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SPECIAL EXCEPTION REQUEST (SE202400017)

TO: Andy Reitelbach
Senior Planner II
Albemarle County Community Development

FROM: Kendra Moon, PE
Line and Grade Civil Engineering

DATE: April 15, 2024

RE: Knight Berkshire Mixed Use
Special Exception Request – Front Stepback

PROJECT DETAILS

Applicant:	Knight Berkshire Holdings LLC
Consultant:	Line and Grade Civil Engineering | Kendra G. Moon, PE
Name of Project:	Knight Berkshire Mixed Use
Short Description:	Special Exception to Maximum Front Setback in C1 District
Proposed Site:	615 Woodbrook Drive, Charlottesville, VA 22901

PROPERTY DETAILS

Parcel ID Number:	04500-00-00-091A0
Short Parcel ID:	45-91A
Total Acres:	1.05 ac
Owner:	Knight Berkshire Holdings LLC
Current Tenant:	Dental Office (commercial)
Magisterial District:	Rio
Zoning:	C1 Commercial
Proffered:	No
Overlays:	Airport Impact Area, Managed Steep Slopes
Comprehensive Plan Area:	Neighborhood 1 - Places 29
Comprehensive Plan Use:	Urban Density Residential
Land Use:	Commercial
Surrounding Uses:	Multifamily residential zoned R-15 to the northwest; offices to the north zoned C1 (note ZMA202300006 for PRD to share entrance with this parcel); retail to the east zoned C1; and Agnor-Hurt Elementary School to the south zoned R-6

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Knight Berkshire Holdings LLC would like to formally request a Special Exception (SE) to the required 15 ft building stepback for the proposed mixed use building on parcel (TMP 45-91A) in Albemarle County, Virginia. Note that this special exception accompanies a special use permit request which details the proposed concept for this site.

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Site Mapping



Image 1 – Subject parcel, source: Albemarle County GIS



Image 2 – Subject parcel as seen from Woodbrook Drive, source: Google Street View, July 2023

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REQUEST OF SPECIAL EXCEPTION TO FRONT STEPBACK

According to Chapter 18, Article II, Section 4.20(a) of the County's Code of Ordinances, conventional commercial districts shall have the following front stepback for buildings:

> For each story that begins above 40 feet in height or for each story above the third story, whichever is less, the minimum stepback shall be 15 feet

This stepback requirement helps to break up large building masses and ensure a human scale to streetscapes, where sunlight can reach the street trees and pedestrians do not feel as though the buildings are looming over them. However, in this case, the building is proposed beyond the maximum 30 ft setback in order to avoid existing utilities near Woodbrook Drive. Therefore, the building will not be as close to the sidewalk as the zoning ordinance intended, and the need for a building stepback is reduced.

The proposed mixed use building requested with the special use permit is 4 stories, but will not have any stories that begin above 40 feet in height. According to Section 4.20(a)(4), the minimum 15-foot stepback may be reduced by special exception. We hereby request to reduce the stepback to 0 ft. As mentioned, the building is proposed beyond the maximum setback from the sidewalk at approximately 80 ft away.

Though there are not currently architectural plans for the proposed building, it is intended that there will be some variation in the façade so that it is visually interesting and broken up even though the 4th story may not be stepped back.