlayne Industrial Center Association on August 15, 2018. The applicant provided detailed information about the proposed rezoning. There were no objections expressed at this meeting.

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