

CONSENT AGENDA ITEM

If no one asks to speak about this case prior to the hearing, it will be approved without discussion as part of the Consent Agenda.

Docket Item #2
SPECIAL USE PERMIT #2007-0108

Planning Commission Meeting
December 4, 2007

ISSUE: Consideration of a request for a special use permit to operate a child care home.

APPLICANT: Avis Walker

LOCATION: 525 S. Columbus Street (Parcel Address: 598 S. Alfred Street)

ZONE: RB/Residential

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 #2007-0108

12/04/07



I. DISCUSSION

REQUEST

The applicant, Avis Walker, requests special use permit approval for the operation of a child care home located at 525 South Columbus Street.

SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject property is one lot of record with 227 feet of frontage on South Columbus Street and South Alfred Street, 247 feet of depth and a total lot area of 56,096 square feet. The site is developed with the Old Town West Townhouse development. The subject site is a townhouse that faces South Columbus Street.



The surrounding area is occupied by a mix of residential and retail uses. Immediately to the north and west are garden style apartments. To the south and east are townhouses.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to operate a child care home at her residence. There is one resident child in the home, age three. The applicant proposes to care for an additional eight children on weekdays 6:00 am to 6:30 pm. Overnight care will be provided for five children.

Hours: Monday – Friday, 6:00am – 6:30pm (9 children)
Monday – Friday, 6:30pm – 6:00am (5 children)

Number of children: 9 children during the day, 5 children overnight

Age of children: 3 months to 8 years

Noise: No undue noise is anticipated, staff will control noise levels

Trash/Litter: Trash will be collected daily, children will not be allowed to take potential litter outside

PARKING

Parents will drop off their children at the front entrance of the home on South Columbus Street. On-street parking is available on both sides of the street, but is limited. The applicant is also able to provide pick-up and drop-off in the parking lot located behind her home.

ZONING/MASTER PLAN DESIGNATION

The subject property is located in the RB zone. Section 3-703 of the Zoning Ordinance allows a child day care home in the RB zone only with a special use permit.

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

II. STAFF ANALYSIS

Staff supports the new child care home proposed for 525 South Columbus Street. The applicant lives in a clean, neat, well-maintained two level two bedroom home that is a privately owned, publicly assisted unit. The applicant has arranged her space so that there is adequate room to accommodate nine children. There is a playground on the grounds.

The applicant is proposing to care for 9 children on weekdays and 5 children overnight on weeknights. Staff recognizes that there is a great need for child care, including overnight care. Staff is in agreement with the Office of Early Childhood Development and is recommending approval of the special use permit.

With the following conditions, staff recommends approval of the special use permit.

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 hours of operation of the child care home shall be limited to Monday through Friday, 6:00am to 6:30pm for nine children. Up to five children may be cared for overnight. (P&Z)
3. The applicant shall obtain a license from the Virginia Department of Social Services. (Human Services)
4. 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)
5. The applicant or an assistant must be available to escort children to and from the parent's cars in the event that parking is not available on South Columbus Street. Parents shall not be permitted to double-park their cars on South Columbus Street while dropping off or picking up children. (T&ES)

6. The applicant is to contact the Community Relations Unit of the Alexandria Police Department at 703-838-4520 regarding a security survey for the child care home. This is to be completed prior to the child care home opening for business. (Police)
7. The applicant is to contact the Community Relations Unit of the Alexandria Police Department at 703-838-4520 regarding a robbery readiness program for employees. (Police)
8. 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;
Richard Bray, 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:

- R-1 The applicant or an assistant must be available to escort children to and from the parent's cars in the event that parking is not available on S. Columbus St. Parents shall not be permitted to double-park their cars on S. Columbus St while dropping off or picking up children. (T&ES)
- C-1 The applicant shall comply with the City of Alexandria's Noise Control Code, Title 11, Chapter 5, which sets the maximum permissible noise level as measured at the property line.

Code Enforcement:

- F-1 Applicant states that they are not currently licensed by the Virginia Department of Social Services. The number of children in application is nine (9). This review is based on the assumption that this facility will be licensed as a family day home by the Virginia Department of Social Services. If this does not occur then the number of children served at one time shall be limited to five (5).
- C-2 Smoke detectors shall be provided in all sleeping areas.
- C-3 Fire extinguishers shall be provided at this facility.
- C-4 The applicant shall develop an evacuation plan to be approved by Code Enforcement. Upon approval, the plan shall be posted in an unobstructed location.

Health Department:

- F-1 No comment

Human Services:

- F-1 On October 12, 2007, a visit was conducted by the Office of Early Childhood Development (OECD) Social Work Staff, Rosa Chavez.

Ms. Walker was at home at the time of the visit. Ms Walker is in the process of becoming state licensed to care for 9 children. She attended the

first orientation for state licensing on October 25th. Ms. Walker has obtained certification in CPR and First Aid training.

Ms. Walker plans to use the living room, the kitchen and the dining room as her major child care areas. All of the rooms are clean and well ventilated. The house has only one bathroom which is on the second level. The house is clean and organized, although there is no equipment or supplies in the home at this time for a child care setting. Ms Walker states that she will use her walk in closet on the main level to store the children's belongings. The children will be napping in the living room. Ms Walker needs to obtain age appropriate equipment for the children she accepts for care, such as books educational toys, cribs, high chairs etc. Ms. Walker is currently not providing care for any outside children. Ms. Walker has one son, 3 years of age, who was not present during the visit.

- R-1 It is recommended that Ms. Walker's request for a special Use Permit be approved to allow her to care for nine children in her home contingent upon her meeting all of the state licensing requirements.

Police Department:

- R-1 The applicant is to contact the Community Relations Unit of the Alexandria Police Department at 703-838-4520 regarding a security survey for the child care center. This is to be completed prior to the child care home opening for business.
- R-2 The applicant is to contact the Community Relations Unit of the Alexandria Police Department at 703-838-4520 regarding robbery readiness training for employees.

SUP #2007-0108
598 South Alfred Street

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