

## STAFF ANALYSIS

**STAFF PERSON:** J.T. Newberry, Senior Planner II  
**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS:** January 14, 2026  
**PROJECT:** SE-2025-00038 Premier Circle Variation  
**TAX MAP PARCELS:** 061M0-00-00-006C0

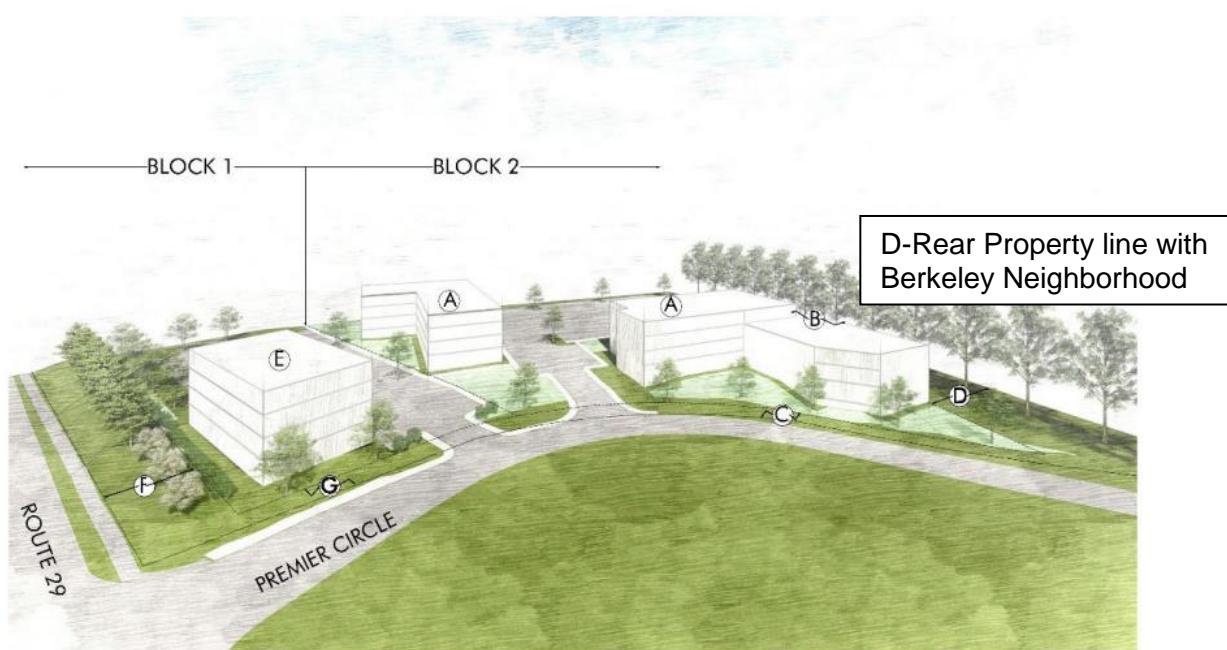
## PROPOSAL

The applicant requests a variation to the code of development approved with ZMA202000011 Premier Circle for the required building stepback in Block 2.

Under County Code §18-8.5.5.3(a)(4), the Board of Supervisors may grant a variation of an approved plan, code, or standard for minor changes to architectural standards.

The variation is limited to Block 2 and would eliminate the stepback for a building that is three stories (or 40 feet tall). The request is to eliminate the 15 feet to 0 feet, wherever the building face is setback 65 feet from the rear property line in Block 2. This stepback was specific to the building face along the northwest property line with the Berkley neighborhood. An illustration from the code of development is below.

Figure 1: LOT AND BUILDING REGULATIONS ILLUSTRATED



## CHARACTER OF THE AREA

The Premier Circle development is located along Premier Circle, which is adjacent to Route 29 between Dominion Drive and Westfield Road. All adjacent properties have been developed. To the north is the Berkley Subdivision with single-family detached houses.

The Premier Circle development is zoned Neighborhood Model District (NMD) and is subject to the application plan and code of development most recently approved with ZMA202000011. The project is a phased redevelopment of the former Red Carpet Inn site to provide up to 140

affordable residential units and a non-residential or mixed-use building fronting on Route 29. The site will serve the clients of three affordable housing providers: Virginia Supportive Housing (VSH), the Thomas Jefferson Area Coalition for the Homeless (TJACH), and Piedmont Housing Alliance (PHA).

## **ANALYSIS OF VARIATION REQUEST**

Under County Code § 18-33.9(A), factors, standards, criteria, and findings, however denominated, in the applicable sections of the Zoning Ordinance, are to be considered in special exception applications.

Under County Code § 18-8.5.5.3(a), an applicant may request a variation from its application plan. Required determinations are listed in § 18-8.5.5.3(c) and are analyzed below:

**(1) Whether the proposed variation would be consistent with the goals and objectives of the comprehensive plan;**

The site is located within the Urban Development Area of the Places 29 Master Plan and has a primary designation of Office/R&D/Flex/Light Industrial. Small portions of the property are also Neighborhood Density Residential and Urban Mixed Use (in Centers). Properties to the east and west include a variety of commercial, retail, hotel, and office uses.

The proposed variations are consistent with the goals and objectives of the Places29 Master Plan for the proposed stepback reduction. The property is primarily designated Office/R&D/Flex/Light Industrial. The variation request and originally-approved “Lot and Building regulations” in Table E of the code of development remain consistent with the land use designations. The proposed stepback variation is consistent with the Neighborhood Model design principles of the Comprehensive Plan.

**(2) Whether the proposed variation would increase the approved development density or intensity of development;**

The proposed variations would not increase the overall approved development density or intensity of development. As shown in Attachment B, the proposed massing of the structure in Block 2 will not change. The code of development and application plan will continue to require a 20' landscape buffer along the rear property line and 65' building setback. The maximum building height permitted in the development is 50'. The Architectural Review Board has indicated that the proposed change is not expected to have a significant visual impact on the Entrance Corridor.

**(3) Whether the proposed variation would adversely affect the timing and phasing of development of any other development in the zoning district;**

The proposed variations would not have any impact on the timing or phasing of other development in the zoning district.

**(4) Whether the proposed variation would require a special use permit; and**

A special use permit would not be required.

**(5) Whether the proposed variation would be in general accord with the purpose and intent of the approved application.**

Staff believes that the requested variations maintain consistency with the purpose and intent of the approved application plan and code of development. Staff believes a stepback is not needed in this case, given the increased setback and buffer to the rear property line. The

variations would allow flexibility for the applicant to provide a critical affordable housing project. The applicant notes in Attachment A that “Stepbacks on building faces can increase total project costs, impacting the project’s performance in competitive Low-Income Housing Tax Credit applications, and increase the amount of state and local subsidy needed to close the funding gap.” Staff agrees with the applicant that this change will help to make this affordable housing project more feasible without negatively impacting neighbors.

**RECOMMENDATION**

Staff recommends that the Board adopt the attached Resolution (Attachment D) to grant the proposed variation to the approved code of development.