



CITY OF HARRISONBURG COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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To: Planning Commission
From: Department of Community Development
Date: June 10, 2020 (Regular Meeting)
Re: Special Use Permit –794 North Main Street (To Allow Business & Professional Offices in M-1)

Summary:

Public hearing to consider a request from Bell Investments LLC for a special use permit per Section 10-3-97(3) of the Zoning Ordinance to allow business and professional offices within the M-1, General Industrial District. The +/- 1.36-acre property is addressed as 794 North Main Street and is identified as tax map parcel 41-N-15.

Background:

The Comprehensive Plan designates this site as Mixed Use. The Mixed Use designation includes both existing and proposed areas for mixed use. Mixed Use areas shown on the Land Use Guide map are intended to combine residential and non-residential uses in neighborhoods, where the different uses are finely mixed instead of separated. Mixed Use can take the form of a single building, a single parcel, a city block, or entire neighborhoods. Quality architectural design features and strategic placement of green spaces for large scale developments will ensure development compatibility of a mixed use neighborhood with the surrounding area. These areas are prime candidates for “live-work” and traditional neighborhood developments (TND). Live-work developments combine residential and commercial uses allowing people to both live and work in the same area. The scale and massing of buildings is an important consideration when developing in Mixed Use areas. Commercial uses would be expected to have an intensity equivalent to a Floor Area Ratio of at least 0.4, although the City does not measure commercial intensity in that way.

Downtown is an existing area that exhibits and is planned to continue to contain a mix of land uses. The downtown Mixed Use area often has no maximum residential density, however, development should take into consideration the services and resources that are available (such as off-street parking) and plan accordingly. Residential density in Mixed Use areas outside of downtown should be around 24 dwelling units per acre, and all types of residential units are permitted: single-family detached, single-family attached (duplexes and townhomes), and multi-family buildings. Large scale developments, which include multi-family buildings are encouraged to include single-family detached and/or attached dwellings.

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

Site: Brewery manufacturing operation and printing company operation, zoned M-1
North: Manufacturing operation, zoned M-1
East: Manufacturing operation, zoned M-1

South: Non-conforming single-family detached dwellings, zoned M-1

West: Across North Main Street, non-conforming business office and non-conforming single-family detached dwellings, zoned M-1

Key Issues:

The applicant is requesting a special use permit (SUP) per Section 10-3-97(3) of the Zoning Ordinance to allow business and professional offices in the M-1, General Industrial District. The property is located along the eastern side of North Main Street, approximately 350-feet from the intersection of Washington Street. Situated on the subject parcel is a +/-24,586 square foot building, which currently contains +/-19,326 square feet of manufacturing uses including a beer brewing company and the production area for a printing company.

If approved, the applicant desires to use the remaining +/-5,260 square feet of the building for professional and/or business office space. The applicant describes that 3,660 square feet would be used by the existing printing company as office space; 1,000 square feet would be leased by a professional engineering firm; and the remaining 600 square feet would be occupied by a future tenant. It should be understood that the use of space as office facilities accessory to and supportive of uses permitted within the M-1 zoning district is a use permitted by right; therefore, the printing company operation is allowed to have associated offices without obtaining a SUP. However, it is the applicant's desire to obtain the business and professional office SUP for the entire +/- 5,260 square foot area should the printing operation ever leave and there is interest in office facilities that are not accessory to and supportive of uses permitted in the M-1 district.

Conversion of the +/-5,260 square foot area into offices will require a change of use permit to ensure all Building Code regulations are met. Also, the applicant should be aware that if the SUP is approved, the office use must be established within twelve months of approval date.

Parking for the office use would be calculated at one parking space for every 300 square feet of gross floor area. The manufacturing uses require one parking space for every two employees working on a maximum shift and one space for each vehicle associated with the manufacturing use. If approved, staff would work with the applicant to determine the minimum number of off-street parking spaces needed for all uses. Meeting the minimum parking requirements for the intended uses should not be a problem as there is a large parking area, which already exists; however, the entrances into the parking area from North Main Street are only suitable for one-way use. There is also a separate, two-way entrance from East Washington Street onto the site. Staff suggests the applicant establish a regular traffic pattern on the site to provide for safe vehicular circulation; safe entry/exit; and adequate access to parking spaces. This could be accomplished by making the North Main Street entrances one-way in only, exiting onto East Washington Street, and utilizing angled or parallel parking in the parking area along the southern side of the building.

The entire frontage of the North Main Street corridor, with the exception of one Industrial designation and a handful of Governmental/Quasi-Governmental designations, is designated as Mixed Use within the Comprehensive Plan's Land Use Guide. In the general area surrounding the subject property, there is a mix of residential uses, professional offices, automotive sales and services, and light industrial uses. Staff believes that the proposed SUP is consistent with good zoning practice and will have no more adverse effect on the health, safety, or comfort of persons living and working in the area and will be no more injurious, economically or otherwise, to property or improvements in the surrounding area.

Staff recommends approving the special use permit.

Environmental Impact:

N/A

Fiscal Impact:

N/A

Prior Actions:

N/A

Alternatives:

- (a) Recommend approval of the special use permit request as submitted;
- (b) Recommend approval of the special use permit with conditions(s); or
- (c) Recommend denial.

Community Engagement:

As required, the request was published in the local newspaper twice advertising for Planning Commission's public hearing. The advertisement was published as shown below:

Special Use Permit – 794 North Main Street (To Allow Business & Professional Offices in M-1)

Public hearing to consider a request from Bell Investments LLC for a special use permit per Section 10-3-97(3) of the Zoning Ordinance to allow business and professional offices within the M-1, General Industrial District. The +/- 1.36-acre property is addressed as 794 North Main Street and is identified as tax map parcel 41-N-15.

In addition, adjoining property owners were notified of the public hearing; the property was posted with signage advertising the request; and a notice was provided on the City's website at <https://www.harrisonburgva.gov/public-hearings>.

Recommendation:

Staff recommends alternative (a) approval of the special use permit request as submitted.

Attachments:

- 1. Site maps
- 2. Application, applicant letter, and supporting documents

Review:

N/A