



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2026-117: To authorize the special use of the property known as 607 Arnold Avenue for the purpose of up to two single-family detached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions. (6th District).

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: June 2, 2026

PETITIONER

Nicole Reed

LOCATION

607 Arnold Avenue

PURPOSE

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to authorize the subdivision of the subject property and the construction of a single-family detached dwelling on the new parcel. The subject property is in the R-5 Single-Family Residential District. While single-family detached dwellings are permitted uses in this district, the proposal does not meet certain lot feature requirements. A Special Use Permit is therefore required to pursue this development.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed use aligns with the Master Plan recommendations for Residential land uses, in which single-family dwellings are an appropriate Primary Use.

Staff conclude 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 recommend approval of the Special Use Permit request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The property is in the Highland Terrace neighborhood on the southern side of Arnold Avenue, midblock between Wellington Street to the west and Napoleon Street to the east. The property is 4,229 sq. ft. parcel of land.

Proposed Use of Property

Two single-family detached dwellings.

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" (p. 54).

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.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

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

30-410.4 - Lot area and width

Single-family dwellings in the R-5 Single-Family Residential District shall be located on lots of not less than 6,000 square feet in area with a width of not less than 50 feet.

The proposed division will result in a newly proposed lot (Lot 4) with an area of 2,022 square feet. The proposed lot widths are 29.81 feet (Lot 4) and 27.19 feet (Lot 3).

30-410.5 – Yards

There shall be a rear yard with a depth of not less than five feet.

The proposed porch on Lot 4 encroaches into the rear yard.

30-410.6 – Lot coverage

Maximum lot coverage in the R-5 Single-Family Residential District shall not exceed 35 percent of the area of the lot.

The proposed lot coverage exceeds 35%.

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

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as up to two single-family detached dwellings, 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.
- Vinyl siding shall not be permitted.
- All mechanical equipment, including heating, ventilation, and air conditioning units, serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any adjoining public right-of- way.
- Prior to the issuance of any building permit for the Special Use, the establishment of no more than two residential lots, substantially as shown on the Plans, shall be accomplished by obtaining the necessary approvals from the City and recording the appropriate plats and deeds among the land records of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of the City of Richmond

Surrounding Area

Adjacent properties are within the same R-5 Single-Family Residential District. The area is primarily residential properties.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified the Highland Park Quality of Life Association and adjacent property owners of this proposed special use. To date no communication from the public regarding the proposal has been received.

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