



# CITY OF RICHMOND

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

**Ord. No. 2024-307:** To authorize the special use of the property known as 303 Bates Street for the purpose of a mixed-use building, upon certain terms and conditions. (6<sup>th</sup> District)

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**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Land Use Administration  
**Date:** December 3, 2024

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### **PETITIONER**

Burt Pinnock, Baskervill

### **LOCATION**

303 Bates Street (6<sup>th</sup> District)

### **PURPOSE**

The applicant is seeking a Special Use Permit to allow for a JXN Haus, a mixed-use building that will include a recreation of the historic Skipwith-Roper Cottage, as well as indoor and outdoor community space. Some of the uses proposed are not permitted in the R-53 - Residential Multi-Family District. Therefore, a Special Use Permit is necessary to proceed with this request.

Some of the proposed uses include:

- Community Programming and Placemaking
- Historical Site and House Museum
- Private Event Rental Space
- Research Lab and Library
- Co-Working and Office Space

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff finds that the proposal is consistent with the City's Richmond 300 Master Plan future land use designation of Neighborhood Mixed-Use where cultural uses are considered a secondary use (Richmond 300, p. 82).

Staff finds the proposed project contributes to Objective 12.1 where one of the strategy items is to, "support heritage tourism and expand the number of tourism sites that tell stories that have not yet been shared" (Richmond 300, p. 167). The proposed project aims to use the story of Abraham Peyton Skipwith to highlight the experience of being Black in America. The project also aims to tell the story of Jackson Ward, the nation's first officially registered Historic Black Urban Neighborhood

Staff finds that while the proposed project is in North Jackson Ward, just north of I-95, it contributes to the growth of the Downtown Jackson Ward Priority Growth Node, as identified in the City's Richmond 300 Master Plan. One of the goals outlined for the node is to reconnect the two sides of Jackson Ward. Part of the vision for a reconnected Jackson Ward is to play a leading role in supporting Black culture.

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.

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## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **Site Description**

The property is located in the Gilpin neighborhood on Bates Street between 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Street. The property is currently a 13,238 square foot (0.30 acre) parcel of land.

### **Proposed Use of the Property**

Mixed-use building.

### **Master Plan**

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the subject area as Neighborhood Mixed-Use, which is described 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" (RVA 300, p. 56).

**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.

### **Zoning and Ordinance Conditions**

The current zoning for this property is R-53 Multifamily Residential District. The following features of the proposed development do not comply with the current zoning regulations:

**Sec. 30-418.1. - Permitted principal uses & Sec. 30-418.2 Permitted accessory uses and structures**

*Within the R-53 Multifamily Residential District, community centers open to the public are not permitted. Other requested uses are also not permitted.*

**Sec. 30-418.5 – Yards**

Front yard. There shall be a front yard with a depth of not less than 15 feet

*The proposed front yards are 7.33 feet and 1.33’.*

Side and rear yards. Side and rear yards shall be as follows:

Side and rear yards for uses and buildings other than single-family and two-family dwellings and buildings accessory thereto shall be not less than 15 feet in depth.

*The proposed side yard is 5 feet.*

This special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as a mixed-use building, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- No off-street parking shall be required for the Special Use.
- No fewer than five short-term bicycle parking spaces shall be provided on the Property, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- The height of the Special Use shall not exceed three stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- Signs on the Property shall be limited to signs permitted in the R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential District pursuant to section 30-507.1 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended. Internally illuminated signs shall not be permitted.
- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements, including landscaping, 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 residential.

**Neighborhood Participation**

Staff notified area residents, property owners and The Historic Jackson Ward Civic Association. Staff has received no letters to date regarding the proposal.

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