



## CITY OF RICHMOND

### Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

**Ord. No. 2014-236:** To close, to public use and travel, two alleys in the block bounded by Porter Street, West 12th Street, Bainbridge Street and West 13th Street, consisting of 3,842± square feet, upon certain terms and conditions.

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**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Land Use Administration  
**Date:** December 1, 2014

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#### **PETITIONER**

Urban Development Associates, LLC

#### **LOCATION**

Block bounded by Porter Street, West 12th Street, Bainbridge Street and West 13th Street

#### **PURPOSE**

To close to public use and travel two public alleys in the block bounded by Bainbridge, Porter, 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets containing approximately 3,842 square feet and to accept the dedication of two easements for the City to use for access, utilities, and other city uses.

#### **SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

The applicant requests the closure of these alleys to consolidate the property within the noted City block in order to develop new residential buildings. In order to meet the needs of all City agencies and gain approval for the alley closure, the applicant has agreed to build the plan substantially as shown on Exhibit A and to dedicate easements to the City for City use. These easements will allow access for fire apparatus and refuse collection as well as the potential for the installation of public utilities that benefit the new construction. Other reviewing administrative agencies offered no objections to the closing request.

The value of the right-of-way to be vacated, approximately 3,842 sf, has been set at \$31,350.72. This is based on the assessed value of the surrounding properties: \$8.16 per square foot. This amount is customarily paid to the City by the applicant. In this case the fee is to be waived as the value to the City of the newly dedicated easements (total area of 10,288sf) exceeds that of the alleys to be closed. The alleys proposed to be vacated are of inconsistent size and do not go all the way through the block. The easements to be dedicated will provide the City with two ample width passageways from one side of the block to the other. Staff has no objections to the right-of-way closing subject to the conditions set forth in the ordinance.

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## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **Site Description**

The two public alleys to be closed are located in the block bounded by Bainbridge, Porter, 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> Streets and are approximately 3,842 sf. The applicant is also proposing to dedicate two public easements to the City, which are approximately 10,288 sf in total area. The two alleys that are to be closed are currently improved with gravel and physically connect through the block; however the actual right-of-way is not connected. The remainder of the block is currently unimproved.

### **Proposed Use of the Property**

The applicant proposes to develop the block with a mix of residential uses with up to 78 dwelling units and accessory parking.

### **Master Plan**

The Downtown Plan designates this block as part of the General Urban Area, which is characterized by medium-density mixed-use development distributed along medium sized blocks. The Downtown Plan also discourages closing public right-of-ways, stating "Given the importance of the street grid to Richmond's urban environment, every effort should be made to preserve the grid, including alleys, as the City develops further. Closure or sale of the City's streets and alleys should only be allowed if the development type requires such." In this proposed alley closing the street grid will be enhanced by closing two dead end alleys in exchange for two easements that connect through the property and will provide for the service needs of the future development.

### **Zoning**

The block is located in the R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential zoning district, which permits single-, two- and multifamily dwellings as well as limited commercial uses on the corners. The proposed development that would result from the alley closings would comply with the R-63 zoning district.

### **Surrounding Area**

The surrounding blocks are located in the R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential and the R-8 Urban Residential zoning districts and are occupied by a mix of single-, two- and multifamily uses.

### **Neighborhood Participation**

There has been no input received from the neighborhood association or the surrounding property owners.

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