



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2019-012: To authorize the special use of the property known as 602 Libbie Avenue for the purpose of an office use, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: February 4, 2019

PETITIONER

Lory Markham – Markham Planning

LOCATION

602 Libbie Avenue

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 602 Libbie Avenue for office use, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The subject property consists of an 11,050 SF or .3 acre parcel of land improved with a 1,672 square foot building constructed, per tax assessment records, in 1941. The building has been used for residential use and is located in the Far West Planning District, on the Libbie Avenue corridor between the Libbie/Grove and Libbie/Patterson Service Areas. The proposed use of the property is to be an office use within an existing building, with on-site parking.

Staff finds that the proposed use would contribute to the mix of uses consistent with the Master Plan's land use recommendations for the subject property as well as for the Libbie Avenue corridor.

Staff finds that the proposal would not pose an undue burden on the availability of on-street parking in the area.

Staff further finds that with the ordinance conditions the safeguards contained within the City Charter, relative to the granting of Special Use Permits, are met. Specifically, staff finds that the proposed use would not be detrimental to the general welfare of the community involved and would not create congestion in the streets in the area involved.

Therefore staff recommends approval of the Special Use Permit request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject property consists of an 11,050 SF or .3 acre parcel of land improved with a 1,672 square foot building constructed, per tax assessment records, in 1941. The building has been used for residential use and is located in the Far West Planning District, between the Libbie/Grove and Libbie/Patterson Service Areas.

Proposed Use of the Property

The proposed use of the property is to be an office use within an existing building, with on-site parking.

Master Plan

The City of Richmond's current Far West Planning District Land Use Plan designates a future land use category for the subject property as Mixed Use (MU). 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. Generally, such areas consist of a mix of several types of uses, designed and arranged to be compatible with one another. Each type of use could function independently, but all benefit from proximity to one another. The mix of uses and predominant land use character may vary considerably by location, and are described in each case in the text of the District Plans. Typical zoning classifications that may accommodate this land use category: B-5, UB, UB-2, B-6, and B-7 (p. 134).

Specifically for this portion of the Libbie Avenue corridor, the Master Plan states, "Although historically Grove and Patterson were separate shopping districts, there is an accelerated positive trend that will eventually join these into one shopping district. Development and zoning conversions are bringing more and more commercial and office uses to Libbie, between Grove and Patterson. This evolution of the three streets into one town center for Westhampton will be important to the vitality of all the businesses on each of these streets. Expansion of the Libbie/Grove Service Center should occur north on those parcels that front Libbie Avenue to Kensington Avenue as shown on the Land Use Plan map. As shown on the amended Land Use Plan, mixed use development is appropriate for these parcels" (p. 183)

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The property is located in the R-4 Single Family Residential Zoning District, which does not permit office use.

Additional conditions will be imposed by the Special Use Permit ordinance, including:

3(a) The use of the Property shall be office use, including business, professional and administrative offices.

(b) No fewer than 3 on-site parking spaces shall be provided on the Property, substantially shown on the Plans.

(c) Signage pertaining to the Special Use shall be comply with underlying zoning.

(d) The floor area of the office use may be expanded to the rear of the existing building by up to 1,000 square feet subject to approval of a plan of development in accordance with Chapter 30, Article X, Division 4 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2015), as amended. Any expansion shall be governed by the zoning regulations prescribed for the district in which the Property is situated and shall not exceed two stories in height.

4(c) Facilities for the collection of refuse shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of the Director of Public Works. Such facilities shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from adjacent properties and public streets.

Surrounding Area

Surrounding properties are also located in the R-4 district. Properties located further south are located in the RO-1 Residential-Office and UB Urban Business Districts; properties located further north are within the B-2 Community Business District.

A mix of commercial, office, and residential land uses are present along the Libbie Avenue corridor.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff has received a letter of no opposition from the Westhampton Planning and Advisory Committee, as well as letters of opposition from the Westview Civic Association and area residents regarding this application.

Staff Contact: Jonathan Brown, Land Use Administration, 804-646-5734