



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2022-018: To authorize the special use of the property known as 1127 North 29th Street for the purpose of up to eight single-family dwellings and up to four two-family dwellings, with off-street parking, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: February 7, 2022

PETITIONER

Mark Baker – Baker Development Resources

LOCATION

1127 North 29th Street

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 1127 North 29th Street for the purpose of up to eight single-family dwellings and up to four two-family dwellings, with off-street parking, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The proposal is to construct eight single-family dwellings, and four two-family dwellings, within an R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential Zoning District. Such a use is a permitted use in this district, however, the proposed building would not meet certain feature requirements, including density, lot area, lot width, front yards, lot coverage, building height, and off-street parking requirements. A Special Use Permit is therefore required.

Staff finds that the proposal would be consistent with the recommendations of the City's Master Plan pertaining to the development style and features within the Neighborhood Mixed-Use land use category including the layout, building height, and primary uses.

Staff finds that the proposal would not pose an undue burden on the availability of on-street parking in the area due to the addition of 14 off-street parking spaces provided on-site, as well as the 13 on-street spaces in close proximity to the property.

Staff finds that the proposed use would be consistent with the historic pattern of development in the area which contains several single family attached, detached and multi-family units among nearby properties.

Staff also finds that the proposed development supports Objective 15.1a which states "Increase the number of Richmonders living in a development pattern that encourages density and reduces dependency on single-occupancy vehicles" The proposed units are located near existing bus transit.

Staff finds that with the ordinance conditions the safeguards contained within the City Charter, relative to the granting of Special Use Permits, are met. Specifically, staff finds that the proposed use would not be detrimental to the general welfare of the community involved and would not create congestion in the streets in the area involved.

Therefore staff recommends approval of the Special Use Permit request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

1127 North 29th Street is currently improved with a 3,590 sq. ft. commercial building, constructed in 1985, situated on a 22,836 sq. ft. (.52 acre) parcel of land. The property is located in the Church Hill North neighborhood, between R and Q Streets.

Proposed Use of the Property

The applicant is proposing a Special Use Permit which would authorize eight single-family dwellings, and four two-family dwellings, with off-street parking. The density of the proposed development is approximately 30 units per acre.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Neighborhood Mixed-Use which is defined as "existing or new highly-walkable urban neighborhoods that are predominantly residential with a small, but critical, percentage of parcels providing retail, office, personal service, and institutional uses."

These areas feature a variety of building types that are close to one another and create a unified street wall. The building size, density, and zoning districts for these areas vary depending on historical densities and neighborhood characteristics. Future development should generally complement existing context. Setbacks, plazas, and parks create a sense of place and community gathering areas. New developments on larger parcels continue or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity within the neighborhood and to adjacent neighborhoods. In historic neighborhoods, small-scale commercial uses exist today or should be allowed to reestablish. In new neighborhoods, small scale commercial buildings should be introduced. Regardless of use, buildings should engage the street with features such as street oriented façades with windows and door openings along street frontages. Appropriate setbacks, open space, front porches, elevated ground floors, and other features that provide a sense of privacy should be provided for residential uses. Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated. Bike parking is provided. New driveways are prohibited on Priority and Principal Street frontages. Vehicular access to parcels should use alleys wherever possible. Parking areas should be located to the rear of street-facing buildings. Building heights are generally two to four stories. Buildings taller than four stories may be found along major streets. Parcels are generally between 1,500 and 5,000 sq. ft.

Primary Uses: Single-family houses, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, small multi-family buildings (typically 3-10 units), and open space.

Secondary Uses: Large multifamily buildings (10+units), retail/office/personal service, institutional, cultural, and government.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for the subject parcel is R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential. The City's Zoning Administration reviewed the application and determined the following:

Section 30-412.4(2)b, Lot Area and width.

Single-family attached dwellings shall be located on lots of not less than 2,200 square feet in area, provided that such area may be reduced when an area equivalent to such reduction is provided in common ownership elsewhere on the development site and is accessible to residents of the lots so reduced in area and is available for their use. Each lot reduced to less than 2,200 square feet in area shall be provided with a private yard adjoining the dwelling unit and containing not less than 500 square feet of useable open space.
Lots 1 through 6 are less than 2,200 square feet in area.

Section 30-412.5(2)a. Yards.

There shall be a front yard with a depth of not less than 15 feet.
The Plans propose varied Front Yards between 7 to 14 ½ feet.

Section 30-412.6. Lot Coverage.

Lot coverage in the R-6 single-family attached residential district shall not exceed 55 percent of the area of the lot.

Lots 1-6 exceed the maximum lot coverage allowed.

Section 30-412.8. Height.

No building or structure in the R-6 single-family attached residential district shall exceed 35 feet in height.
Lots 1-6 exceed the maximum height requirements.

30-710.1(a). Off-Street Parking Requirements.

1 space per dwelling.
The Plans contain 16 units and 14 off-street parking spaces.

The special use permit would impose conditions on the property, including:

3(a) The Special Use of the Property shall be as eight single-family dwellings, and four two-family dwellings, with off-street parking, substantially as shown on the Plans.

(b) No fewer than 14 off-street parking spaces shall be provided on the Property, substantially as shown on the Plans.

(c) All building materials, elevations, and site improvements shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.

(d) The height of the Special Use shall not exceed three stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.

(e) All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.

(f) Prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for any one of the dwellings constituting the Special Use, the establishment of twelve residential lots, substantially as shown on the Plans, shall be accomplished by obtaining the necessary approvals from the City and recording the appropriate plats among the land records of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of the City of Richmond.

4(c) Facilities for the collection of refuse shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of the Director of Public Works. Such facilities shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from adjacent properties and public streets.

(e) The Owner shall make improvements within the right-of-way, including the installation of 10 street trees, substantially as shown on the Plans, which improvements may be completed in one or more phases as approved by the Director of Public Works.

Surrounding Area

Adjacent properties are located within the same R-6 District with some R-63 Multi-family and B-2 Community Business Districts to the North and South, respectively. A mix of single-, two-, and multifamily residential, as well as institutional and commercial uses are present in the area.

Affordability

The median household income for the Richmond region is currently \$68,529 per year. The affordability threshold is 30% of household income towards housing costs, which equates to \$20,559 per year, or \$1,713 per month, or less, to avoid a housing cost burden.* Based upon the median household income for the Richmond region, and the estimated pricing provided by the applicant, the fee simple units are projected to be affordable to households making approximately 83% of the Area Median Income (AMI) affordability threshold**, while the rental units are projected to be affordable to 88% of the affordability threshold.

**(U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)*

*** (Based upon VHDA fixed-rate, 30-year mortgage, with 20% down and 4% interest)*

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents, property owners, and the Church Hill Central Civic Association, of the proposed Special Use Permit. To this date, staff has received 16 letters of support for this application.

Staff Contact: Jonathan Brown, Senior Planner, Land Use Administration, 804-646-5734