



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2026-073: To authorize the special use of the property known as 1215 North 29th Street for the purpose of up to one two-family detached dwelling and one dwelling unit within an accessory building, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: April 21, 2026

PETITIONER

Mark Baker - Baker Development Resources

LOCATION

1215 North 29th Street

PURPOSE

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to authorize up to one two-family detached dwelling and one dwelling unit within an accessory building within an R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential District. Accessory dwellings are not a permitted use within the R-6 district when combined with a two-family dwelling on the same parcel. A Special Use Permit is therefore required to authorize this request.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff find that the proposed use aligns with the Master Plan recommendations for Neighborhood Mixed Use land uses and is considered a Primary Use. While functioning as a duplex, the units appear from the public realm as a single-family dwelling.

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 request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The property is located in the Church Hill North neighborhood on North 29th Street between S and R Streets. The property is currently a 3,960 square foot (.10 acre) unimproved parcel of land.

Proposed Use of the Property

The proposed use is a two-family dwelling with an accessory dwelling unit. The proposed density of the parcel is 3 units upon .10 acres, or 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 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."

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 multifamily buildings (10+units), retail/office/personal service, institutional, cultural, and government. (p. 56)

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for this property is R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential. The proposed accessory dwelling unit is not permitted by Section 30-412.1, Permitted principal uses.

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

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as up to one two-family detached dwelling and one dwelling unit within an accessory building, 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 adjoining public right-of-way.

Surrounding Area

All adjacent and nearby properties are located within the same R-6 zone. The area is primarily single-family residential, with some two-family residential, small multi-family, and institutional uses present in the vicinity.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents and the Church Hill Central Civic Association of the proposed Special Use Permit. Staff has received public comment in response to the application.

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