



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2019-351: To amend Ord. No. 2015-5-30, adopted Feb. 9, 2015, which authorized a Preliminary Community Unit Plan permitting the development of a residential community of up to 300 dwelling units on approximately 21.76 acres of land located at 1501 North 31st Street and 1611 North 31st Street, to modify the phasing requirements.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: January 6, 2020

PETITIONER

The Community Builders

LOCATION

Property Bound by North 31st Street, Kuhn Street, and Oakwood Cemetery, known as the Old Armstrong High School Community Unit Plan (Church Hill North)

PURPOSE

To amend Ord. No. 2015-5-30, adopted Feb. 9, 2015, which authorized a Preliminary Community Unit Plan permitting the development of a residential community of up to 300 dwelling units on approximately 21.76 acres of land located at 1501 North 31st Street and 1611 North 31st Street, to modify the phasing requirements.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

A Preliminary Community Unit Plan was adopted in 2015 authorizing up to 300 dwelling units (50 single-family; 250 multi-family), with provisions for phasing of the single-family and multi-family dwelling units. The applicant has requested modifications to the phasing requirements to allow for greater flexibility in the development of the property. An amendment to the Preliminary Community Unit Plan Ordinance is therefore required.

Staff finds that the proposed amendment to phasing requirements would not alter the development features or standards of the community that is currently under construction.

Staff finds that the proposed Preliminary Community Unit Plan Amendment will adequately safeguard the health, safety and welfare of the occupants of the adjoining and surrounding properties, will not unreasonably impair an adequate supply of light and air to adjacent properties, will not unreasonably increase congestion in streets and will not increase public danger from fire or otherwise unreasonably affect public safety and will not diminish or impair the established values of property in surrounding areas.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of the proposed Preliminary Community Unit Plan Amendment.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject property consists of on approximately 21.76 acres of land bound by North 31st Street, Kuhn Street, and Oakwood Cemetery, in the Church Hill North neighborhood of the East Planning District. Construction of dwelling units, as authorized by the Community Unit Plan (Ord. No. 2015-5-30), is underway on the subject property. The site is the location of the former Armstrong High School facility.

Proposed Use of the Property

The use of the property would continue as an affordable residential development containing open space, community facilities, and 300 dwelling units comprised of a total of 50 single-family and 250 multi-family (apartments, stacked flats, and townhouse) dwelling units. Phasing requirements of the development would be modified as stated in the Zoning and Ordinance Conditions section below.

Master Plan

The City's Master Plan recommends Public & Open Space land use for the subject property.

The Plan also states "Richmond neighborhoods will be recognized as safe, attractive and desirable places to live, work and raise families, while providing a variety of housing choices and homeownership opportunities." (p. 96).

Also for the East District, the Plan states there is "a continued need...to stabilize older low-income residential neighborhoods throughout the District, particularly north of Broad Street in the Church Hill, Oakwood/Chimborazo, and Farimount neighborhoods" (p. 163).

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The underlying zoning of the subject property is R-5 Single-Family Residential, which is superseded by the Community Unit Plan ordinance (Ord. No. 2015-5-30, adopted Feb. 9, 2015).

The proposed amendment to the Phasing requirements is as follows:

Residential construction on the Property may be developed in phases. ~~[Each phase]~~ Phase 1A and Phase 1B of the development, as shown on the exhibit entitled "Church Hill North Revitalization, Phasing Diagram," prepared by Torti Gallas and Partners, Inc., and dated December 2, 2016, a copy of which is attached to and made a part of this amendatory ordinance, shall include sufficient single-family dwelling units so that cumulatively there are a minimum of 16 percent single-family dwelling units and a maximum of 84 percent multifamily dwelling units. Certificates of use and occupancy shall not be issued for more than 85 percent of the multifamily dwelling units constructed in ~~[each phase]~~ Phase 1A and Phase 1B of the development until such time as building permits have been issued and the construction has commenced on the required single-family dwelling units either cumulatively or in that phase of development. The community center and the "formal" open space, as shown on the ~~[attached]~~ Preliminary Plan attached to Ordinance No. 2015-5-30, adopted February 9, 2015, shall be provided prior to the issuance of a certificate of use and occupancy for the 150th dwelling unit. The final certificate of use and occupancy for the last multifamily ~~[dwellings]~~ dwelling shall not be issued until such time as

building permits have been issued and the construction has commenced on [~~the required 50~~] at least 20 single-family dwellings.

Surrounding Area

The surrounding properties to the east and west are also located in the R-5 District. The properties to the west are occupied by single-family residential uses. Oakwood Cemetery is located to the east. The properties to the north along Nine Mile Road are located in the B-2 Community Business District and are occupied by a mix of commercial uses. The properties to the south are located in the R-5 District and R-53 Multi-Family Residential District and are occupied by single-family residential uses.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified adjacent property owners of the proposed amendment and has not received any letters of support or opposition.

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