



CITY OF HARRISONBURG COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

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To: Planning Commission
From: Department of Community Development
Date: August 10, 2022 (Regular Meeting)
Re: Rezoning –745 North Dogwood Drive and 860 Waterman Drive (R-1 to M-1C)

Summary:

Public hearing to consider a request from New Venture Partners LLC to rezone a +/- 0.36-acre site from R-1, Single Family Residential District to M-1C, General Industrial District Conditional. The request is to rezone +/- 0.36-acres comprising of portions of 39-O-1 and 39-O-4 to M-1C. The site is addressed as 745 North Dogwood Drive and 860 Waterman Drive.

Note: The original application and public notices included a request to rezone an adjacent +/- 0.99-acre area from R-1 to R-5C, High Density Residential District Conditional. The applicant has tabled that portion of the 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: Undeveloped land, zoned R-1

North: Industrial uses, zoned M-1

East: Across Rockingham Drive shared use path, undeveloped property, zoned R-5C

South: Undeveloped property, zoned R-1

West: Self-storage facility, zoned M-1

Key Issues:

The applicant is requesting to rezone a +/- 0.36-acre site from R-1, Single Family Residential District to M-1C, General Industrial District Conditional. If the request is approved, the applicant intends to expand the existing self-storage facility on the adjacent property identified as tax map parcel 38-E-7 and addressed as 820 Waterman Drive.

With this request the applicant has proffered the following (written verbatim):

1. At the time of development, along the property boundary adjacent to the North Dogwood Drive right-of-way, construct a 5 ft tall fence and provide a 10-ft wide landscaping buffer with trees or vegetation with the intent to form a dense screen. The installed vegetation shall be 6-ft in height at the time of planting and installed at a distance not greater than 7-ft on center. Both the fence and landscaping shall be maintained by the property owner.

While staff encouraged the applicant to consider conserving mature trees on the private property, the applicant responded that due to the steep slope of the site and grading that will be necessary, it would be difficult for them to conserve trees. The applicant has offered the above proffer to provide vegetative screening. This is in addition to the existing vegetation and trees within the public street right-of-way of the shared use path.

While the Comprehensive Plan designates this site as Neighborhood Residential and designates areas to the west fronting along Waterman Drive as Commercial, staff believes the request to rezone this small, triangular area to M-1 to expand the self-storage facility along with the submitted screening proffer is reasonable.

Staff recommends approval of the rezoning from R-1 to M-1C.

As noted above, the original application and public notices included a request to rezone an adjacent +/- 0.99-acre area from R-1 to R-5C, High Density Residential District Conditional. The applicant had first approached staff with the idea to rezone +/- 0.99-acres to R-5C and +/- 0.36-acres to M-1 in January 2022 and submitted an application in early July anticipating for the request to be included with the August 10, 2022 Planning Commission meeting agenda. At staff's request, the applicant has since tabled this portion of their request.

The reasoning for staff's requested tabling of the residential component of the applicant's property is due to a street connectivity study that is ongoing. Specifically, in January 2022, the City was awarded a technical assistance grant from the Virginia Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment for a "Street Connectivity Evaluation and Road Diet Multimodal Evaluation" (Street Connectivity Study). The Department of Public Works and consultants began the Street Connectivity Study in March 2022 and it is not anticipated to be completed until the end of August 2022.

Draft study results include a recommendation to extend 3rd Street to the west. While the final terminus to the west is not yet fully conceptualized, there appears to be opportunity to plan for a future street that could extend into Rockingham County and provide connectivity between existing and future neighborhoods. If the 3rd Street extension to the west is included as a recommendation in the final Street Connectivity Study, it would be included in staff's proposal of amendments to the Comprehensive Plan's Street Improvement Plan, which is anticipated to occur in late 2022 or early 2023.

To this end, staff requested the applicant table their request to rezone the +/- 0.99-acre site to R-5C until staff has a better understanding of what recommendations might be made in the Street Connectivity Study and the Street Improvement Plan.

Environmental Impact:

N/A

Fiscal Impact:

N/A

Prior Actions:

N/A

Alternatives:

- (a) Recommend approval of the rezoning request; or
- (b) Recommend denial of the rezoning request.

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 (Note: The advertisement will be amended for the City Council public hearing to reflect the updated request.):

Rezoning – 675, 705, 715, and 745 North Dogwood Drive and 860 Waterman Drive (R-1 to R-5C and M-1C)

Public hearing to consider a request from New Venture Partners LLC to rezone five parcels, totaling 1.36-acres from R-1, Single Family Residential District to R-5C, High Density Residential District Conditional and to M-1C, General Industrial District Conditional. The Zoning Ordinance States that the R-1, Single-Family Residential District is intended for low-density, relatively spacious single-family residential development. The R-5, High Density Residential District is intended for medium to high density residential development, including townhouses and multiple family dwelling units, together with certain governmental, educational, religious, recreational and utility uses. The residential density ranges for the R-5 district are multifamily, 1,800 sq. ft. minimum/unit; multifamily quadraplex, 3,000 sq. ft. minimum/unit; and townhouse, 2,000 sq. ft. minimum/unit. The M-1, General Industrial District is intended primarily for manufacturing, processing, storage, and distribution activities, which are not properly associated with, nor compatible with, residential and institutional development. 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 request is to rezone +/- 0.99-acres, comprising of tax map parcels 39-O-2, 39-O-3, and 39-U-1, and portions of 39-O-1 and 39-O-4 all to R-5C, and to rezone +/- 0.36 acres comprising of the remaining portions of 39-O-1 and 39-O-4 to M-1C. The site is addressed as 675, 705, 715, and 745 North Dogwood Drive., and 860 Waterman Drive.

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 rezoning request.

Attachments:

1. Site map
2. Application and supporting documents

Review:

N/A