



## CITY OF RICHMOND

### Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

**Ord. No. 2021-283:** To rezone the property known as 2723 East Cary Street from the M-2 Heavy Industrial District to the B-5 Central Business District.

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**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Land Use Administration  
**Date:** October 18, 2021

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#### **PETITIONER**

Mark Baker, Baker Development Resources

#### **LOCATION**

2723 East Cary Street

#### **PURPOSE**

To rezone the property known as 2723 East Cary Street from the M-2 Heavy Industrial District to the B-5 Central Business District

#### **SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

The applicant is requesting to rezone the property to B-5 Central Business District, which allows for walkable, mixed use development with building heights of up to five stories. The current M-2 Heavy Industrial District does not permit residential uses and allows for heavy industrial uses. The proposed rezoning would include a single parcel of land located at the southwest corner of East Cary Street and Pear Street, in the Shockoe Bottom neighborhood. The total land area of the parcel is 12,641 square feet, or 0.290 acres. The property is currently unimproved.

Staff finds that the proposed rezoning is consistent with the recommendations of Richmond 300. The property has a land use designation of Corridor Mixed-use. Corridor Mixed-Use is a land use designation that is envisioned to provide for medium- to medium-high-density pedestrian and transit-oriented development with buildings typically ranging in height from two to ten stories. Primary uses recommended are commercial, multi-family residential, cultural, and open space. The proposed rezoning to B-5 would allow primary uses by-right and would prohibit a variety of heavy industrial and auto oriented uses permitted under the current M-2 designation. The height limit would be five stories for new buildings; the renovated tobacco row buildings in the area are generally five stories or taller in height. The B-5 district also has form-based requirements that are not applicable under the current M-2 district including building fenestration, prohibition of driveway entrances on principal streets, and the requirement that parking be located to the rear of buildings.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of the Rezoning.

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## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **Site Description**

The subject property consists of a single parcel of land that has a lot area of 12,641 square feet (0.290 acres) that is currently vacant. The property was previously improved with a masonry warehouse building that was demolished approximately twelve years ago.

### **Proposed Use of the Property**

A variety of uses are permitted in the B-5 District.

### **Master Plan**

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the property as Corridor Mixed-Use. This land use category is described as an area found along major commercial corridors and envisioned to provide for medium- to medium-high-density pedestrian- and transit-oriented development.

**Development Style:** The building size, density, and zoning districts for these areas may vary significantly depending on historical densities and neighborhood characteristics. Future development should generally complement existing context. Uses may be mixed horizontally in several buildings on a block or vertically within the same building. Developments continue introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity.

**Ground Floor:** Ground floor uses engage with, and enliven, the street. Monolithic walls are discouraged, while windows, doors, storefronts, and other features that allow transparency and interaction between building and street are encouraged. Active commercial ground floor uses are required on street-oriented commercial frontages.

**Mobility:** Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated. Bike parking is provided. Driveway entrances are required to be off alleys whenever possible; new driveways are prohibited on priority and principal streets. Parking areas are located within the structure and to the rear of buildings and require screening; shared parking requirements are encouraged.

**Intensity:** Buildings generally ranging from two to ten stories, based on street widths and depending on the historic context and stepping down in height adjacent to residential areas. New buildings that are taller than historical buildings should step back from the build-to line after matching the height of the predominant cornice line of the block.

**Primary Uses:** Retail/office/personal service, multi-family residential, cultural, and open space.

**Secondary Uses:** Single-family houses, institutional, and government.

## **Zoning**

The subject property is currently located within the M-2 Heavy Industrial District. The current zoning district permits all commercial uses except those uses specifically prohibited in Section 30-454.1 (2) of the Zoning Ordinance. This includes a variety of heavy industrial uses and auto-oriented uses such as drive-thrus and gas stations. The current M-2 District does not permit dwelling units. The proposed zoning district would prohibit auto-oriented uses while allowing for dwelling uses.

## **Surrounding Area**

Properties to the west and south are also located in the M-2 Heavy Industrial District. Properties to the north are located in the B-5 Central Business District. Properties to the east are located in both the B-5 Central Business District and the M-1 Light Industrial District. Multi-family developments are located to the north and a new multi-family building is currently under construction to the east. Surface parking areas are located to the west, and Great Shiplock Park is located to the south, across a CSX rail line and Dock Street.

## **Neighborhood Participation**

Staff notified area residents and property owners, as well as the Shockoe Partnership and Church Hill Association. Staff has not received any letter of support or opposition.

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