

Applications for Zoning Map Amendments and Special Use Permits

Parcel: 07800-00-00-021B0

Project: Woolen Mills

PROJECT PROPOSAL

Applicant has filed multiple rezoning and special use permit applications for the purpose of facilitating the re-development of the historic Woolen Mills buildings as a part of a mixed-use project that will preserve, restore and reinvigorate the historic Woolen Mills property (the "Property"). The Property is unique to the County and the region and presents the community with a critical and beautiful window into a significant part of our local history. Unfortunately, the Property is presently underutilized and is a "hidden" gem, rather than the inviting and community defining space it could be. It is the applicant's intent through the pending zoning applications to facilitate the future re-use and reinvigoration of this site. The property's enhancement, as proposed, will also allow for more open public access to the Rivanna River, an underutilized treasure in our community. This type of thoughtful development along the River is strongly favored by both the City and County.

Historically, the Property was a hub for the community when it was an operational factory. The beautiful historic building remains, but is not equipped to handle today's industrial needs. The cost of renovating the building for manufacturing use today would be prohibitive and the required renovations would destroy the historic aspects of the building. Nevertheless, this building can still be productively used and preserved, and other parts of the Property can still be used to provide for some non-residential and employment-generating uses. The applicant intends to protect and preserve the historic buildings while renovating them for mixed use, including residential units, live/work space, offices, a restaurant, other commercial uses, and some common space. The existing buildings about other properties that are residential as it serves as the centerpiece of the historic Woolen Mills neighborhood. On the other side of the property, however, you do find commercial and industrial uses, and it is on that portion of the Property that the applicant desires to construct a new building for commercial use. These buildings can exist in harmony with the residential and mixed uses of the original structures while accommodating commercial and office uses of today. By doing so, this Property can serve as a transitional property between the nearby residential properties in the City, the adjacent residential County properties, and the commercial/industrial properties on the Broadway St. side. In addition, the renovation of the Property is proposed to include the development of green spaces and interconnection with the nearby Rivanna Trail system, to allow and encourage the public to explore the beauty and historic nature of this waterfront property.

We have included, with our application, plans showing the layout of the existing and proposed buildings on the property and the nature of their intended uses. In addition, you will note an

area along the river labeled "Potential Kayak Area" which is available and intended for a future commercial, outdoor recreation use that takes advantage of the natural surrounding greenspace and waterway.

As shown on those attachments, the uses within the rezoned Property would include by-right uses under C-1 including, potentially and without limitation, laboratories/research facilities, manufacturing/processing facilities, administrative/professional offices and eating establishments. Additionally, Applicant seeks a special use permit to allow for the residential uses as permitted by right in the R-15 district to complete the renovation of the existing historic buildings. The other pending zoning applications allow for the parking lots to be repaired, restored and renovated and for the new commercial building to be constructed by managing the steep slopes on the Property, and also allow for construction of a flood wall to remove the residential buildings from the flood plain. The flood wall is designed to use the existing basement wall location of the buildings to the extent possible and has been favorably received by the state Department of Historic Resources.

Each of the pending applications is necessary for this project to come to fruition, i.e., a denial of any one application would cause the entire project to fail. Accordingly, these applications are being presented jointly for consideration and approval.

CONSISTENCY WITH COMPREHENSIVE PLAN

In 2015, the Board of Supervisor approved an amendment to the Comprehensive Plan as a precursor to this rezoning application. The same proposal was presented to the Board at that time and was very well received. Attached is the result of that Comprehensive Plan amendment which specifically provides for Office/R&D/Flex/Light Industrial use on the Property. It further specifically provides that "Residential use of a portion of the historic former mill buildings as part of a mixed use development may be appropriate if the buildings are removed from the floodplain and provided that at least 45% of the total built square footage and leased outdoor area of the mill property is used non-residentially in employment-generating and commercial uses." FEMA has since approved a Letter of Map Amendment that together with construction of the proposed flood wall will allow for such residential development in the existing buildings. Said residential use is necessary to the feasibility of this mixed-use project.

It is a stated objective within the Comprehensive Plan to "Pursue additional protection measures and incentives to preserve Albemarle's historic and archaeological resources in order to foster pride in the County and maintain the County's character." This proposed amendment will do that by providing the flexibility necessary to preserve and reuse the existing historic buildings, while opening up the Property to be more welcoming to the community as a whole. The Woolen Mills story is one that should not be lost, and should not only be known to the community, but should be a source of pride. Sadly, many County residents have not seen this beautiful Property because there is nothing drawing them there. Connecting the Rivanna Trails

through this Property and having some mixed uses there that provide work, home and entertainment possibilities will help to preserve this piece of history. As the Comprehensive Plan states, "choices about growth and change should include the preservation of historic buildings and structures. Adaptive reuse may be a practical approach to preserving these important historic resources."

Needless to say, with the Comprehensive Plan having been amended to specifically allow for this Project, the proposed project is very consistent with the Comprehensive Plan.

IMPACTS ON PUBLIC FACILITIES & PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE

The Project will be served by public roads, water and sewer. As stated above, the main entrance to the Project will be from Broadway St. which is presently capable of handling the traffic needs of this Project. A traffic study has been provided that shows no impacts on surrounding roads that require attention. Applicant has nevertheless proffered a contribution of \$10,000 to the City of Charlottesville for use in intersection improvements in the Woolen Mills area.

IMPACTS ON ENVIRONMENTAL FEATURES

This Project will have no adverse impacts on environmental features. On the contrary, the Project will facilitate improved and adapted use of green spaces, create more green spaces accessible to the public and preserve the historic beauty of the area through the renovation and preservation of the existing mill buildings. New walking trails will welcome the public to view a beautiful part of the County that may otherwise be lost to history.

PROPOSED PROFFERS TO ADDRESS IMPACTS

See attached proffer form.