

Docket Item #
SPECIAL USE PERMIT # 2007-0073

Planning Commission Meeting
October 2, 2007

ISSUE: Consideration of a request for a special use permit for a parking reduction.

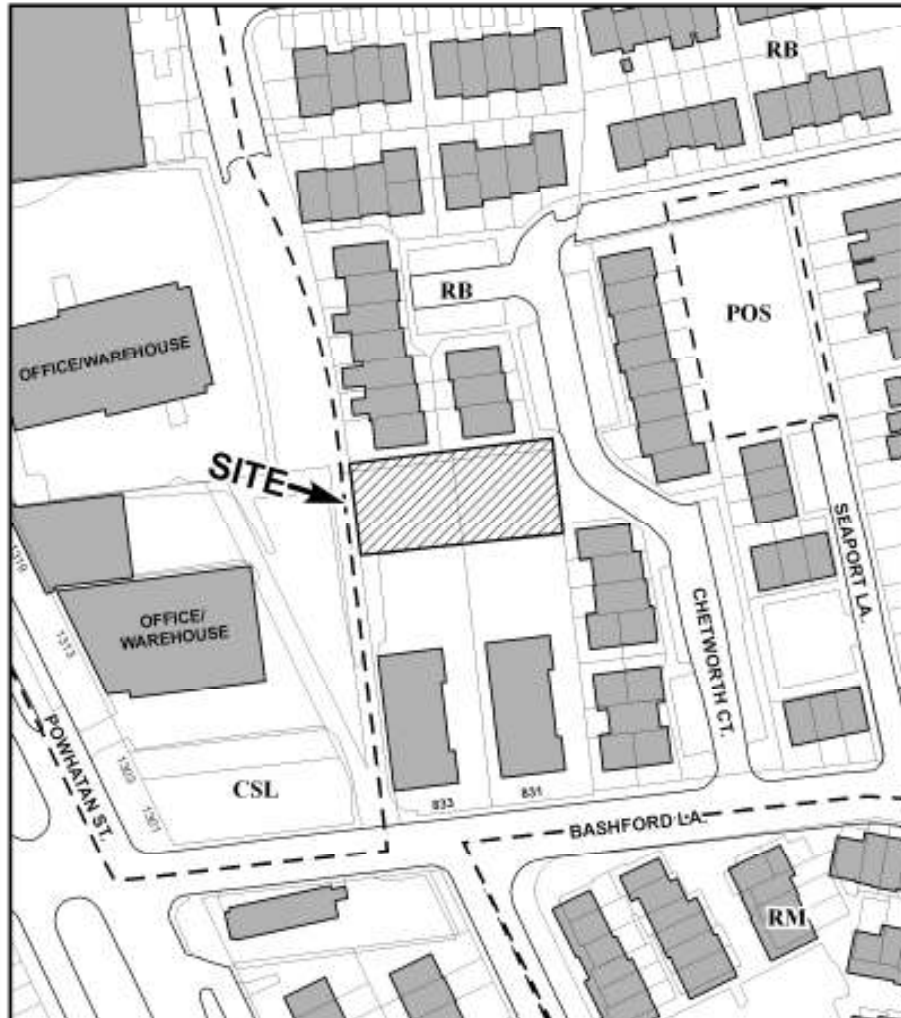
APPLICANT: Robert Pierre Johnson Housing Development Corporation

STAFF: Allison Anderson
Allison.anderson@alexandriava.gov

LOCATION: 831-833 Bashford Lane

ZONE: RB

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends **approval** subject to compliance with all applicable codes and ordinances and the recommended permit conditions found in Section III of this report.



SUP #2007-0073

10/02/07



I. DISCUSSION

REQUEST

The applicant, Robert Pierre Johnson Housing Development Cooperation, requests Special Use Permit approval for a parking reduction located at 831-833 Bashford Lane.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject property is two lots of record with 123 feet of frontage on Bashford Lane, 248 feet of depth and a total lot area of 35,046 square feet. The site is developed with two garden-style apartment buildings, known as the Arbelo Apartments. Access to the property is from Bashford Lane.



The surrounding area is occupied by a mix of residential and commercial uses. Immediately to the north is a residential townhouse development. To the south is a restaurant and residential townhouses. To the east and west are commercial and residential uses.

APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to renovate and modernize the existing apartment buildings and to make improvements to the existing parking lot. The proposed apartment renovations consist of new kitchen and bathroom appliances and fixtures, new windows, upgraded plumbing and electrical systems, and new HVAC systems.

The parking lot improvements would include repairing concrete sidewalks, repairing and resealing the existing asphalt parking lot, upgrading parking and security lighting and upgrading waste removal area including the addition of screening.

The applicant will also be providing new amenities for the tenants, including new playground equipment, patio and grills.

PARKING

According to Section 8-200(F)(1)(B) of the Zoning Ordinance, any building that is significantly altered after January 27, 1987 shall comply with the parking requirements of the Ordinance. Significantly altered means:

“the reconstruction, remodeling or rehabilitation of, or other physical changes to, a structure or building, or a portion thereof, over any two-year period, whether or not involving any supporting members of the structure or building and whether altering interior or exterior components of the structure or building, which involves expenditures amounting to 33 1/3 percent or more of the market value of the structure or building, or portion thereof, at the time of the application for an alteration permit.”

Construction estimates have shown that the applicant's desired renovations would exceed 33 1/3 of the market value of the building. Based on current zoning, the applicant is required to provide a total of 54 parking spaces. There are 29 existing parking spaces on the property. The existing parking area will be reconfigured to accommodate handicapped accessible parking spaces consistent with current code requirements. The applicant proposes to provide 26 parking spaces and is requesting a parking reduction of 28 spaces.

ZONING/MASTER PLAN DESIGNATION

The subject property is located in the RB zone. Although apartments are not a permitted use in the RB zone, these apartments pre-date existing zoning and are a continuing nonconforming use. The apartments were built in 1954.

The proposed use is consistent with the Northeast Small Area Plan chapter of the Master Plan which designates the property for residential use.

II. STAFF ANALYSIS

The Arbelo Apartments currently provide 34 low and moderate income rental housing units. On June 2, 2006 the applicant placed a deed of easement and restrictive covenants on the property restricting its use as affordable housing for the duration of RPJ Housing's ownership. For either forty years or the duration of RPJ Housing's ownership of the property, 26 units will be maintained as affordable rental housing. After fifteen years, all 34 units will be maintained as affordable units.

The applicant wishes to renovate the apartments, but by doing so would be required to provide 54 parking spaces. It is not possible to provide 54 parking spaces on the subject property. The only area of the property that could accommodate parking is currently occupied by open space. A reconfiguration of the open space area would yield few additional parking spaces, since it would require loss of existing spaces to access any new parking. There are no nearby lots available for off street parking.



The applicant anticipates that the proposed 26 spaces will adequately serve their tenants. Over the course of four days the applicant surveyed the parking lot, which currently contains 29 spaces, and nearby on-street parking to determine the number of available spaces. At the time 32 of 34 units were occupied. The results of that survey are shown below:

	Fri. 7/20 9:08 p.m.	Sat. 7/21 8:05 a.m.	Mon. 7/23 9:15 a.m.	Mon. 7/23 8:00 p.m.
Number of off-street parking spaces available	23	19	21	19
Number of on-street spaces available between Powhatan & Michigan Ave. (adjacent to the property)	2	8	12	9
Number of on-street spaces available between Powhatan & Michigan Ave. (across the street)	3	5	8	5

Staff determined that 7 of 29 parking spaces were utilized on September 16th at 6:15 p.m. Additionally there were 13 available on street parking spaces.

Public transportation is available nearby with DASH stops located at the corner of Seaport and Bashford Lanes, Portner Road and Bashford Lane, and Powhatan Street and Bashford Lane.

The applicant feels that the current parking lot is underutilized due to its poor condition. The renovation of the parking lot and improvement of security lighting should help better utilize parking on site, thus improving the on street parking situation in this area. As the number and size of residential units is staying the same, the applicant is not anticipating any negative impact on the existing neighborhoods.



Staff has no objection to the requested parking reduction under the following conditions:

III. RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

Staff recommends **approval** subject to compliance with all applicable codes and ordinances and the following conditions:

1. The special use permit shall be granted to the applicant only or to any corporation in which the applicant has a controlling interest. (P&Z)
2. The applicant shall conduct employee training sessions on an ongoing basis, including as part of any employee orientation, to discuss all SUP provisions and requirements. (P&Z)
4. Housing shall be maintained as affordable in accordance with the deed of easement and restrictive covenants. (P&Z)
5. A landscape plan, in conformance with the most recent edition of the City of

Alexandria Landscape shall be provided to the satisfaction of the Department of Parks and Recreation. (Recreation)

6. The proposed playground shall be relocated to provide a safer distance from the parking lot and any vehicular movement. (Recreation)
7. The Director of Planning and Zoning shall review the special use permit after it has been operational for one year, and shall docket the matter for consideration by the Planning Commission and City Council if (a) there have been documented violations of the permit conditions which were not corrected immediately, constitute repeat violations or which create a direct and immediate adverse zoning impact on the surrounding community; (b) the director has received a request from any person to docket the permit for review as the result of a complaint that rises to the level of a violation of the permit conditions, (c) the director has determined that there are problems with the operation of the use and that new or revised conditions are needed. (P&Z)

STAFF: Richard Josephson, Acting Director, Department of Planning and Zoning;
Allison Anderson, Urban Planner.

Staff Note: In accordance with section 11-506(c) of the zoning ordinance, construction or operation shall be commenced and diligently and substantially pursued within 18 months of the date of granting of a special use permit by City Council or the special use permit shall become void.

IV. CITY DEPARTMENT COMMENTS

Legend: C - code requirement R - recommendation S - suggestion F - finding

Transportation & Environmental Services:

F-1 T&ES has no objections to the proposed parking reduction.

Code Enforcement:

C- 1 Handicap parking spaces for apartment and condominium developments shall remain in the same location(s) as on the approved site plan. Handicap parking spaces shall be properly signed and identified as to their purpose in accordance with the USBC and the Code of Virginia. Ownership and / or control of any handicap parking spaces shall remain under common ownership of the apartment management or condominium association and shall not be sold or leased to any single individual. Parking within any space identified as a handicap parking space shall be limited to only those vehicles which are properly registered to a handicap individual and the vehicle displays the appropriate license plates or window tag as defined by the Code of Virginia for handicap vehicles. The relocation, reduction or increase of any handicap parking space shall only be approved through an amendment to the approved site plan.

Health Department:

F-1 No Comment

Recreation:

R-1 A landscape plan, in conformance with the most recent edition of the City of Alexandria Landscape shall include parking lot screening if applicable.

R-2 The proposed playground shall be relocated to provide a safer distance from the parking lot and any vehicular movement.

Police Department:

F-1 The Police Department has no objections to the request for a parking reduction.

**REPORT ATTACHMENTS
AVAILABLE IN THE PLANNING AND ZONING OFFICE**