CITY OF HARRISONBURG

February 11, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting

Title
Consider a Subdivision Ordinance Variance at 625 and 630 Franklin Street and 765 East Market Street (The Edge) — Meg Rupkey, Community Development

Summary

Project name	The Edge
Address/Location	625 and 630 Franklin Street and 765 East Market Street
Tax Map Parcels	28-K-1 and 28-J-13
Total Land Area	+/- 6.52 acres
Property Owner	The Edge Realty Partners LLC
Owner's Representative	Valley Engineering
Subdivision Ordinance Variance Request	Subdivision Ordinance Sections 10-2-61 (a) and 10-2-66 and Design and Construction Standards Manual Sections 3.6.2.4 and 3.6.4.1
Planning Commission	February 11, 2026
City Council	March 10, 2026

Recommendation
Option 1. Recommend approval of the subdivision variance requests with a condition.

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

Site:	Vacant parcels, zoned R-5C
North:	Commercial uses, zoned B-2
East:	Across East Market Street, commercial uses, zoned B-2
South:	Commercial uses, single-family detached dwellings, zoned B-2 and R-3
West:	Single-family detached, duplex, and townhomes, zoned R-2

In March 2022, City Council approved a rezoning for 23 parcels from B-2 to R-5C. The applicant also received approval for a special use permit to allow for multi-family buildings with more than 12 units per building. During the rezoning, the applicant was informed that variances to the Subdivision Ordinance (SO) would be required to construct Franklin Street as a public street as was shown on the concept plan submitted with their rezoning request.

In July 2023, the applicant completed a minor subdivision to vacate the internal property lines and to create two parcels; one on either side of the undeveloped Franklin Street public street right-of-way. The applicant is now requesting variances to the SO and the Design and Construction Standards Manual (DCSM) associated with the vertical curvature and the width of the proposed street.

Land Use

The Comprehensive Plan designates this site as Mixed Use and states:

> The Mixed Use category 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.
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> 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.

Transportation and Traffic

The Determination of Need for a Traffic Impact Analysis (TIA) form ("TIA determination form") for the proposed development was completed during the rezoning process and indicated that the project would not generate 100 or more peak hour trips, which is the threshold for staff to require a TIA.

Public Water and Sanitary Sewer

Staff has no concerns regarding water and sanitary sewer service availability for the proposed development.

Subdivision Ordinance Variance Requests

The applicant is requesting to deviate from the requirements of the SO Sections 10-2-61 (a) and 10-2-66, which are associated with public street design standards. Specifically, Section 10-2-61 (a) states that "[t]he subdivider is required to make all such improvements to streets, including grading, subgrade, surface, and curbs and gutters, in accord with the requirements of the city's DCSM" while Section 10-2-66 states "[a]ll utility, street and alley improvements shall be provided in each new subdivision lying wholly or partly within the corporate limits of the city in accordance with standards and specifications of the city." The SO deviations are needed because the applicant is specifically requesting to deviate from the DCSM Sections 3.6.2.4 and 3.6.4.1.

With regard to deviating from Section 3.6.2.4, the applicant is requesting a variance to the rate of the vertical curvature (the K value) used in calculating the minimum length of the sag vertical curve on a section of the proposed extension of Franklin Street. A sag vertical curve is the parabolic curve in a road that connects a change in grade along a street centerline. Proper design allows for smooth transitions for drivers, prevents changes in elevations that can create a rollercoaster effect, and helps provide adequate headlight sight distance at night. When the K value is larger, it produces a decreased rate of change of slope through the vertical curve, which is preferred. Less desirable is a lower K value, which creates an increased rate of change in the slope. Per Section 3.2.6.4, the minimum K value for a local street is 20. The applicant proposes a minimum K value of 15 and explains in their letter that "[t]he existing Franklin Street has an existing slope of 9.82%. In order to [provide] an accessible slope, throughout the property, we must flatten this slope as quickly as possible which creates a sag curve K value of less than 20." Within the applicant's supporting documentation, Exhibit 2 illustrates the existing and proposed street profile (slope and grades) and due to existing conditions, in this case, staff finds the request reasonable.

Section 3.6.4.1 of the DCSM requires for typical street sections to follow those specified in the DCSM's Appendix F. Specifically for local streets, Appendix F requires a pavement width of 30 feet for local streets (34 feet face of curb to face of curb). However, the applicant proposes to construct Franklin Street at a width of 20 feet of street pavement, where parking is not permitted (24 feet face of curb to face of curb), and to allow 25 feet of street pavement, where parking is allowed on one side (29 feet face of curb to face of curb). The applicant's variance request to Appendix F, specifically for a local street, are shown in the table below. These widths are acceptable to Public Works. Exhibit 3 illustrates the proposed street widths.

	Appendix F Requirement for Local Street	Requested Variance (No On-Street Parking)	Requested Variance (On-Street Parking One Side)
Pavement Width	30 ft	20 ft	25 ft
Face-of-Curb to Face-of-Curb Width	34 ft	24 ft	29 ft

Conclusion
Staff finds the requested minimum rate of vertical curvature, K value, of 15 along Franklin Street acceptable and recommends in favor of the variance only with the following condition:

- The K value used to calculate the minimum length of the sag vertical curve in DCSM Section 3.6.2.4 shall not be less than 15.

Additionally, staff finds the proposed street widths are acceptable as presented and recommends approval with no recommended conditions.

Options
1. Recommend approval of the subdivision variance requests with a condition.
2. Recommend approval of the subdivision variance requests as requested.
3. Recommend denial of the requests.

Attachments
- Site maps
- Application and supporting documents
- Exhibit 3