



CITY OF HARRISONBURG COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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March 25, 2025

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

SUBJECT: *Consider a request from Bluestone of Harrisonburg LLC for a special use permit to allow multiple-family dwellings of more than 12 units per building at tax map parcel 108-B-2 (Boulder Ridge)*

**EXTRACT FROM THE DRAFT MINUTES OF HARRISONBURG PLANNING
COMMISSION MEETING HELD ON:** March 12, 2025

Chair Baugh read the request and asked staff to review.

Ms. Soffel said in February 2021, City Council approved two requests from Bluestone of Harrisonburg LLC:

1. Amended the Comprehensive Plan's Land Use Guide map within Chapter 6 Land Use & Development Quality by modifying +/- 5.54 acres of land from the Commercial designation to Medium Density Residential.
2. Rezoned +/- 5.54 acres from B-2, General Business District to R-5C, High Density Residential District Conditional, while also rezoning +/- 20.76 acres from B-2, General Business District to B-2C, General Business District Conditional.

At that time, the applicant intended to construct six multi-family (apartment) buildings consisting of a total of 72 dwelling units on the +/- 5.54 acres rezoned to R-5C, and to develop commercial uses on the +/- 20.76 acres zoned B-2. Among other approved proffers, one of the existing proffers that was approved in 2021 limits the property to a maximum of 72 units. Information regarding the 2021 application and proffers can be found at <https://harrisonburg-va.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4773418&GUID=C7B6EA8E-F8EA-4020-8442-9DD5E4D3797A&Options=&Search=>.

The first phase of the development, which is located within Rockingham County, is currently under construction following site plan approval in 2024 from the County. If the SUP that is herein requested is approved, the applicant plans to construct three (3) multi-family buildings with 24 units per building rather than constructing six, 12-unit buildings that were conceptually shown during the 2021 rezoning. The proposed 24-unit buildings would be consistent with the approved multi-family buildings that are being constructed in Rockingham County.

Land Use

The Comprehensive Plan designates this site as Medium Density Residential and states:

These areas have been developed or are planned for development of a variety of housing types such as single-family detached, single-family attached (duplexes and townhomes), and in special circumstances, multi-family dwellings (apartments). Depending on the specific site characteristics, densities in these areas should be around 15 dwelling units per acre. Non-residential uses may also be appropriate.

Transportation and Traffic

A new traffic impact analysis (TIA) was not required for the SUP request.

Public Water and Sanitary Sewer

Staff has no concerns regarding water and sanitary sewer service. The developer will be required to extend public water and sewer from South Main Street to the planned development.

Housing Study

The City's Comprehensive Housing Assessment and Market Study (Housing Study) places the subject site within Market Type B, which has "neighborhoods [that] are characterized by high income earning households, large volumes of housing sales and lower population growth." The Housing Study further notes that houses in these markets are quick to sell and that "[p]riorities and policies that are appropriate to Market Type B areas include the preservation of existing affordable housing while at the same time working to increase access to amenities."

Public Schools

Students will attend schools based on which side of the jurisdictional line they live. Staff from Harrisonburg City Public Schools (HCPS) noted that based on their student generation calculations, the proposed 72 residential units is estimated to result in 23 additional students. Based on the School Board's currently adopted attendance boundaries, Bluestone Elementary School, Thomas Harrison Middle School, and Harrisonburg High School would serve the students residing in this development.

For total student population projections, the City of Harrisonburg and HCPS both use the University of Virginia's Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service's projections. These projections are updated annually and are available at: <https://www.coopercenter.org/virginia-school-data>.

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of the SUP request as submitted by the applicant.

Chair Baugh asked if there were any more questions for staff. Hearing none, he invited the applicant or applicant's representative to speak to their request.

Seth Roderick, applicant's representative from Monteverde, came forward to speak to the request. He said it is a pretty straight forward request here. When the project was first proposed we were thinking standard twelve unit, three story, four per floor garden style apartments. Since then, the owners have opted for essentially two of those units pushed together with a fire wall in between. Outside of that everything remains the same. There are two breezeways on the building instead of

one singular. It just creates some proficiencies on construction and helps keep some of those costs down. It creates a little more open space. If we start spreading those buildings back out of course all the roadway and parking gets spread out with it. It is just a little less efficient from a multitude of perspectives. With that, I am happy to answer any questions or address any concerns that may be present.

Chair Baugh said you are already straight with the County part of it?

Mr. Roderick said the County portion is approved and under construction at the moment. That side has twelve 24-unit buildings. This is all tied to the same infrastructure, so it helps keep that cohesive aesthetic through the development as well.

Vice Chair Finnegan said what percentage of this property, if it is built the way it is shown here, is for the building itself and what percentage is for car storage?

Mr. Roderick said I would have to get back to you on that Brent, I apologize. That would take a bit of quantification, but I am happy to follow up with you after the fact just to understand where that leads.

Chair Baugh said I am assuming the striping consistency. I remember a time where we looked around and said why do we have nothing but three-story buildings with twelve units in them because that was all you could do.

Mr. Roderick said it is an almost antiquated piece of the ordinance that still remains. It is kind of a thought of yesteryear. I mean that is not to say that it has zero purpose, but this style of construction is much more common these days for the efficiencies we are talking about.

Chair Baugh said it was the old maximum in the region. Nobody would let them build anything denser than that.

Chair Baugh asked if there were any more questions for the applicant or applicant's representative. Hearing none, he opened the public hearing and asked if there was anyone in the room or on the phone wishing to speak to the request. Hearing none, he closed the public hearing and opened the matter for discussion.

Commissioner Nardi said I am ready to approve; the unit count is the same. I feel like design changes happen during processes and that it seems fair and prudent.

Vice Chair Finnegan said this is a small portion that is in the City. As the applicant said, the other part of this is already under construction. I would support this and with that I will move to approve.

Commissioner Nardi seconded the motion.

Chair Baugh called for a roll call vote.

Commissioner Nardi	Aye
Vice Chair Finnegan	Aye
Commissioner Washington	Aye
Commissioner Porter	Aye
Chair Baugh	Aye

The motion to recommend approval of the special use permit request passed (5-0). The recommendation will move forward to City Council on April 8, 2025.