



**City of Harrisonburg, Virginia**  
**Department of Planning & Community Development**

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Building Inspections  
Engineering  
Planning & Zoning

June 5, 2017

**TO THE MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL**  
**CITY OF HARRISONBURG, VIRGINIA**

**SUBJECT:** Public hearing to consider a request from Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community, Inc. (VMRC) to rezone a 13.35 +/- acre section of the Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community by amending the existing master planned complex known as Park Village and other small areas as shown in the Master Plan Drawing. If approved, the identified area would be rezoned from R-3, Multiple Dwelling Residential and I-1, Institutional Overlay District to R-3C, Medium Density Residential Conditional and I-1, Institutional Overlay District. The properties are identified as tax map parcels 52-D-4, 6-10.

**EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF HARRISONBURG PLANNING COMMISSION MEETING HELD ON: May 10, 2017**

Mrs. Fitzgerald rejoined the Planning Commission meeting at 7:57 pm.

Mr. Colman recused himself from this request at 7:57 pm.

Chair Way read the request and asked staff to review.

Mrs. Banks said the Comprehensive Plan designates this area as Institutional. This designation states that these areas are for development by certain nonprofit and public institutional uses such as private colleges and universities, hospitals, offices of nonprofit organizations, community assembly uses and institutions that provide for the shelter and care of people.

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

Site: Duplexes and multi-family apartment buildings associated with Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community, Inc., zoned R-3/I-1

North: Multi-family apartment buildings, zoned R-3

East: Pleasant View Home Residences and single-family detached dwellings, zoned R-3

South: Multi-family apartment buildings and facilities associated with Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community, Inc., zoned R-3/I-1

West: Across Park Road, Park View Mennonite Church and duplexes associated with Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community, Inc., zoned R-2

The applicant is requesting to amend a portion of the Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community (VMRC) master plan. A master plan is required whenever any parcel, or parcels, within the City are applying to be included in the I-1, Institutional Overlay District. This overlay district is intended to provide for orderly development of certain nonprofit institutional uses such as colleges and universities, hospitals, offices or nonprofit organizations and community assembly uses and institutions providing for the shelter and care of persons. An approved master plan for development may include uses which do not

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meet dimensional or parking requirements of the underlying zoning district. Requests for an institutional overlay require a rezoning to incorporate the I-1 zoning district and a submission of an accompanying master plan to show how the development will occur. Any subsequent changes to the approved master plan are accomplished by the same procedure.

VMRC is a 46.2 +/- acre property comprised of three subsidiaries; Park Village, Inc., Heritage Haven Inc., and Virginia Mennonite Home, Inc. An institutional overlay master plan for the original 45 +/- acre tract of VMRC was approved in March 1997. This master plan described all uses within the campus, but primarily focused on the Virginia Mennonite Home subsidiary and the construction of the five-story Park Gable retirement housing and fitness center. VMRC took advantage of reduced setbacks and greater height for the Park Gable building, as well as relief in parking requirements for the campus. In June 2004, an addition was made to the 1997 master plan when 1.2 +/- acres along Park Road was added to the Park Village, Inc. section of VMRC. In July 2009, the master plan was amended to add a child day care center as one of the allowable uses for the Woodland Facility, located on a 3.5 acre portion of the Virginia Mennonite Home, Inc. portion of VMRC. The child day care center never moved into the Woodland Facility and in December of 2009 VMRC again amended the master plan to demolish the Woodland Facility and surrounding cottages in order to construct the Green House Homes, which provides skilled nursing care for up to ten occupants in each building. The homes were to be constructed along a loop road within the Woodland area and relief from the required parking was approved as part of the master plan amendment. In July 2011, VMRC once again amended the Woodland area to allow for a reduction in setback requirements for the Green House Homes after right-of-way was dedicated along Parkwood Road and Virginia Avenue for the public streets. The Green House Homes project remains under construction today.

With the current request, VMRC is focusing on a portion of the Park Village area of the campus. Park Village currently has 95 dwelling units, consisting of duplexes and multiple-family units. As stated in the Master Plan Amendment Narrative, VMRC is recasting its vision of the Park Village neighborhood by replacing existing buildings and increasing walkability and connectivity, both internally and to other neighboring places surrounding the VMRC campus. In November 2016, VMRC requested to close and purchase Villa Drive, Pine Court, Spruce Court, Hawthorne Circle, and Shank Drive (east of Park Road); all interior streets within the Park Village area. Planning Commission recommended approval and City Council approved the street closures in December 2016. Currently, VMRC is finalizing the subdivision to complete the closure of the streets and to add the 124,700 +/- square feet of roadway area into the Park Village neighborhood. Approval of this rezoning and master plan amendment request will incorporate the new area into the R-3, Medium Density Residential District zoning classification and the I-1, Institutional Overlay District of Park Village once the subdivision is completed. Along with the closure of the streets, VMRC received approval in December 2016 of a special use permit for a multiple-family building within the R-3/I-1 portion of Park Village. This would allow VMRC to demolish an existing four unit, multiple family building, and replace it with a new six unit building.

As described in the Master Plan Amendment Narrative, changes to the Park Village neighborhood will be made over many years, as tenant turnover takes place. VMRC desires to tailor renovation to emerging market conditions; therefore, a master plan detailing the future design for the neighborhood has not been developed at this time. Instead, the requests within this amendment provide a framework for the orderly design of the future development.

If the master plan amendment is approved for this portion of Park Village, it would allow for a reduction in the front yard setback from 30-feet to 20-feet along Park Road and Virginia Avenue. There would also be a reduction in the side yard setback from ten-feet to five-feet in the Park Village area as shown on the master plan site drawings. This will allow VMRC to have flexibility in the future with the reconfiguring of the Park Village neighborhood.

VMRC is also requesting relief from off street parking and parking lot landscaping requirements. Based on their current and projected parking demands for Park Village, VMRC believes parking would be sufficient at a ratio of 1 parking space per dwelling unit with one bedroom and 1.5 parking spaces per dwelling unit with two or more bedrooms. The City's standard minimum off-street parking regulations require 1.5 parking spaces per dwelling unit with one bedroom, 2.5 parking spaces per dwelling unit with two or three bedrooms, plus one additional parking space per bedroom when a unit has more than three bedrooms. Therefore, based on existing conditions in the Park Village neighborhood, 212 spaces would be required. Approval of the master plan reduces the required minimum by 79 parking spaces. (Once the interior streets are closed and incorporated into the Park Village area, VMRC can count parking spaces along these streets towards meeting parking requirements. By doing such, 223 off street parking spaces can be provided in Park Village.) Parking spaces would be provided by attached garage, driveways adjacent to dwelling units, or within a parking lot. Driveway areas leading into garages would also count as a parking space. Because garages are preferable to VMRC's residents and it is necessary to count each garage as a parking space, VMRC is proffering with this rezoning request that conversion of garages into living space will not be permitted.

Although VMRC understands the value of landscaping and will install landscaping features throughout the campus, approval of this request would allow for two deviations from parking lot landscaping regulations. The first is to deviate from the required interior parking lot landscaping adjacent to driveway parking spaces, garages, and parking spaces adjacent to any new buildings. Any new, stand-alone parking lots will adhere to parking lot landscaping requirements. The second deviation is to reduce the required 10-foot landscape border between parking lots and public street right-of-way to five-feet. Street trees will be installed within the five-feet as required per the ordinance. (As a reminder, deviations to parking lot landscaping requirements are only permissible on properties with the I-1 overlay district.)

What the master plan does not provide is a layout of proposed buildings or number of dwelling units within each building. Density, however, is controlled by the underlying R-3 regulations. VMRC is aware that as they redevelop the Park Village neighborhood they will need to obtain a SUP for any new multiple family building that is proposed for the site. If at some point VMRC develops a master plan detailing the future design for the Park Village neighborhood, they could submit a rezoning and master plan amendment at that time.

Staff understands the complexities of planning for future development in this portion of the VMRC campus. The proposed master plan amendment lays out a framework for organized development and growth of VMRC. Staff supports the master plan amendment for this portion of Park Village, Inc. within the VMRC campus as presented.

Chair Way asked if there were any questions for staff. Hearing none, he opened the public hearing and asked if anyone would like to speak in favor of this request.

Welby Lehman, architect at Blue Ridge Architects, said I am here on behalf of VMRC and ask you to approve this master plan amendment.

Chair Way asked if there were any questions for the applicant's representative. Hearing none, he asked if anyone else would like to come and speak in favor or against this request. Hearing none, he closed the public hearing and asked Planning Commission for a motion on the request for the purpose of discussion.

Mrs. Fitzgerald moved to approve the request for rezoning of the Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community Master Plan Amendment (Park Village) as presented by staff.

Mr. Finnegan seconded the motion.

Chair Way asked if there was any other discussion. Hearing none, he called for a voice vote on the motion.

All voted in favor (5-0) to approve the request for rezoning of the Virginia Mennonite Retirement Community Master Plan Amendment (Park Village) as presented by staff.

Chair Way said this will go forward to City Council on June 13, 2017.

Respectfully Submitted,

*Alison Banks*

Alison Banks  
Senior Planner