CITY OF RICHMOND

REPORT TO COMMITTEE

To Council - Nov. 28/00
To Planning - Nov. 21/00

TO: Planning Committee

DATE: October 31, 2000

FROM: Joe Erceg
Manager, Development Applications

FILE: RZ 00-180662
8060-20-7185

RE: **Application by Victor Que for rezoning at 7260 Westminster Highway from Automobile-Oriented Commercial District (C6) to Comprehensive Development District (CD/116)**

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Bylaw No. 7185, for the rezoning of 7260 Westminster Highway from "Automobile-Oriented Commercial District (C6)" to "Comprehensive Development District (CD/116)", be introduced and given first reading.

Joe Erceg
Manager, Development Applications

Att. 3

FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY
CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER

192504

STAFF REPORT

ORIGIN

The subject site is one of a number of small City Centre properties zoned Automobile-Oriented Commercial District (C6), which front the south side of Westminster Highway and back onto Minoru Park. The site was developed 6 years ago with two small commercial buildings. Recently, business in the larger of the two buildings, Happy Video, has proven to be poor. The owner would like to remedy this situation by infilling that building's large atrium space to create a full second storey and adding additional tenant(s). As the subject site is currently developed at close to its maximum allowable density, the proposed second storey expansion requires the site to be rezoned. The proposed renovation is limited to the building's interior and does not make provision for increased on-site parking to satisfy bylaw requirements. For reasons outlined below, staff propose that this parking shortage be addressed through a Development Variance.

FINDINGS OF FACT

ITEM	EXISTING	PROPOSED
Owner	Trans-Pacific Business Corp.	No change
Applicant	Victor Que	No change
Site Size	1,716.8 m^2 (18,480 ft^2), including a 7.5 m (24.6 ft)wide rights-of-way for future rear lane use	No change
Land Uses	Retail and karaoke	Multiple commercial tenants (May include expanded karaoke)
OCP Designation (City Centre Area Plan)	Mixed Use - Specialty	No change
Zoning • *Uses* • *Density* • *Lot Coverage* • *Road Setbacks* • *Building Heights* • *Parking*	***Automobile-Oriented Commercial District (C6)*** • Range of commercial uses *including* retail, restaurant, entertainment, and hotel • Hotel: 1.5 FAR Other uses: 0.5 FAR • 50% • 6 m (19.685 ft) • Hotels: 45 m (147.638 ft) Other uses: 12 m (39.370 ft) • Retail: 4 cars/100 m^2 • Restaurant: 10 cars/100 m^2	***Comprehensive Development District (CD/116)*** • No change, *except* ***a covenant limits restaurant to 140 m^2 (1,507 ft^2)*** • Hotel: No change Other uses: ***0.59 FAR*** • No change • No change • No change • No change • No change
Permitted Building Area	858.4 m^2 (9,240 ft^2) @ 0.5 FAR	1,012.9 m^2 (10,903.1 ft^2) @ 0.59 FAR
Actual Building Area	794.7 m^2 (8,554 ft^2)	+/-1,001m^2 (10,775 ft^2), including the ***206.3 m^2 (2,221 ft^2) addition***
Parking	• 24 stalls provided	• No change • Zoning requires +/-48 stalls. ***Development Variance Permit will be required.***

Surrounding Development & Related Policies

The subject site and the lots to its east and west are an unusual development challenge in the City Centre. Prominently located along Westminster Highway, in view of the hospital and three major hotels, the strip of land would appear, at first glance, to be appropriate for similar downtown-type, high-rise projects. The strip is, however, very shallow; its proximity to Minoru Park means it has no real "back"; and, the lack of a rear lane means that driveways must be accommodated along the strip's Westminster frontage. This has made large-scale projects impractical and, in turn, has discouraged land assembly. As a result, recent developments have been small (e.g. mostly 2-storeys) and fairly consistent with the area's typical zoning, Automobile-Oriented Commercial District (C6). The City Centre Area Plan encourages a more urban, pedestrian-friendly form of development and a lane policy is in effect (towards which the subject site has already contributed a rights-of-way and covenanted to close its Westminster Highway driveway when the lane is opened), but until the lane becomes operational it appears unrealistic to expect any significant improvement in this area.

Staff Comments

- ***Policy Planning***
  The attractiveness of Richmond's downtown is largely dependent on the image and viability of its retail sector. A viable retail sector attracts not just business, but people, and contributes to a vibrant urban environment. Failed retail shops, especially in prominent locations, do just the opposite. The applicant's shop is located in a prominent, yet difficult retail area, with no on-street parking and little pedestrian traffic. The applicant's proposal challenges City conventions with regard to parking, but appears to be manageable. Given that the proposal is limited to an interior renovation (with the exception of new, more attractive signage), represents an increase of less than 0.1 FAR, and does not set an undesirable precedent, staff believe it is in the City Centre's best interest to support the applicant's bid to enhance the viability of his site.

- ***Transportation***
  Staff support a variance of 24 stalls, based on the existing 24 stalls being maintained on the subject site. A covenant is required restricting the maximum allowable space for restaurant use to 140 m^2 (1,500 ft^2) to ensure that this variance is not exceeded. The 24-stall parking shortfall can be compensated for by the surplus of pay parking in the surrounding area, as identified in the parking survey conducted by the applicant's traffic consultant.

<u>ANALYSIS</u>

The subject site was developed several years ago, when Richmond's retail market was buoyed by a large influx of immigrants. Recently, however, both immigration and Richmond's retail market have slowed, and the applicant's business, Happy Video, has suffered. The applicant believes he has no alternative, but to reduce the size of his store and rent a portion to another tenant. Unfortunately, the design of the building, with its large 2-storey atrium, cannot accommodate this. The applicant's architect has advised that multi-tenant conversion of the building requires expansion of the existing mezzanine to create a full second floor. The increased floor space requires the site to be rezoned. The site layout provides no means by which to accommodate a corresponding increase in on-site parking. Staff have considered the applicant's proposal from the perspectives of "fit" and parking and have concluded the following.

"Fit": Staff are supportive of the proposal on the basis that:

1. As financial hardship is the reason behind this proposal, a more costly alternative solution (i.e. a larger-scale redevelopment of the site) would appear to be unworkable;

2. The existing development is relatively new and well maintained, and is consistent with the scale and character of adjacent development along the south side of Westminster Highway;

3. The applicant has agreed to improve the appearance of his property by replacing the existing, free-standing, illuminated sign with one better suited to the site's prominent, urban location; and

4. If the applicant is unsuccessful in this bid to enhance the viability of his property, the site could degrade (e.g. through high tenant turn-over), which could damage the image of its neighbours and this important City Centre street.

Parking: Staff are supportive of the proposal on the following basis:

1. The applicant is willing to place limitations on the range of uses permitted on the subject site to ensure that the development's parking shortfall will not exceed 24 stalls. Specifically:
   - Restaurant uses will be limited to 140 m^2 (1507 ft^2) through use of a covenant. This is a considerable improvement over the existing situation, as the subject site's current zoning, Automobile-Oriented Commercial District (C6), would permit the entire development to be converted to restaurant use without any corresponding increase in parking. Such a conversion would result in a parking deficit of 56 stalls.

2. The parking requirement for retail/office uses on the subject site and its small, Automobile-Oriented Commercial District (C6) neighbours is higher that on the larger Downtown Commercial District (C7) properties surrounding it. Specifically:
   - Under C6, assuming 140 m^2 (1507 ft^2) of restaurant uses and 861 m^2 (9268 ft^2) of retail uses, the bylaw requirement for the subject site would be 48 stalls, for a variance of 24 stalls. Under C7, the same development would require only 39 stalls and a variance of only 15 stalls.

3. Rezoning of the southeast corner of Westminster Highway and Lawn Bowling Green Road from C6 to CD/31 reduced required on-site parking to 2.7 cars/100 m^2 for retail, office, and restaurant uses. Specifically:
   - Assuming the same development scenario in #2 above, the subject site would require only 27 stalls and a variance of only 3 stalls.

4. The 24-stall shortfall can be readily accommodated by the surplus of pay parking in the vicinity. Specifically:
   - The applicant's transportation consultant did parking counts at pay parking lots at Minoru Park (Lawn Bowling Green), the Richmond Inn/Marriott, and the former "Temporary City Hall" lot on both weekday and weekend afternoons and recorded significant surplus parking. Even taking into account possible seasonal fluctuations in parking usage, it appears the 24 stalls can be compensated for without hardship.

5. The 24 stall shortfall is expected to have little impact on on-street parking or neighbouring lots. Specifically:
   - No on-street parking is permitted along Westminster Highway, and it is only permitted along one side of Alderbridge Way. Given the limited opportunity to park on-street, staff do not believe the development will have any significant impact.
   - Developments on the north side of Westminster Highway have pay parking with surplus capacity, as noted above. On the south side of Westminster Highway, developments are typically small with small surface parking lots. While it is possible that patrons of the subject site may abuse these lots, staff expect this problem to be minimal as these lots are already well used and access is somewhat inconvenient.

6. The impact of the precedent set by the City's support of this proposal is expected to be marginal. Specifically:
   - The precedent applies to an interior renovation;
   - The increase in floor area ratio (FAR) is less than 0.1;
   - A covenant will be placed on the site to ensure that any future conversion of retail space to restaurant use will not result in a parking shortfall in excess of the agreed 24-stall parking variance; and
   - The reduced parking requirement will be handled through a Development Variance, rather than the proposed Comprehensive Development District (CD/116) zone in order that it will only apply to the proposed renovation. The City's standard parking bylaw will be applied to any future redevelopment of the site.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

None.

CONCLUSION

This application is consistent with the City Centre Area Plan, but is not in conformance with the City's parking bylaw. In view of alternative parking opportunities and City practices, however, staff recommend support of this rezoning to Comprehensive Development District (CD/116) on the basis that it is in the City Centre's best interest to support the applicant's bid to enhance the viability of his site.

Suzanne Carter-Huffman

Suzanne Carter-Huffman
Senior Planner/Urban Design

SPC:cas

There are requirements to be dealt with prior to adoption:
Legal requirements, specifically:
- Covenant limiting restaurant use to a maximum of 140 m^2 (1507 ft^2) until such time that the site is redeveloped.

Development requirements, specifically:
- Development Variance Permit for parking processed to a satisfactory level, together with the design of new signage to be erected in place of the property's existing free-standing illuminated sign to the satisfaction of the Manager of Development Applications.

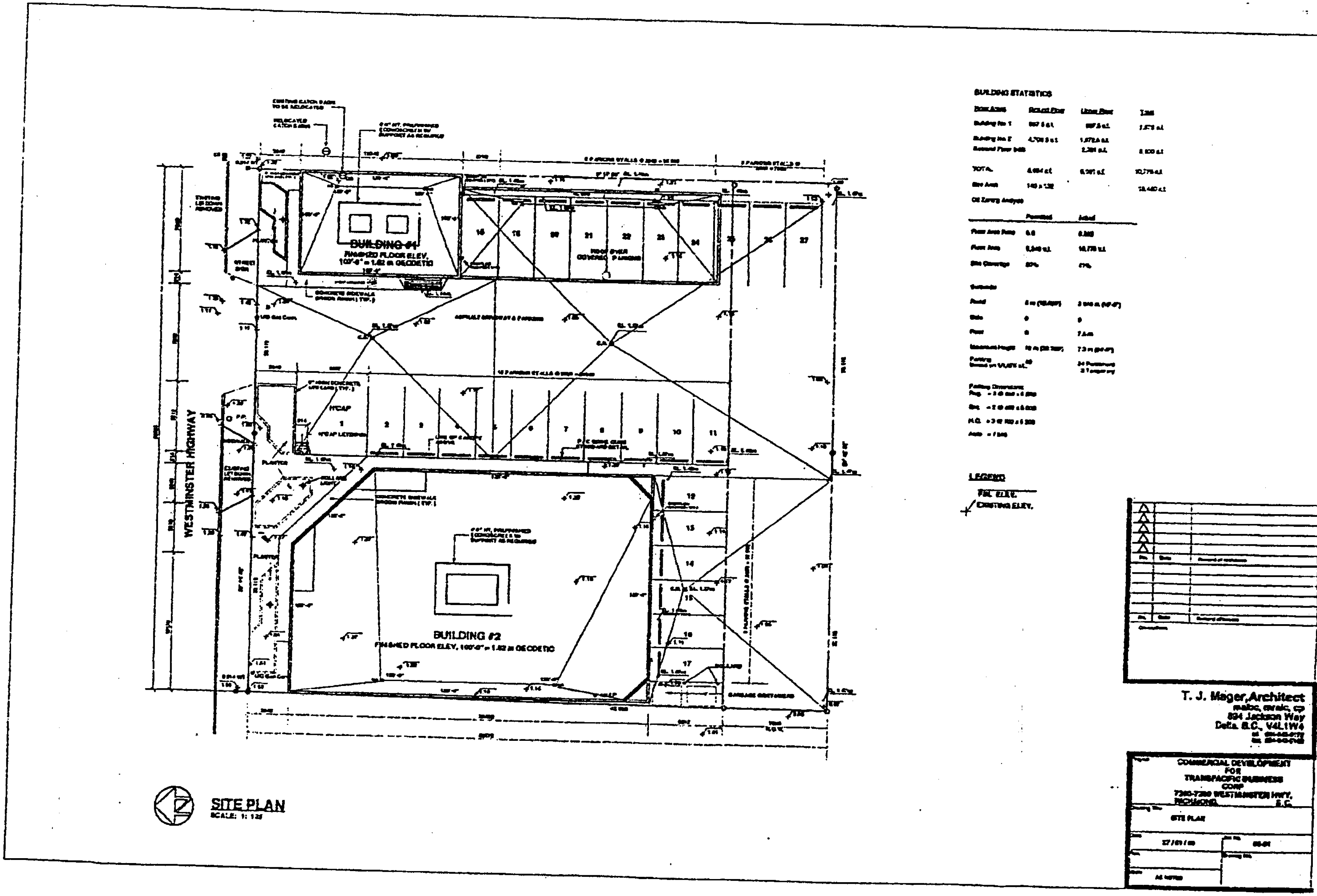
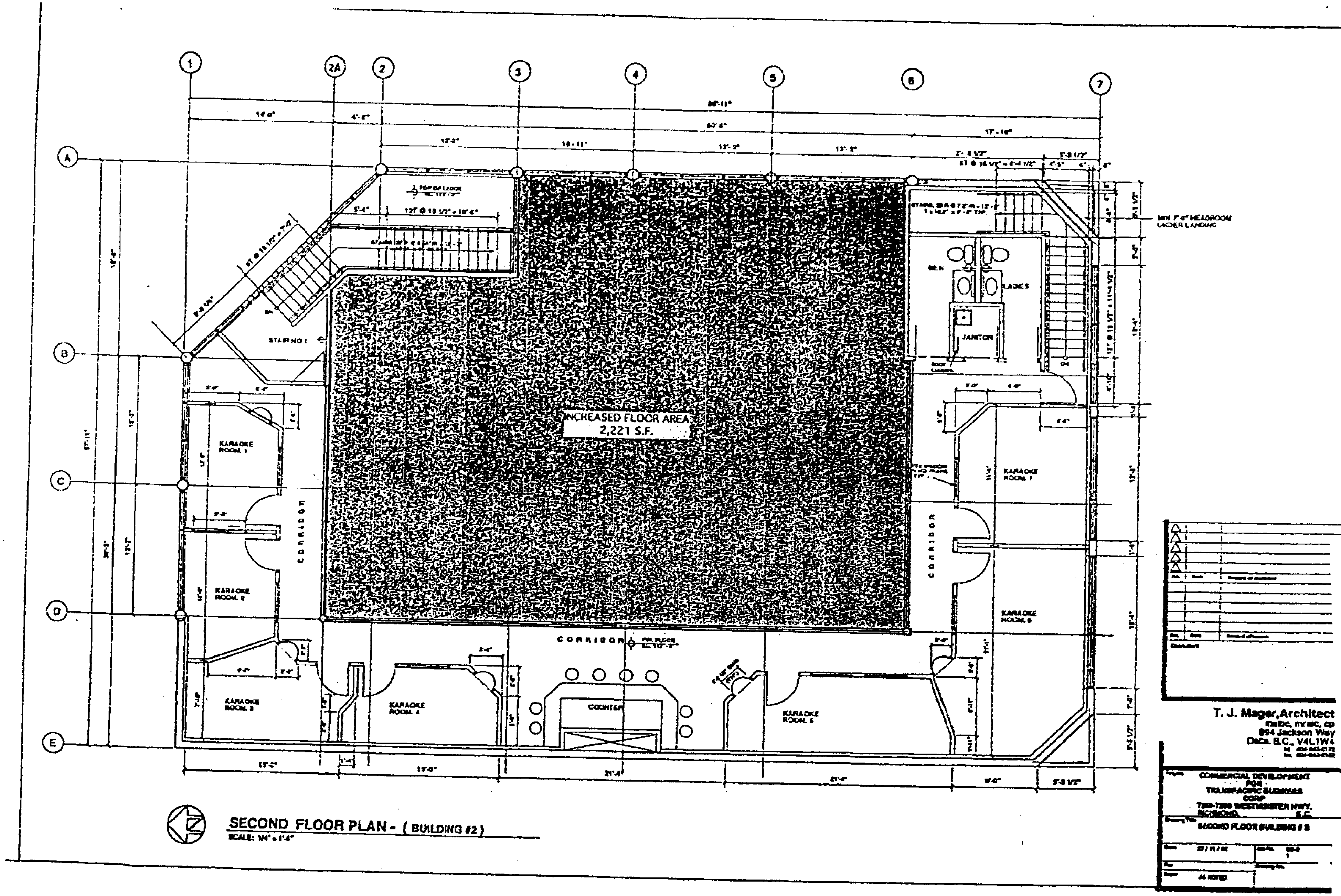


EXHIBIT 1

ATTACHMENT 2



ATTACHMENT 3

EXHIBIT 2

** TOTAL PAGE.08 **

CITY OF RICHMOND

BYLAW 7185

RICHMOND ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT BYLAW 5300 AMENDMENT BYLAW 7185 (RZ 00-180662) 7260 WESTMINSTER HIGHWAY

The Council of the City of Richmond, in open meeting assembled, enacts as follows:

1. Richmond Zoning and Development Bylaw 5300 is amended by inserting as Section 291.116 thereof the following:

"291.116 COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (CD/116)

The intent of this low-density zoning district is to provide for the shopping, personal service, business, entertainment, commercial, and light industrial needs of the community.

291.116.1 PERMITTED USES

RETAIL TRADE & SERVICES, but excluding **gas station** and the sales and servicing of automobiles, trailers, motorcycles, boats, or machinery;
OFFICE;
FOOD CATERING ESTABLISHMENT;
EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION;
ANIMAL HOSPITAL or CLINIC; including **caretaker residential accommodation** in conjunction therewith;
RECREATION FACILITY;
COMMERCIAL ENTERTAINMENT;
HOTEL;
STUDIO for artist, display, dance, radio, television, or recording;
AUTOMOBILE PARKING;
TRANSPORTATION;
LIGHT INDUSTRY;
COMMUNITY USE;
RADIO AND TELEVISION TRANSMISSION FACILITIES, provided that this use does not occur within 20 m (65.617 ft.) of the ground;
ACCESSORY USES, BUILDINGS, & STRUCTURES.

291.116.2 PERMITTED DENSITY

.01 Maximum **Floor Area Ratio**:

(a) For Automobile Parking as a principal use: No maximum limit.

(b) For **Hotel**: 1.5 (exclusive of parts of the **building** which are **used** for off-street parking purposes).

(c) For all other uses: 0.59 (exclusive of parts of the **building** which are **used** for off-street parking purposes).

291.116.3 **MAXIMUM LOT COVERAGE:** 50%

291.116.4 **MINIMUM SETBACKS FROM PROPERTY LINES**

.01 Road Setbacks: 6 m (19.685 ft.).

291.116.5 **MAXIMUM HEIGHTS**

.01 **Buildings**:

(a) For **Hotels**: 45 m (147.638 ft.).

(b) For all other **buildings**: 12 m (39.370 ft.).

.02 **Structures**: 20 m (65.617 ft.).

2. The Zoning Map of the City of Richmond, which accompanies and forms part of the Richmond Zoning and Development Bylaw No. 5300, is amended by repealing the existing zoning designation of the following area and by designating it COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT DISTRICT (CD/116):

   P.I.D. 018-696-040
   Parcel One Section 8 Block 4 North Range 6 West New Westminster District Reference Plan LMP15308

3. This Bylaw may be cited as **"Richmond Zoning and Development Bylaw 5300, Amendment Bylaw 7185".**

FIRST READING	NOV 2 8 2000
PUBLIC HEARING	
SECOND READING	
THIRD READING	
OTHER REQUIREMENTS SATISFIED	
ADOPTED	

CITY OF RICHMOND

APPROVED for content by originating dept.

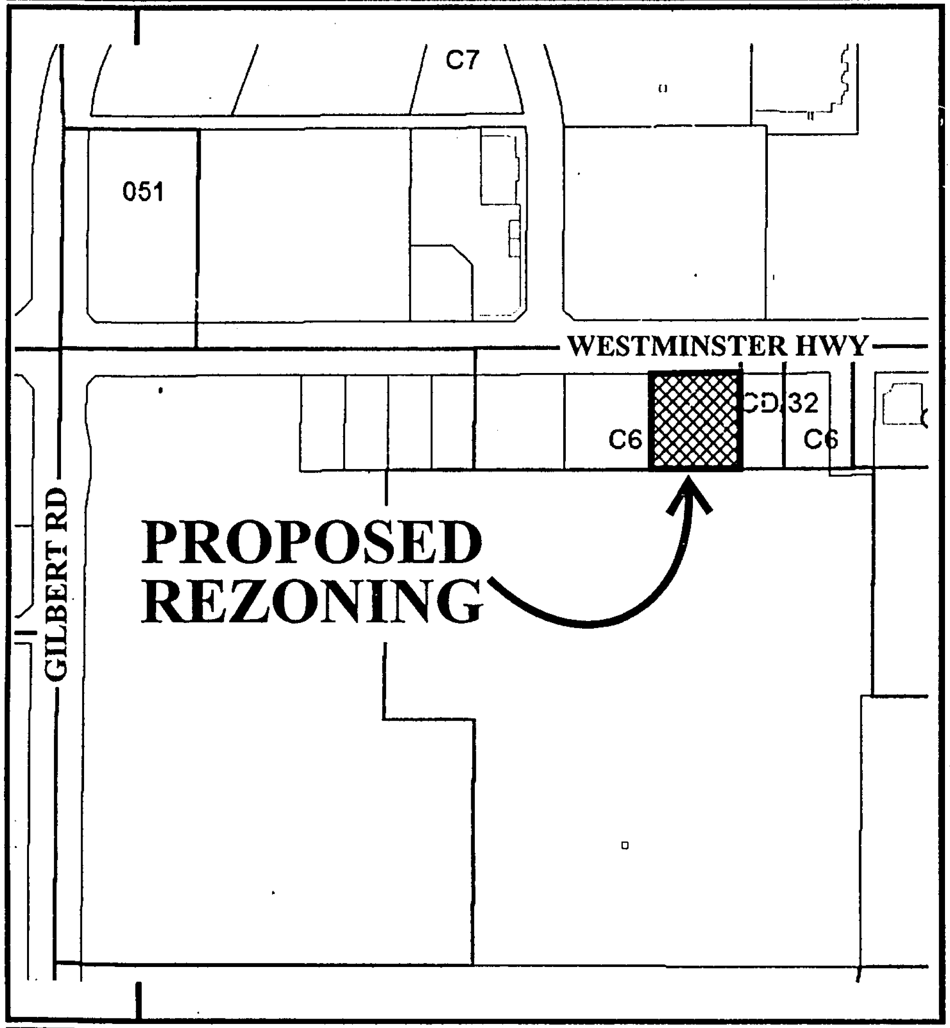
HB

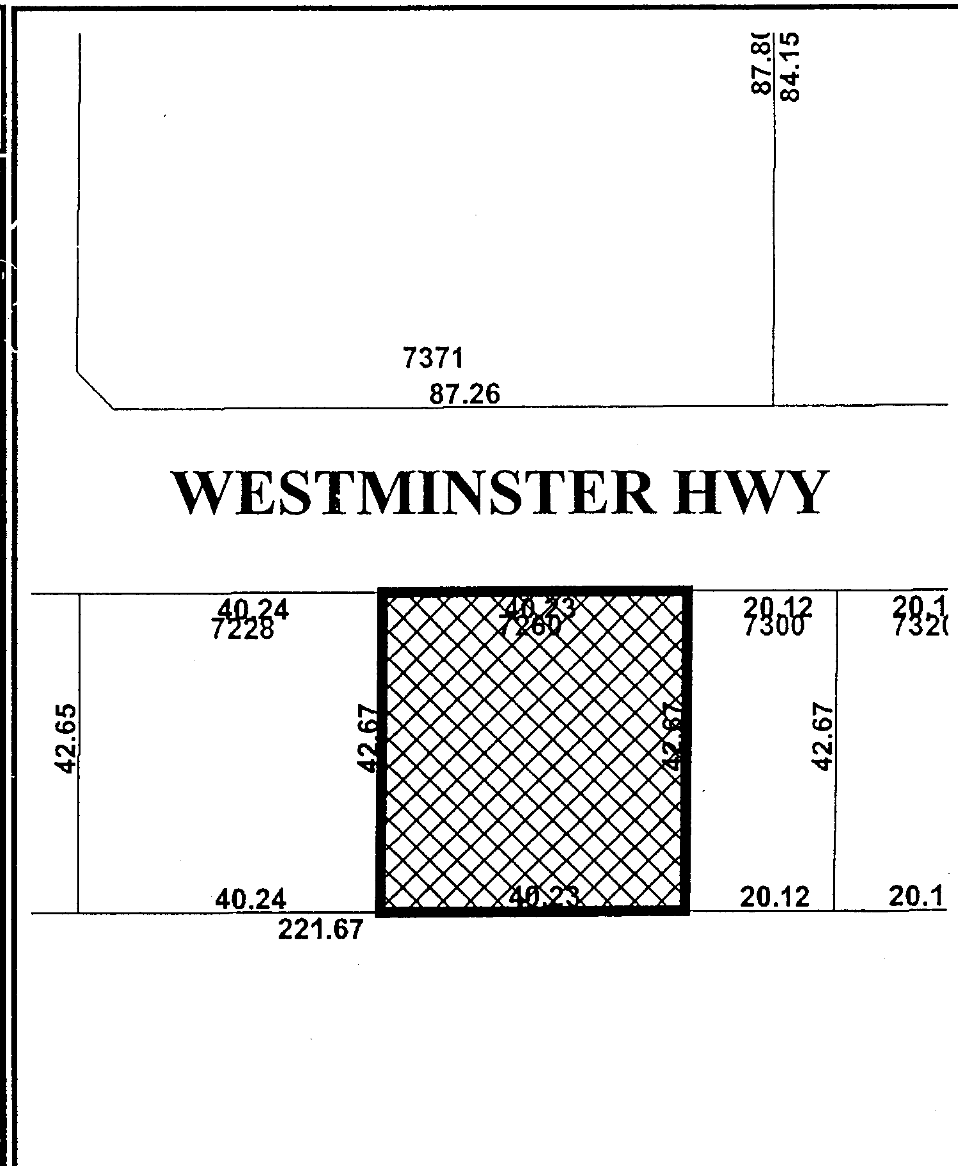
APPROVED for legality by Solicitor

MAYOR

CITY CLERK

City of Richmond





RZ 00-180662

Original Date: 10/03/00

Revision Date:

Note: Dimensions are in METRES

ATTACHMENT 1