



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2026-020: To authorize the special use of the property known as 13 East 33rd Street for the purpose of one two-family detached dwelling, upon certain terms and conditions. (5th District)

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: February 3, 2026

PETITIONER

Jeffrey Roberts

LOCATION

13 E 33rd Street

PURPOSE

The applicant requests to authorize the conversion of a single-family detached dwelling into a two-family detached dwelling. Two-family dwellings are not permitted in the R-5 Single-Family Detached Residential Zoning District; therefore, a Special Use Permit is needed to authorize this request.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the subject property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map in the Richmond 300 Master Plan. Duplexes are listed as a primary use in this future land use category.

Staff finds that the conversion of a single-family dwelling to a two-family dwelling on the subject property supports Objective 14.5(e) in the Master Plan, which calls for allowing “the development of middle housing (2- to 4-unit buildings) by-right within a half mile of high-frequency transit stops.” The subject property is located within one-half mile of five bus routes (1A, 1B, 1C, 2B, and 2C), which provide service at 15- to 30-minute intervals, thereby meeting the plan’s intent to concentrate additional housing options, and specifically middle housing, in areas with access to frequent transit.

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 property is located in the Swansboro West neighborhood, fronting 33rd Street and just south of Midlothian Turnpike. The property is currently a 5,118.36 sq. ft. (.118 acre) parcel of land.

Proposed Use of the Property

The conversion of a single-family home to a two-family home. The proposed density is 2 units upon 0.118 acre or 16.9 units per acre.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Residential, which is defined as a neighborhood consisting primarily of single-family houses on large- or medium-sized lots more homogeneous in nature.

Development Style: Houses on medium-sized and large-sized lots in a largely auto-dependent environment. Homes are setback from the street. Future developments continue and/or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity. Future single-family housing, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, and small multi-family residential buildings are built to a scale and design that is consistent with existing buildings.

Ground Floor: Not applicable.

Mobility: Bicycle and pedestrian access are prioritized and accommodated. Low residential density means that it is not possible to provide frequent transit within these areas; however, frequent transit may be found at the edges of these areas within more intense future land use designations. Many homes have driveways and/or garages, which are located off an alley behind the home if an alley is present.

Intensity: Buildings are generally one to three stories. Lot sizes generally range up to 5,000 to 20,000+ sq. ft. Residential density of 2 to 10 housing units per acre.

Primary Uses: Single-family houses, accessory dwelling units, and open space.

Secondary Uses: Duplexes and small multi-family buildings (typically 3-10 units), institutional, and cultural. Secondary uses may be found along major streets (see Street Typologies Map).

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for this property is R-5 Single-Family Detached Residential. The following features of the proposed development do not comply with the current zoning regulations:

Section 30-410.1. – Permitted principal uses

Two-family dwellings are not a permitted use

If approved, this special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as one two-family detached dwelling, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- The height of the Special Use shall not exceed two stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- 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 surrounding area is primarily single-family detached homes.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified the Swansboro West Civic Association, area residents and property owners. A sign was posted on the property. Staff has received one letter of non-opposition from the Swansboro West Civic Association to date regarding the proposal.

Staff Contact: Madison Wilson, Planner, Land Use Administration, 804-646-7436