



City of Richmond
Department of Planning & Development Review
DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL RESPONSE FORM

Development Proposal / Address: 3415 Crewshaw Mews Alley

Special Use Permit –Ord. No. 2026-102

Association Name: Museum District Association

Please Check Appropriate Boxes:

/

The Association's (check one) Membership or Board met on 5/18/2026
and voted to Oppose Not Oppose Take no position on this proposal.

This Association does not intend to consider this issue because: _____

Was a representative for the proposal present? YES NO

Other comments: _____

This vote to not oppose is on the condition that the use of the garages shall be accessory to any principal use situated within the same entire block as the Property or any residential use situated outside the same entire block as the Property - or there is written confirmation that such language isn't necessary because that is how it is interpreted and will be enforced. We wish to ensure that these will not be used as storage or another function of businesses in the area.

Stephen Mosher
Print Name

President
Title

Signature

Date

Please send to:

Mail: Karen Paquette– Program & Operations Supervisor
City of Richmond
Permits and Inspections Office
900 East Broad Street, Room 108

May 14, 2026

BY ELECTRONIC DELIVERY

Mr. Jonathan Brown
Principal Planner
Department of Planning and Development Review
City of Richmond, VA

RE: Special Use Permit: 3415 Crenshaw Mews Alley – Ordinance No. 2026-102

Dear Mr. Brown:

We are the current owners of residential properties bounding 3415 Crenshaw Mews Alley, where a Special Use Permit (SUP) has been submitted for consideration and vote by the City of Richmond Planning Commission at the May 19, 2026 meeting.

We wish to express our opposition to the approval of this request for the following reasons:

1. OPPOSITION TO HEIGHT OF PROPOSED GARAGES

While the narrative of the ordinance describes the height of the proposed garages not to exceed “one story”, the plans show the elevation at 21’ 8.25”, to include loft storage. This is a substantial deviation from “one story”, which is most often defined as a height of 12 feet. A 21’+ garage is nearly the size of a small house, not a typical accessory structure. The SUP effectively creates a different land use intensity than intended by current zoning. We feel the garages are too tall and out of scale with what is expected for alley infill construction. Garages of the proposed height will block views of nearby trees, increase shadowing and reduce sunlight. Oversized rear structures reduce the appeal of nearby homes, and negatively impact property values.

2. OPPOSITION TO GARAGES BEING SOLD/RENTED TO OUTSIDERS

The SUP calls for the ability of the garages to be rented and/or sold to individuals who reside outside of the block. Garage use by outsiders will increase vehicle traffic in alleys that are already narrow, congested and partially privately owned. There is concern for backing accidents and pedestrian conflicts. Renting and/or selling to outsiders could turn the garages into quasi-commercial parking spaces, bring unfamiliar vehicles and people into the alley regularly, reduce neighborhood security and accountability and increase noise from late-night arrivals/departures. It has been noted that the developer, for the first time in a public forum, stated in an MDA Zoning meeting this week, that electrical charging stations may be placed in or near the garages. This raises additional concerns that the garages could evolve into a commercial parking operation. Charging equipment supports a separate business use not typical for accessory residential garages. Residential alley garages should not become parking and storage facilities for outsiders. There is concern that tall, double garages could later be converted into apartments, studios, or short-term rentals. Enforcement of permit conditions may weaken over time.

3. SETBACKS ON THE ELWOOD ALLEY SIDE ARE NOT ADEQUATE

Setbacks on the Elwood side of the alley are not adequate for the current residents to access their off- street parking, while the proposed garages are being accessed. With the current setbacks, the alley is not wide enough to accommodate two-way traffic. There is already difficulty with trash truck access on the Crenshaw entrance to the Ellwood alley, as well as concern for emergency vehicle access. Note: The Ellwood Alley is currently one way headed out of the alley on the Crenshaw Avenue side. The Elwood Alley is a Private Drive, only 10 feet in width, from the Nansemond entrance for the length of the first five properties.

4. OPPOSITION TO THE EXTERIOR SELECTION OF MATERIALS

The exterior selection of materials gives a commercial appearance. It is not in keeping with the architectural beauty and historic appeal of our neighborhood. It will negatively impact the aesthetic enjoyment derived from our neighborhood, as well as negatively impact property values.

The impacted neighbors met early in the SUP process to compile three typed pages of questions and concerns for the developer. The developer answered a few of the questions, not all, didn't address any of our concerns and was unwilling to compromise on any of the terms of the SUP.


For all of the reasons stated above, we strongly oppose the approval of the referenced Special Use Permit.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

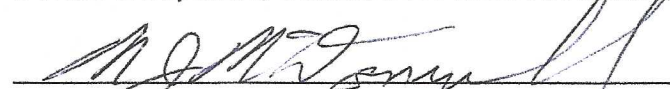
Sincerely,



Jacqueline E. Kimberlin, Owner, 3431 Floyd Avenue, Richmond, VA 23221



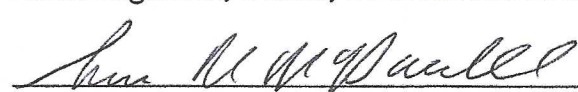
Donna Shropshire, Owner, 3418 Elwood Avenue, Richmond, VA 23221



Mike McDonnell, Owner, 3420 Elwood Avenue, Richmond, VA 23221



Adele Nighman, Owner, 3412 Elwood Avenue, Richmond, VA 23221



Susan McDonnell, Owner, 3420 Elwood Avenue, Richmond, VA 23221

Mark D. Ferry

Duane Carr, Owner, 3434 Elwood Avenue, Richmond, VA 23221

Shannon Carr

Shannon Carr, Owner, 3434 Elwood Avenue, Richmond, VA 23221

Thomas LaMarca

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3414 ELLWOOD AVIZ

Donalyn LaMarca

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To: Richmond City Planning Commission

RE: Special Use Permit Request for 3415 Crenshaw Mews Alley, Map Reference No. W000-1596/050

To Whom it May Concern,

I am a resident at 3422 Ellwood Ave, writing to oppose the Special Use Permit requested for 3415 Crenshaw Mews Alley. My home is directly across from the Building 2 shown in the proposed plan documents. I believe this proposal does not fully take into account the impacts it will have on the residents of the 3400 blocks of Ellwood and Floyd. My concerns are:

1. Height of the proposed garages: I believe the heights shown in the proposal are unnecessarily tall and out of character with other alley infill construction. The proposal states:

“When complete, the garages would be one story and built with quality materials to ensure durability.”

Zoning Ordinance Chapter 30, Division 9 Sec. 30-680.1b states: *In R-6...districts, a building accessory to a single-family or two-family dwelling and not exceeding 12 feet in height may be located within a required rear yard and/or the portion of a required side yard situated within 30 feet of the rear lot line.*

The proposal currently shows the mean roof height at around 16’ feet, which exceeds the 12’ maximum height listed in the zoning ordinance quoted above. The SUP makes no mention of asking for an exception to this ordinance. Based on neighborhood discussions with the parcel owner, the only reason for such tall buildings is to provide storage, which is entirely glossed over in the proposal and plans.

Further, the proposal states:

The light and air available to the subject and adjacent properties will not be affected. No changes are proposed to the built structures. As a result, this request will not interfere with the provision of adequate light and air to the adjacent buildings.

Claiming that the light and air available to adjacent homes is not affected because the proposed garages do not change the structure of those homes is demonstrably false and a bad faith argument. Creating a line of 21’ tall garages only 10’ away from residential properties will absolutely affect the light and air those homes receive.

2. Increased Traffic in the Ellwood Alley: The majority of the garages will be accessed via the Crenshaw and Ellwood alleys, and offering garages to persons outside of the neighboring blocks will increase traffic in already narrow, hard to navigate alleys. The proposal states:

The proposed special use permit will not result in significant traffic impacts to nearby residential neighborhoods. In fact, the proposal provides parking that would be available to individuals residing within the block or nearby, thereby decreasing the on-street parking demand.

This statement does not look at the entire picture. While the SUP will add 15 off-street parking spaces to the neighborhood, it will also about double the amount of cars accessing the Ellwood alley. The majority of homes on the Ellwood Alley already have off-street parking and the neighborhood as a whole almost always has available on-street parking spaces. There is little demand for additional off-street parking, and

providing garages to those outside the block comes at the expense of residents who use the Ellwood Alley to access their homes. The alley is already narrow and frequently difficult to navigate with the current traffic load of just residents. Photos of the Ellwood and Crenshaw Alleys are attached at the end of this letter.

3. **Necessity of SUP:** I do not believe the SUP has inherent value over by-right development. According to the proposal:

Locating parking to the rear of street-facing buildings and the quality assurances inherent in the SUP process guarantee higher quality development than may otherwise occur by right.

Accessory use garages are already permitted by right - and it seems disingenuous to claim that “high quality” development is only possible through the SUP process. From the perspective of a current neighbor, this SUP seems to prioritize parking and storage at the expense of those who live adjacent to the parcel in question. There is nothing specific to the SUP that would demonstrably increase the quality of the development proposed over what could be built by right - offering the garages to persons outside of the block does not inherently change the quality of the built product.

To conclude, I urge you to deny this Special Use Permit or have the owner amend it. The application does not reflect the reality of the site conditions or the proposed garage buildings. The proposal wants to double traffic to an already narrow alley, and will block light and air from existing homes. Were the proposed plans amended to be truly one story, as the proposal alludes to, I would have no issue compromising on traffic and the development continuing to move forward. As it stands - building garages with storage space above to appeal to persons residing in other neighborhoods serves only to increase profits for the parcel owner at the expense of the neighbors.

Respectfully,

Danielle Roberts and Ian Swain
3422 Ellwood Ave



Above: view of Crenshaw Alley looking South



Above: View of Crenshaw Alley looking North



Above: View of Ellwood Alley looking West



Above: Entry to Ellwood Alley off Nansemond