



CITY OF HARRISONBURG COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

409 SOUTH MAIN STREET, HARRISONBURG, VA 22801

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To: Planning Commission
From: Department of Community Development
Date: November 13, 2024 (Regular Meeting)
Re: Preliminary Plat with Variances from the Subdivision Ordinance - 450 Mount Clinton Pike (Fire Station #5)

Summary:

Project name	Fire Station #5
Address/Location	450 Mount Clinton Pike
Tax Map Parcels	46-C-4A
Total Land Area	+/- 15.23-acres
Property Owner	City of Harrisonburg
Owner's Representative	N/A
Subdivision Ordinance Variance Requests	Sections 10-2-41 (a), 10-2-61 (a), and 10-2-66
Staff Recommendation	Approval
Planning Commission	November 13, 2024
City Council	Anticipated December 10, 2024

Background:

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

Site: Future Fire Station #5 and undeveloped property; zoned M-1

North: Recreational use with single-family detached dwellings; zoned M-1

East: Industrial uses; zoned M-1

South: Across Mount Clinton Pike, undeveloped property; zoned M-1

West: Industrial uses; zoned M-1

Key Issues:

The City is requesting to preliminarily subdivide +/- 15.23-acres of property by creating two lots and to dedicate public street right-of-way. Proposed Lot 1 would contain Fire Station #5, which is currently under construction. At this time, the residual +/- 12.8-acre lot would remain undeveloped. As part of the preliminary subdivision process the City is requesting to deviate from requirements of the Subdivision Ordinance, which are all associated with public street design standards.

Land Use

The Comprehensive Plan designates this site as Industrial and states:

These areas are composed of land and structures used for light and general manufacturing, wholesaling, warehousing, high-technology, research and development, and related activities. They include the major existing and future employment areas of the City.

Transportation and Traffic

The Determination of Need for a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) form (“TIA determination form”) for the proposed preliminary plat is attached. The TIA determination form indicated that the project will not generate 100 or more peak hour trips, which is the threshold for staff to require a TIA. Therefore, a TIA was not required for the preliminary plat request.

Public Water and Sanitary Sewer

As required, all lots would be served by public water and public sanitary sewer. The preliminary plat shows how proposed water and sanitary sewer lines will serve each new lot.

Subdivision Ordinance Variance Requests

The three variances being requested are from Sections 10-2-41 (a), 10-2-61 (a), and 10-2-66, which are associated with public street design standards. Specifically, Section 10-2-41 (a) states that “[p]roposed streets shall conform to the standards and specifications outlined in the Design and Construction Standards Manual (DCSM) except that variances to the standards for streets, alleys, blocks, easements, sidewalks, and all such related features may be approved on a case-by-case basis by the city council when particular objectives are met.” Section 10-2-61 (a) states that “[t]he subdivider is required to make all such improvements to streets, including grading, subgrade, surface, and curbs and gutters, in accord with the requirements of the city's DCSM.” And Section 10-2-66 states “[a]ll utility, street and alley improvements shall be provided in each new subdivision lying wholly or partly within the corporate limits of the city in accordance with standards and specifications of the city.”

In particular, the City is requesting to deviate from the Design and Construction Standards Manual (DCSM) Sections 3.1.4 and 3.6.4.1.

- Section 3.1.4 (Right-of-Way Widths) requires that street right-of-way shall be as shown in Appendix F of the DCSM, which illustrates that local street public right-of-way width is 50-feet. The preliminary plat proposes for the public street right-of-way to be 44-feet. This width is acceptable to the Department of Public Works who describes in a letter that “it allows all City maintained infrastructure to be located within the provided right of way, and it is allowed per State code.”
- Section 3.6.4.1 (Street Design – General) requires that street widths shall be as shown in Appendix F of the DCSM, which illustrates that local public street width is a minimum of 34-feet measured face of curb to face of curb. Rather than 34 feet, the City is proposing to construct a street that is 28 feet wide. This width is acceptable to the Department of Public Works because the width is consistent with the VDOT approved width for a local street.

Staff supports all of the variances that have been requested.

Recommendation

Aside from the variance requests as described herein, the preliminary plat meets all other requirements of the Subdivision Ordinance. Staff supports the variance requests and recommends approval of the preliminary plat.

Environmental Impact:

N/A

Fiscal Impact:

N/A

Prior Actions:

N/A

Alternatives:

- a. Recommend approval of the preliminary plat and variances as requested;
- b. Recommend approval of the preliminary plat and variances with conditions; or
- c. Recommend denial of the request.

Community Engagement:

As required by the Subdivision Ordinance, a sign was posted giving public notice to the variances requested to deviate from the standards of the Subdivision Ordinance.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends alternative (a) approval of the plat and variances as requested

Attachments:

1. Site maps
2. Application and supporting documents

Review:

N/A