

Applicant's Report

Submitted to:
City of Richmond
Department of Planning and Development Review
Land Use Administration
900 E Broad Street, STE 511
Richmond, VA, 23219

Re: Special Use Permit: 3101-3105 E Marshall St.

Dear Mr. Watson,

This letter shall serve as the Applicant's Report accompanying the application for a special use permit (the "SUP") for the property known as 3101-3105 E Marshall Street, identified as Tax Parcel E0000731002 (the "Property").

The Property is zoned R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential and is located in the Church Hill. The property is a corner lot, situated at the intersection of 31st street and Marshall St. The property contains 5,400 square feet of lot area. There is currently a duplex residential building on the lot and a vacant land next to the building.

The property is proposed to be developed into a mixed-use property with nine residential units and up to two commercial units. The project has received approval by the Commission of Architectural Review (CAR) in Jan. 2020. As the requirement of lot area for nine residential units does not meet the zoning requirement, a SUP is required.

In exchange for the SUP, the intent of this request is to allow for the development of a high-quality, mixed-use property for preserving the history of the building, improving the neighborhood, and being part of the community.

The project would be consistent with the existing neighborhood character and the urban scale, density and pedestrian orientation that are suggested by the R-63 district statement of intent. Located on a corner lot, the permitted commercial uses of the ground floor and basement space include: art galleries, barber shop and beauty salons, grocery stores, convenience stores and specialty food and beverage stores, Laundromats and laundry and dry cleaning pick-up stations, restaurants, tea rooms, cafes, delicatessens, ice cream parlors and similar food and beverage service establishments, including catering businesses in conjunction therewith, and video rental stores, up to 1,500 square foot in ground floor area. The proposed mixed-use property will have 5 on-site parking spaces.

The following are factors indicated in Section 17.11 of the Charter and Section 30-1050.1 of the Zoning Ordinance related to the SUP approval 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 SUP will not impact the safety, health, morals and general welfare of the nearby community.

In fact, the owner conducted an extensive research on the location of 3101-3105 E Marshall St. The property used to be a corner commercial and a mixed-use property dated back 60 years ago. The redevelopment of this underutilized property would be in conjunction with the high quality/benefits provided by the SUP to restore to its historical commercial storefront and provide convenience to the community.

In addition, the redevelopment would be consistent with Richmond 300, the city's forward-looking vision. On page 54 of the Richmond 300, the neighborhood Mixed-Use intensity is specified as “building heights are generally two to four stories.... Parcels are generally between 1,500 and 5,000 sq. ft. Residential density of 10 to 30 housing units per acre.” Primary uses are “single-family houses, duplexes, small multi-family residential (typically 3 to 10 units)”. Our proposed development is consistent with this specification.

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

The proposed SUP will not result in significant traffic impacts to nearby residential neighborhoods. The required parking space for R-63 development is 1 parking space per residential unit. The proposal includes 5 on-site parking spaces for the residential units. The parcel is on GRTC Transit System route 13 and 56 and there is a bus stop in front of the building and another one at the intersection of 31st and Marshall st. Therefore, there is convenient public transportation available to the residence. Additionally, there are plenty of street parking space.

During the development plan, the applicant presented to Church Hill Association (CHA) multiple times. The number and size of the residential units are based on suggestions from CHA committee and the applicant’s vision to attract the stable and family and retirees residence to Church Hill. The Church Hill community currently has a lot of transit residence because of lack of newer and better options for the family and retirees. It is then the applicant’s vision to allow decent unit size (all of the residential units would be 700+ sq ft), where family and/or retirees can stay longer, grow their family and build their memories in the community.

Additionally, Church Hill is an excellent community and has a tradition to support local entrepreneurs. On page 132 of Richmond 300, the City objective 11.3 calls to “increase the number and support the growth of small businesses, start-ups, and

women-owned and minority-owned businesses". The size and location of the proposed ground floor and basement commercial spaces would provide the needed space to support dream of community members.

Based on Richmond 300 report, on page 4, it is reported that young adults and retirees are driving the population growth: "From 2010 to 2018, the number of 25 to 34-year-olds in Richmond grew by 43% compared to 6% and 11% growth in Henrico and Chesterfield respectively. During the same time period, the population of 55 to 74-year-olds in grew by 38%, compared to 32% and 33% for Henrico and Chesterfield, respectively". Therefore, the City calls the proposal to develop high quality properties to align with city-wide goals.

On page 54 of Richmond 300, the City also calls the development plan for neighborhood Mixed-Use to accommodate and prioritize bicycle, pedestrian and transit access. On page 106 of the Richmond 300, the City calls Non-Car Network to enhance walking, biking and transit infrastructure. On page 145, the City provides the future enhanced transit map. The proposed Marshall st development is very accessible and on the enhanced transit route.

Besides the City's vision and infrastructure, the applicant also conducted their own research by visiting the property location on week days, after work and on weekends. At a radius of 2 blocks (<0.2 mile) of the property, there are more than 30% of street parking available, equivalent to 10 car parking spaces.

Therefore, the traffic generation for the mixed-use property would be negligible. As such, the SUP will not create congestion on streets, roads, alleys or any other public right of way.

- ***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 SUP will not tend to overcrowd the land or create an undue concentration of population. The R-63 intent is to provide for this type of density in an urban setting. As the applicant noted above, Richmond 300 specifies and encourages of such density on R-63 development for the desired urban small multi-family development with lot size between 1,500 to 5,000 sq. ft.

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

The special use permit amendment 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 proposed development pattern is consistent with the historical development pattern and to the desired urban form for the area.

In summary, the applicant is enthusiastically seeking approval for the construction and improving the corner lot mixed-use property. The proposal represents an ideal, highest and best use urban infill development for this location. The design of the entire building is aligned with the City's vision and where the applicant wants Church Hill to be a better community.

In exchange for the approval, the quality assurances conditioned through the SUP would guarantee the construction of higher quality dwellings than might otherwise be developed by right in the vicinity. This would contribute to the overall vibrancy of the block through the provision of an appropriate urban form that is consistent with the historical development pattern of the surrounding neighborhood.

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

Sincerely,

Jingjing Ye

Prepared and Submitted by:
Datapro Investments LLC