



City of Harrisonburg, Virginia

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

STAFF REPORT
January 13, 2016

SPECIAL USE PERMIT – 98 PLEASANT HILL ROAD (SECTION 10-3-40 (6) MFDH)

GENERAL INFORMATION

Applicant: Harold and Thelma Williams Life Estate with representative Tara Koontz
Tax Map: 9-D-1
Acreage: 0.55-acres
Location: 98 Pleasant Hill Road
Request: Public hearing to consider a request to allow a major family day home per Section 10-3-40 (6) of the Zoning Ordinance within the R-2, Residential District.

LAND USE, ZONING, AND SITE CHARACTERISTICS

The Comprehensive Plan designates this area as Low Density Residential. This designation states that these areas consist of single family detached dwellings with a maximum density of 1 to 4 units per acre. Low density sections are found mainly in and around well established neighborhoods and are designed to maintain the existing character of neighborhoods and to provide traditional areas for home ownership.

The following land uses are located on and adjacent to the property:

Site: Single family detached home, zoned R-2
North: Single family detached homes fronting Middlebrook Street, zoned R-2
East: Single family detached homes fronting Middlebrook Street, zoned R-1, and other single family detached homes fronting Pleasant Hill Road, zoned R-2
South: Across Pleasant Hill Road, single family detached homes and undeveloped parcels, zoned R-2
West: Single family detached homes, zoned R-2

EVAULATION

The applicant's representative, Ms. Tara Koontz, is requesting a special use permit (SUP) per Section 10-3-40 (6) to operate a major family day home (MFDH) at 98 Pleasant Hill Road, which is zoned R-2, Residential District. The subject site is currently for sale and Ms. Koontz has the property under contract to purchase. Ms. Koontz is hopeful that both her real estate contract and SUP application are approved so she can easily transition her family and her existing MFDH child care operation located at 627 South Mason Street to the subject site.

As noted, Ms. Koontz currently operates a MFDH at 627 South Mason Street, where the property is zoned U-R, Urban Residential District and has the R-P, Residential Professional District Overlay. In May 2010, after going through the public hearing process and receiving favorable recommendations

for approval of a SUP to allow a MFDH from both staff and Planning Commission, City Council approved her SUP with no conditions at the Mason Street location. Prior to receiving her MFDH SUP, Ms. Koontz operated a minor family day home at the same property.

The subject site at 98 Pleasant Hill Road is located within the block bounded by Willow Hill Drive to the west and Central Avenue to the east, where it is just over one half acre in size and is improved with a single family detached dwelling with a large, fenced rear yard. The property is accessible via Pleasant Hill Road by a paved single lane, almost 80-foot in length driveway, leading from the public street to the garage.

After thorough review, staff has only one concern with the application and is recommending approval of the request with one condition. Although Pleasant Hill Road no longer maintains the same traffic volumes it once carried prior to the opening of Erickson Avenue between South Main Street and South High Street, the street remains designated a collector street and holds relatively high traffic counts. (After Erickson Avenue was opened, there was almost a 45 percent traffic reduction on Pleasant Hill Road.) Because the traffic numbers remain relatively high, staff does not want to allow new or additional uses that would promote vehicles backing into Pleasant Hill Road when exiting properties.

To help prevent this from happening, staff is recommending approval of the MFDH only with the following condition:

- A vehicle turnaround shall be provided on site. The turnaround shall not simply be additional space for the storage of vehicles for drop-off and pick-up of children, but rather a designated area, where vehicles can safely turnaround on site to eliminate the need to back into Pleasant Hill Road when exiting the property.