



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2024-148: To authorize the special use of the properties known as 3004 Lawson Street and 3006 Lawson Street for the purpose of two single-family detached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions. (5th District)

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: June 18, 2024

PETITIONER

Olivia Kent and Milton Lewis

LOCATION

3004 Lawson Street and 3006 Lawson Street

PURPOSE

The R-5 district requires that a lot width be no less than 50 feet and a lot area no less than 6,000 square feet. Neither property meets these requirements, but are currently legally nonconforming lots in the R-5 Single-Family zoning district. The applicants propose a lot line adjustment for the property line bifurcating the subject parcels to align with an existing fence. This will create two new lots of record that do not meet the lot feature requirements of the underlying zoning district. Therefore, a special use permit is requested.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed development would be consistent with the recommendations of the Richmond 300 master plan for Community Mixed uses of the property and neighborhood.

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 special 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.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The properties are in the Swansboro neighborhood on Lawson Street between Playn Street and East 30th Street. An alley running along the rear property lines serves both properties.

The property known as 3004 Lawson Street is 42 feet wide and contains 5,040 square feet. It is improved with a single-family attached dwelling.

The property known as 3006 Lawson Street is 33 feet wide and contains 3,960 square feet and is improved with a single-family dwelling.

Proposed Use of the Property

Single-family detached dwellings on each property

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the property for Community Mixed-Use which Cluster of medium-density, walkable commercial and residential uses that provide neighborhood services to nearby residential communities and sometimes feature regional attractions.

Development Style: The building size, density, and zoning districts for these areas may vary significantly depending on historical densities and neighborhood characteristics. Future development should generally complement existing context. Uses may be mixed horizontally in several buildings on a block or vertically within the same building. Developments continue or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity.

Mobility: Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated. Bike parking is provided. Driveway entrances are required to be off alleys whenever possible; new driveways are prohibited on priority and principal streets. Parking areas are located within the structure and to the rear of buildings and require screening; shared parking requirements are encouraged.

Intensity: Buildings generally ranging from two to six stories, based on street widths, and depending on the historic context and stepping down in height adjacent to residential areas, as necessary. New buildings that are taller than historical buildings should step back from the build-to line after matching the height of the predominant cornice line of the block.

Primary Uses: Retail/office/personal service, multi-family residential, cultural, and open space.

Secondary Uses: Single-family houses, institutional, and government.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

Zoning Administration provided the following statement:

Sec. 30-410.4 - Lot area and width requirements are not met.

This special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as two single-family detached dwellings, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.

Surrounding Area

The surrounding neighborhood is in the R-5 Single-Family Residential District and contains primarily single-family dwellings.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents and property owners as well as the Swansboro West – Hull Street/Midlothian Civic Association. No comments in support or opposition have been received.

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