



CITY OF RICHMOND

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

Ord. No. 2025-095: To authorize the special use of the property known as 14 South Lombardy Street for the purpose of a multifamily dwelling, upon certain terms and conditions. (5th District)

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: May 20, 2025

PETITIONER

Baker Development Resources

LOCATION

14 South Lombardy Street

SUMMARY

The authorization of the special use of the property known as 14 South Lombardy Street will authorize the construction of a three-unit multi-family dwelling configured as three single-family attached dwellings. As the dwellings will be built on a single parcel, the structure is classified as multi-family in the zoning ordinance. The proposed multi-family dwelling is not a permitted use in the R-7 Single-and-Two Family Urban Residential zoning. Therefore, a special use permit is requested.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the construction of a small multi-unit dwelling is consistent with the City's Master Plan future land use designation of Neighborhood Mixed-Use, which is described as existing or new highly walkable urban neighborhoods that are predominantly residential. In this designation, small multi-family dwellings are listed as appropriate primary uses (Richmond 300, p. 56).

Staff finds that designing the proposed small-scale multi-family dwelling to appear as a single-family unit is compatible with the character of the surrounding neighborhood.

Staff concludes that the proposed ordinance conditions substantially satisfy the safeguards established in the City Charter concerning the granting of Special Use Permits. 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

The vacant 2,297 square foot property is located midblock on the western side of South Lombardy

Street between West Main Street to the north and West Cary Street to the south. It is served by alleys that run along the northern and western property lines.

Proposed Use of the Property

Three Unit Multi-family dwelling

Master Plan

The Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the subject property for Neighborhood Mixed-Uses.

Development Style: 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.

Ground Floor: 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.

Mobility: 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.

Intensity: 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 multi-family buildings (10+units), retail/office/personal service, institutional, cultural, and government.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

Zoning Administration provided the following comments:

The R-7 zoning district does not permit multifamily dwellings by-right, therefore an SUP is required.

This special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as a multifamily dwelling, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- The height of the Special Use shall not exceed three stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- Vinyl siding shall not be permitted. The siding shall consist of brick or cementitious siding.
- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements shall be 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 current zoning for this property and properties to the south and west is R-7 Single-and-Two Family Urban Residential. Properties across the alley to the north, and across South Lombardy Street to the east, are in the Urban Business zoning district. The area is mix of residential and commercial uses.

Neighborhood Participation

The property is located within the Uptown Association area which has been notified of this proposal. Notices shall be mailed to surrounding property owners and a sign shall be placed on the properties.

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