



December 2, 2020

Mr. Matthew Ebinger  
City of Richmond, Department of Planning and Development Review  
Land Use Administration Division, Room 511  
City Hall, 900 E Broad Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

**Re: Special Use Permit: 501 Oliver Hill Way (E0000248001)**

Mr. Ebinger,

This letter shall serve as the Applicant's Report accompanying the application for a special use permit (the "SUP") for the property known as 501 Oliver Hill Way, identified as Tax Parcel E-000-248/001 (the "Property"). The Property is located on the east side of Oliver Hill Way between Venable Street and Clay Street. The Property consists of an irregularly-shaped lot that contains approximately 0.852 acres of lot area, and is occupied by a two-story building containing 38,796 square feet of floor area. The building was built in 1965, and was last utilized as a manufacturing use. The SUP would permit the use of the existing building on the Property as a warehouse and/or uses related to breweries & manufacturing, warehouse & distribution of food & beverages as defined in the Zoning Ordinance TOD-1 District Regulations, Section 30-457.2 (4)(14).

The Property was rezoned to B-5 conditional (Ordinance 2006-277-278) by a previous owner in 2006. That rezoning was one of four companion rezonings that collectively rezoned the former Cold Storage complex in the vicinity in order to allow for its redevelopment, consisting of the adaptive reuse of existing historic structures utilizing historic tax credits. The redevelopment of the Property originally contemplated never occurred for a variety of reasons, including the inability to utilize historic tax credits for building conversion and the unfortunate timing of the rezoning as related to the economic downturn in 2008. The existing building remains vacant.

The current economic context may now support redevelopment of the Property in a way that is consistent with master plan guidance and the original B-5 conditional rezoning. However, the City's Shockoe Valley Street Improvements Plan now proposes substantial right-of-way (ROW) changes in the area, which will not be complete until 2025 at the earliest. While these changes will likely result in a better context for the Property's redevelopment, they also cause a timing issue for the property owner. No redevelopment of the Property can be pursued in the short-term as the Property's street frontage and access will likely change substantially. Once the proposed ROW changes are complete, future redevelopment of the Property, including potential adaptive reuse of the current structure, will better support the City's goals for the area and optimize the potential of an important corner in this reconfigured corridor. In the meantime, the ROW changes will push the development of the Property out several years and prevent any redevelopment consistent with the rezoning until that time.

The SUP request is made in this context. With the delay of any future redevelopment of the Property, the property owner would like to utilize the building consistent with its past use until such time

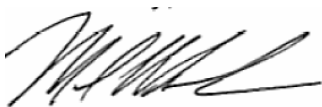
that the Property can be redeveloped. As a result, the SUP request is not about the final goal of redeveloping the Property. Instead, it is about deriving near-term benefit from the Property, largely in its extant condition, until such time that the redevelopment context is clearer based on the timing of planned City improvements. A future redevelopment of the Property in the context of planned ROW improvements will better achieve the goals of the City in this area. In the meantime, the owner can help mitigate losses due to the ROW improvement timing by occupying the existing building with a use generally consistent with the original use of the building.

The SUP would authorize the Property to be utilized as a warehouse as well as uses related to breweries and manufacturing, and the warehouse and distribution of food and beverages as described in the Zoning Ordinance TOD-1 District Regulations, Section 30-457.1 paragraphs (4) and (14). The requested uses would provide near-term utility of the building until such time that redevelopment options can be considered in the context of the new, improved streets configuration.

The request is respectful of future land use guidance applicable to the Property. The Richmond 300 Plan suggests the "Destination Mixed Use" future land use designation for the Property. That designation entails that retail/office/personal service, multifamily residential, cultural, and open-space uses are appropriate primary uses. Furthermore, in the "Streets, Connections, Interchanges, and Bridges" section of the Richmond 300 Plan, the immediate area is recognized for the upcoming right of way improvements as being critical to helping the City achieve Goal 9: to build and improve streets and bridges to expand connectivity to all users. Understanding the connection of land use to transportation infrastructure, this request is respectful of future land use guidance in that it defers redevelopment of the Property until the new right of way pattern is established. In doing so, future redevelopment can occur in a manner that is most complimentary of the new infrastructure improvements—thereby bolstering placemaking and better addressing the new street network. Lastly, this request addresses the various factors indicated in Section 17.11 of the Charter and Section 30-1050.1 of the Zoning Ordinance relative to the approval of special use permits by City Council.

Thank you for your time and consideration of this request. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Mark R. Baker  
Baker Development Resources, LLC