



# CITY OF HARRISONBURG COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

409 SOUTH MAIN STREET, HARRISONBURG, VA 22801

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To: Ande Banks, Interim City Manager  
From: Adam Fletcher, Director – Department of Community Development and Harrisonburg Planning Commission  
Date: March 8, 2022 (Regular Meeting)  
Re: Preliminary Plat with Subdivision Ordinance Variance to Section 10-2-42(c) –723 North Liberty Street

### **Summary:**

Consider a request to preliminarily subdivide a +/- 16,860 square foot parcel into two parcels. The applicant is requesting a Subdivision Ordinance variance per Section 10-2-42 (c) to allow a parcel to not have public street frontage. The property is zoned R-2, Residential District, is currently addressed as 723 North Liberty Street, and identified as tax map parcel 45-D-3.

Staff and Planning Commission recommended approval of the Preliminary Plat with variance request.

### **Background:**

The Comprehensive Plan designates this site as Neighborhood Residential. These areas are typically older residential neighborhoods, which contain a mixture of densities and a mixture of housing types, but should have more single-family detached homes than other types of housing. This type of land use highlights those neighborhoods in which existing conditions dictate the need for careful consideration of the types and densities of future residential development. Infill development and redevelopment must be designed so as to be compatible with the desired character of the neighborhood.

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

- Site:** Single family detached dwelling, zoned R-2  
**North:** Single family detached dwelling and duplex dwelling, zoned R-2  
**East:** Across North Liberty Street, single family detached dwellings, zoned R-2  
**South:** Residential use and duplex dwelling, zoned R-2  
**West:** Across alley, single family detached dwelling, zoned R-2

### **Key Issues:**

The applicant is requesting to preliminarily subdivide one parcel into two lots consisting of one +/- 8,519 square foot parcel with frontage on North Liberty Street, and one +/- 8,341 square foot parcel with frontage on a 15-foot-wide alley. This alley is referred to as Jackson Street because further north of the

subject property it is a public street; however, in this area it is an alley. As described in the applicant's letter, the subdivision will create a parcel for the existing single family detached dwelling located on the property and create a second parcel to allow for construction of a new single family detached dwelling. Because the proposed +/- 8,341 square foot parcel will front along the alley, the applicant is requesting a variance to Section 10-2-42(c) of the Subdivision Ordinance. Section 10-2-42(c) requires that all lots front on a public street; otherwise, this subdivision could have been approved through the Minor Subdivision process, which is administratively reviewed and approved by staff.

Regarding utilities for the parcels, the existing single family detached dwelling is served by a 12-inch water line within North Liberty Street and a 6-inch sanitary sewer line within the alley. The plat indicates that a 10-foot-wide private water line easement will be provided along the southern side of the +/- 8,519 square foot parcel, which would contain the existing dwelling, to serve the proposed parcel that would front along the alley. With regard to sanitary sewer, the proposed +/- 8,341 square foot parcel will connect to sewer that is located within the alley. Because the existing dwelling's sewer is connected to the infrastructure in the alley, a 10-foot-wide private sanitary sewer easement will be provided on the southern boundary of the +/- 8,341 square foot parcel.

The applicant is aware that once it is determined how electric will be brought to the +/- 8,341 square foot parcel, either from 4<sup>th</sup> Street and the alley or from North Liberty Street, an easement may be necessary.

Staff recommends approval of the preliminary plat and variance as requested.

**Environmental Impact:**

N/A

**Fiscal Impact:**

N/A

**Prior Actions:**

N/A

**Alternatives:**

- (a) Approve the preliminary plat and variance as requested;
- (b) Approve the preliminary plat and variance with conditions; or
- (c) Deny the request.

**Community Engagement:**

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

**Recommendation:**

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

**Attachments:**

- 1. Planning Commission Extract
- 2. Site maps
- 3. Application and supporting documents

#### 4. Preliminary plat

**Review:**

Planning Commission recommended (7-0) alternative (a) approval of the preliminary plat and variance as requested.