



STAFF REPORT COVER SHEET

September 28, 2022

Addresses:	127 – 133 Park St NE (Parcels 0382-52-0001, 0002, 0003, 0004,005,006, 0007, 0008, 0009, 0010, 0011, 0012)	Case Number:	PF-651311-CZ
Public Meeting Date:	9/28/2022	Applicant:	BFR Construction Company
Board/Commission:	Planning Commission	Owners:	Trustees of Vienna Presbyterian Church; Joseph T. Nocerino and Mary Ann Nocerino, Trustees; Ezra Partnership; Manufacturers Standardization Society of the Valve and Fittings Industry, Inc.
Existing Zoning:	T (Transitional)	Existing Land Use:	Office
Brief Summary of Request:	<p>Applicant requests:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Change from Transitional zoning district to RM-2 Multifamily, Low Density 2. Site plan modifications of requirements for lot coverage, front yard setback, rear yard setback, and minimum lot area. <p>Applicant requests that the Planning Commission forward a supportive recommendation on these requests.</p>		
Site Improvements:	Applicant proposes to consolidate the twelve existing condominium parcels into one lot, raze the four existing three-story office buildings, and construct 28 single-floor residences in 14 individual two-family buildings.		
Size of Property:	72,167 square feet (1.66 acres)		
Public Notice Requirements:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advertisement of public hearing published in Washington Times on September 14, 2022, and September 21, 2022. • Sign posted along Park Street NE in front of property on September 16, 2022. • On September 21, 2022, 39 certified postcards were sent to adjacent, abutting and immediately across the street property owners/agents/occupants and subject property owners. • Written notice was sent to Fairfax County Executive on September 16, 2022. 		

Brief Analysis	
<p>PROPERTY DESCRIPTION</p> <p>The subject site, 127 to 133 Park Street NE, includes four separate three-story office buildings on a 72,173-square-foot site. The existing buildings were built in 1973 with approximately 24,000 square feet of gross floor area of office space. The site also contains 80 surface parking spaces. The site is currently zoned T Transitional, which allows professional office uses.</p> <p>COMPATIBILITY WITH THE COMPREHENSIVE PLAN</p> <p>The 2015 Comprehensive Plan shows the subject parcels as having the Future Land Use designation of Mixed-Use. The Mixed-Use category is used to “reflect the vision for the existing commercial areas to redevelop as mixed-use projects (versus just commercial projects).” With one exception, all properties in Vienna with this Mixed-Use designation are along the Maple Avenue corridor, including the commercial section of Church Street. The plan does not specify that each parcel must include a mix of uses or if the entire identified area is to be a mix of uses. The implementation strategies include a recommendation to “consider townhouse or multi-family housing options to provide a transition between commercial and industrial properties and single-family neighborhoods.” The proposed two-unit buildings would provide a transition between commercial properties along Maple Avenue E and the residential properties along Church Street NE.</p> <p>COMPATIBILITY WITH THE ZONING ORDINANCE</p> <p>The properties are permitted to be rezoned by Town Council per Article 24 of the Town Code, after receiving a recommendation from the Planning Commission. Per Sections 18-256 and 18-257, Town Council may approve modifications of the zoning ordinance after receiving a recommendation from the Planning Commission.</p>	
Attachments:	01 – Staff Report 02 – Application and Rezoning Affidavit 03 – Modification Request Letter 04 – Rezoning Plan 05 – Illustrative Site Plan 06 - Renderings 07 – Fire Marshal Approval Plan 08 – Fiscal Impact Analysis 09 – By-right and comparable development for reference 10 – Existing Residential Multi-unit developments 11 – Relevant Code Sections
Author:	Kelly O’Brien, AICP, CZA, Deputy Director

ITEM NO. 2

Recommendation to the Town Council for a requested change to the zoning map for twelve parcels, located at 127-133 Park Street NE (Parcel #s 0382-52-0001, 0002, 0003, 0004, 0005, 0006, 0007, 0008, 0009, 0010, 0011, and 0012) in the T Transitional zoning district. Requested zoning is RM-2 Multifamily, Low Density.

and

ITEM NO. 3

Recommendation to the Town Council for site plan modifications of requirements, related to the rezoning request, for lot coverage, front yard setback, rear yard setback, and minimum lot area requirements.

Introductory Comments & Background:



Figure 1 – Aerial image of site dated February 2022

The subject site, 127 to 133 Park Street NE, includes four separate three-story office buildings on a 72,173-square-foot site. The existing buildings were built in 1973 with approximately 24,000 square feet of gross floor area of office space. According to the original site plan, the site also contains 80 surface parking spaces. The site is currently zoned Transitional, which allows professional office uses. The site is surrounded by commercial properties facing Maple Avenue East and single-family residential properties along Church Street NE. The Vienna Presbyterian

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Church is located across Park Street NE from the subject parcel to the south. The property slopes downward from the parking lot in the rear towards Park Street NE.

Table 1 – Existing Use, Zoning and Future Land Use of subject site and surrounding properties

Location	Existing Land Use	Zoning	Future Land Use
Subject Site	Commercial office	T Transitional	Mixed Use
North & Northeast of site	Residential	RS-10 & RS-12.5 Single Family Detached Residential	Low Density Residential
South of site	Vienna Presbyterian Church	RS-12.5 Single Family Detached Residential; C-1A Special Commercial	Institutional
East of site	Residential and Commercial	RS-12.5 Single Family Detached Residential	Mixed Use
West of site	Commercial	C-1A Special Commercial	Mixed Use



Figure 2 - Future land use plan (page 38 of the Town Comprehensive Plan) with subject parcels shown in blue dashed outline.

Proposal History

The applicant presented an earlier concept at a conference session with Town Council on September 27, 2021 and a work session with the Planning Commission on October 13, 2021. The concept at that time included 30 single-floor residences in 15 individual buildings. The following were issues discussed during both sessions:

- The requested front setback of 20 feet would make it too tight for potential future street changes, such as accommodating bicycle lanes.
- Concerns about providing sufficient parking while also acknowledging additional parking will sacrifice green space.
- Concern about the lack of storage availability and how that effects on street parking in the neighborhood when garages are used for storage instead of parking. The applicant stated there will be storage space available in basement.
- Suggested reducing the size of the units to allow for greater setback. The applicant stated that would be difficult to do given land price.
- Concern that the drive aisle is too narrow for emergency vehicles. The applicant stated the Fire Marshall will have to approve the proposal including determining that emergency vehicles have sufficient access.
- Concern about the impact on the neighbors. The applicant stated that due to grade changes, the second floor of the six single-family homes affected will view over the roof of the proposed condos.
- Suggestion that the impact on parking demand could potentially be addressed through shared parking.
- Council members requested a tax impact assessment based on an alternative realistic transitional condition.
- Interest in hearing neighbor feedback, especially concerning screening preferences.
- Concern about density, visitor parking options and rooftop plans for solar panels.
- Suggestion of shortening proposed ramp to provide covered lift that would allow kiosk space for mailboxes and green space.
- Concern about snow removal procedures.
- Questions about providing shared community space.

The applicant also presented an update on the concept plan to the Planning Commission on August 24, 2022.

Current Proposal:

The applicant is requesting a zoning map change for the twelve parcels, from T Transitional to RM-2 Multifamily, Low Density. The developer, if the change in zoning districts is approved, plans to construct 14 two-family dwellings (for a total of 28 single floor units), private alleys, parking, and walkways. The proposed maximum height of all buildings is 28 feet, below the maximum allowed of 35 feet.

The proposed development is accessed from a single ingress/egress point on Park Street NE leading to a private alley that runs along the east side of the property towards the rear property line and connects to a private alley, perpendicular to the main alley, behind the buildings facing Park Street NE. The applicant proposes a total of 75 parking, which includes garage parking,

tandem parking under one of the buildings, and surface spaces. Eleven of the fourteen buildings will have 2-car garages. The remaining three buildings will utilize the tandem parking under one of the buildings. A concept plan and elevations have been included with this staff report as Attachment 04.

The applicant is also requesting several site plan modifications of requirements, per Sections 18-256 and 18-257. These requests include permission for:

- Lot coverage to exceed the maximum 25% ([Section 18-58.I](#)),
- Encroachment into the 35-foot front yard setback ([Section 18-58.D](#)),
- Encroachment into the 35-foot rear yard setback ([Section 18-58.F](#)), and
- Deviation from certain lot requirements of the RS-10 zone, which the code establishes as also applying to the RM-2 zone, and the 8,000 square feet of lot area per two-family dwelling requirement ([Section 18-58.A.2](#)).

Role of the Planning Commission

The Planning Commission is required to hold a public hearing and make a recommendation to the Town Council on the requested change to the zoning map. That recommendation should include a finding on whether the zoning change would be consistent with the Town of Vienna Comprehensive Plan.

The Planning Commission is required to make a recommendation to the Town Council on any requested site plan modifications of requirements.

Staff Analysis:

Rezoning

[Section 18-249](#) of the Town Code describes how Town Council shall give consideration to zoning map changes. It states that Town Council should give consideration to the entire comprehensive plan and that spot zoning should be avoided. As it relates to the [Comprehensive Plan](#), the Future Land Use Plan (page 38 of the Comprehensive Plan), designates the subject parcels as “Mixed Use.” The Comprehensive Plan includes language that supports the proposed multi-unit development as a transition from commercial development to single-family detached residential. However, the plan also states that established residential neighborhoods should be preserved and the overall balance of residential, commercial and industrial areas should be maintained (page 39).

In regards to spot zoning, the proposed change to the zoning map (to RM-2) would not constitute spot zoning since the RM-2 zoning provides a transition from the commercial districts to the single-family detached residential districts, a land use option supported by the Comprehensive Plan. This function for RM-2 also exists on comparable properties on the opposite side of Maple Avenue, near or facing Locust Street, where the RM-2 properties are between the commercial development of Maple Avenue and single-family areas.

Comprehensive Plan

Staff's assessment is that the proposed change from commercial use to two-family dwellings is supported by the comprehensive plan, as shown in the selections highlighted below.

Chapter 3: Land Use (Page 22)

"There are several alternatives that could provide housing for households with a variety of income levels. They include focusing on multi-family housing in the Maple Avenue Commercial (MAC) zoning district, using transitional areas for townhouses, multi-family housing, and village housing, and incentivizing and encouraging the renovation of existing, older houses. Benefits of a more diverse housing stock include the following:

- Increased neighborhood stability and increased housing market stability
- Ability to age in place
- Ability to attract a more diverse population"

Chapter 3: Land Use (Page 23)

"Transitional areas in the Town, in between commercial and single-family detached residential zones, provide opportunities to provide house, such as townhouses, moderate-density multi-family buildings, and village housing.

Townhouses and multi-family housing have historically been used in Town to buffer the commercial and single-family detached residential zones. The Town should continue this practice, when appropriate."

Chapter 3: Land Use (Page 39), Objective 1 – Maintain the overall balance among residential, commercial, and industrial areas.

Implementation Strategies

"Where appropriate and necessary, and where established single-family residential neighborhoods will not be destabilized, consider townhouse or multi-family housing options to provide a transition between commercial and industrial properties and single-family neighborhoods."

Indicators (Page 43)

"Increase in number of affordable units, including increases in the number of condominiums and townhouses."

Chapter 4: Economic Development (Page 52), Objective 2 – Incorporate diversified housing strategies.

Implementation Strategies

“Include a wide array of housing types and focused density to be balanced with surrounding neighborhoods.”

Site Plan Modifications of Requirements

The applicant is requesting four site plan modifications of requirements. The modifications, which are listed in a letter to the Director of Public Works, include requests related to lot coverage, front yard setback, rear yard setback, and lot area.

As the Planning Commission may be aware, the RM-2 zoning regulations have not been significantly altered or amended since 1956. Staff has analyzed residential RM-2 development projects in Town and has found that none of the development projects meet all of the existing RM-2 zoning requirements. The code’s setback requirements and lot coverage requirement are generally too restrictive for multi-family developments. A comparison of the other RM-2 properties has been included as “Attachment 10 - Existing Residential Multi-Unit developments analysis” with this staff report.

Lot Coverage

Per Section 18-58.I, the maximum lot coverage for a development in the RM-2 zoning district is 25%, the same as required in the single-family detached zoning districts. Lot coverage includes the areas of the buildings and parking spaces and drive aisles.

The applicant is requesting a lot coverage of 70%. The proposed style of the development does not lend itself to the stated 25% maximum due to the number of units and required parking area. The applicant has provided a diagram showing the lot coverage as currently proposed at 68%; however, 70% lot coverage has been requested. The additional lot coverage allowance is for flexibility for future engineering and any possible changes to parking or walkways. As shown in Attachment 10, none of the multi-unit developments within Town have been able to meet the 25% lot coverage requirement.

Front Yard Setback

Per Section 18-58.D the front yard setback for multi-unit developments is required to match the setback established for RS-16 single-unit houses, which is 35 feet per Section 18-15.C. The proposed development has three buildings facing Park Street NE. The porches of these buildings are 25 feet from the property line and the building faces are 30 feet from the property line. As shown in Attachment 10, similar reductions of front yard setback requirement have been approved.

Rear Yard Setback

Per Section 18-58.F, the rear yard setback is required to be a minimum of 35 feet. The odd shape of the property requires a rear yard setback in between the side of proposed building #14 and the side property line of the adjacent residential property on lot 2-A. The concept plan depicts a

15-foot setback at this location, which is consistent with the required side setback dimension. Building #11 at the farthest point of the rear of the property is shown with a 20-foot setback, still less than the required 35 feet.

Lot Area

Per Section 18-58.A.2, all two-family dwellings are considered as occupying one lot and each lot area “need not exceed 8,000 square feet”. The proposed development is not subdividing the overall lot into separate lots for each duplex unit and the overall lot area is 72,167 square feet, so the development exceeds the 8,000-square-feet lot area maximum. Since there are no individual lots proposed that would be maintained by each homeowner, the applicant has stated that a Home Owners Association (HOA) will be put in place for property maintenance among other roles.

The proposed modifications are consistent with deviations requested for other multi-family residential properties in the RM-2 district shown in the attached analysis. Besides the requested modifications of requirements, the proposed development meets all other zoning requirements.

Table 2 – Comparison of proposal to zoning requirements

	Required	Proposed
Minimum Lot Area per unit (sf)	8,000 sf	72,167 sf Individual lots are not proposed for this development
Maximum Lot Coverage (%)	25%	70%
Minimum Front Yard Setback (ft)	35'	25'
Minimum Side Yard Setback (ft)	15'	15'
Minimum Rear Yard Setback (ft)	35'	15'
Maximum Building Height (ft)	35'	28'
Parking	62 spaces (2 spaces per unit plus 1 visitor space per 5 units)	75 spaces (44 garage spaces, 12 tandem spaces, plus 19 surface spaces)

The RM-2 zoning district allows up to three-story multi-family buildings, which may include townhouses, two-family dwellings (which require minimum of 8,000 square foot lots), or traditional multi-family buildings. The maximum number of units allowed under the RM-2 zoning ordinance is 36 units (based on a minimum of 2,000 square feet of lot area per unit). The applicant is proposing 28 units. Therefore, this proposal’s lot area per unit is $72,167 / 28 = 2,577$ square feet per unit.

Table 3 shows a comparison of some elements of the proposed development to other approved multi-unit developments since 2008. The requested lot coverage is higher than all of the multi-unit developments approved in the last 14 years.

Table 3 – Comparison of proposal to approved multi-unit developments

Project	Year Built	Number of Units	Units per Acre	Front Yard Setback	Rear Yard Setback	Lot Coverage	Building Coverage
Vienna Courts <i>127-133 Park St NE</i>	-	28	16.9	25 ft	15 ft	70%	33.2%
Village Housing on Courthouse <i>117-121 Courthouse Rd SW</i>	2022* Under construction	12	8.7	20 ft	25 ft	60%	24.7%
Cadence on Park <i>201 Park St SE</i>	2021	5	12.2	20 ft	35 ft	60%	26.5%
Cadence on Center <i>135 Center St S</i>	2018	17	16.4	20 ft	15 ft	60%	37.2%
Locust Street Condos <i>225-233 Locust St SE</i>	2008	5	15.1	35 ft	35 ft	65.9%	31.6%

During discussions with the Planning Commission, the question was asked about removing another building to make room for more open space. If Building 14 were removed from the proposed development, approximately 1,265 square feet of lot coverage could be converted to shared green space. This would change the requested rear setback from 15 feet to the 20 feet required for Building 11. While converting this building to open space would serve to provide more shared open area for the residents, it would only reduce the lot coverage by 2%, compared to the proposal.

Fiscal Impact

The Town's Director of Finance prepared the Fiscal Impact Analysis included as Attachment 08 with this staff report. The anticipated fiscal impact estimate for the proposed redevelopment of the office buildings to 14 two-unit houses ranges from \$59,840 to \$76,150 net gain annually.

During the conference session with Town Council, a tax impact assessment was requested based on an alternative realistic transitional condition. The applicant has provided a possible by-right development scenario and comparable development in another jurisdiction for reference. Those examples are included with this report as Attachment 09. The applicant will be prepared to discuss the attachment at the meeting.