



DOCKET ITEM #6
Text Amendment #2017-0007 – CR Zone

CONSENT AGENDA ITEM

If no one asks to speak about this case prior to the hearing, it will be approved without discussion as part of the Consent Agenda.

Issue: (A) Initiation of a Text Amendment; and (B) Public hearing and consideration of a request for an amendment to Section 4-702 of the Zoning Ordinance to permit homeless shelters in the CR zone.	Planning Commission Hearing:	September 5, 2017
	City Council Hearing:	September 16, 2017
Staff: Alex Dambach, AICP, alex.dambach@alexandriava.gov ; Femi Adelakun femi.adelakun@alexandriava.gov		

I. Issue

Proposed is a text amendment to Section 4-702 of Article VII of the Zoning Ordinance to include Homeless shelters as a permitted use until March 2021.

II. Background

The current edition of the Zoning Ordinance was adopted by the Alexandria City Council on June 24, 1992, with the CR/Commercial regional zone created to provide areas suitable for large scale shopping centers that serve regional needs. The CR Zone encompasses only one section of the City consisting of the parking lot and the end portions of the building at Landmark Mall.

Landmark Mall's retail activity has significantly diminished. Plans were approved (Development Site Plan #2015-0003) to redevelop the site as a mixed-use commercial and residential center but construction has not yet come to fruition. At this time, only a Sears store is operating in the CR zone after the closure of the balance of the mall in late January 2017.

Carpenter's Shelter, a homeless shelter in the Braddock area, is about to undergo a major redevelopment. During redevelopment, its property will not be able to serve the needs of the City's homeless. For several reasons including the terms of its financing (Low Income Housing Tax Credits), the redevelopment must be completed within a defined timeframe. Howard Hughes, the owners of the mall and the Macy's store, which is vacant, has expressed a willingness to accommodate the shelter's activities during the limited time period of the redevelopment (anticipated to be completed no later than December 2020). This situation prompted a staff review of the suitability of the CR zone for the temporary homeless shelter use, and staff is now proposing a text amendment to permit the homeless shelter use in the CR zone.

It is anticipated that the CR zone itself will ultimately be eliminated in accordance with the recommendations of the adopted Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor Plan, which recommends Coordinated Development District zoning for the site's redevelopment.

III. Discussion of proposed text changes

The proposed text amendment to Section 4-700 of the Zoning Ordinance modifies and adds the Homeless Shelter use to the permitted uses Section 4-702. The proposed text amendment is intended to enable currently vacant buildings or parts of buildings in the CR Zone to be repurposed for homeless shelter use until the mall site can be redeveloped and until the permanent facility for the homeless can be re-opened following redevelopment.

The CR Zone is uniquely suitable for providing a temporary location for by-right homeless shelters. It has excellent access to public transit with four bus lines serving the zone and access to employment opportunities for residents within ½ mile. The Carpenter's Shelter redevelopment will displace current tenants for 18 to 24 months. This creates the need to provide an alternate location lasting the course of the shelter redevelopment.

IV. Recommendation

Staff recommends that this text amendment be approved in order to ensure the active use of the CR zone while providing a suitable zone for providing a facility to address the City's homeless needs.

Attachments: 1. Proposed Zoning Text Changes

Attachment 1

Proposed Change:

Sec.4-700 CR/Commercial regional

4-701 - Purpose.

The CR zone is intended to provide areas suitable for large scale shopping centers serving regional needs. Such centers are characterized by uses offering retail comparison shopper goods, locations accessible from regional highways, and an integrated and connected complex of structures with internal roadways.

4-702 - Permitted uses.

- (A) Amusement enterprise;
- (A.1) Animal care facility with no overnight accommodation;
- (A.2) Day care center;
- (B) Health and athletic club;
- (B.1) Homeless shelter. This subsection shall expire on March 1, 2021. Any homeless shelters permitted under the authority of this subsection shall be removed by that date.**
- (C) Light auto repair or drive through facility located in a freestanding building not part of an integrated and connected complex of structures;
- (D) Motor vehicle parking or storage;
- (E) Personal service establishment;
- (E.1) Reserved;
- (E.2) Private school, commercial;
- (E.3) Public school;
- (F) Restaurant;
- (G) Retail shopping establishment;
- (H) Utilities, as permitted by section 7-1200;
- (I) Accessory uses, as permitted by section 7-100: