



# CITY OF RICHMOND

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

**Ord. No. 2024-310:** To authorize the special use of the property known as 6241 Forest Hill Avenue for the purpose of up to two single-family detached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions. (4<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**

Mark Stafford Reece

### **LOCATION**

6241 Forest Hill Avenue (4<sup>th</sup> District)

### **PURPOSE**

The applicant is seeking a Special Use Permit to allow for two single-family detached dwellings on a single lot in an R-2 Single-Family District, where only one main building is permitted on a single lot. The applicant plans to construct a new single-family dwelling above a two-car garage on a lot with an existing single-family dwelling. Though located within an accessory building, this dwelling would not be considered an accessory dwelling unit because it exceeds the square footage maximum required by the Zoning Ordinance and is therefore considered a second dwelling unit. A Special Use Permit is necessary to proceed with this request.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff finds that the single-family use is consistent with the City's Master Plan future land use designation of Residential, where single-family residences are described as a primary use (Richmond 300, p. 54).

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 Gravel Hill neighborhood on Forest Hill Avenue between Heartwood Road and Glyndon Lane. The property is currently a 17,926 square foot (0.412 acre) parcel of land improved with a one-story single-family detached dwelling.

#### **Proposed Use of the 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" (Richmond 300, 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.

**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 this property is R-2 Single-Family Residential District. The following features of the proposed development do not comply with the current zoning regulations:

### Sec. 30-620.2. - More than one main building on lot

More than one main building containing a permitted use, other than a single-family dwelling, or a two-family dwelling in an R-5A, R-6, R-7 or R-8 district, may be erected on a lot, provided that the regulations applicable in the district are met.

*The proposal is to allow for two single-family dwelling units on one lot.*

This special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as up to two single-family detached
- dwellings, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- No off-street parking shall be required for the Special Use.
- 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 have a minimum wall thickness of 0.044 inches, as evidenced by the manufacturer's printed literature.
- 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 land uses are primarily residential.

**Neighborhood Participation**

Staff notified area residents, property owners and the Cherokee Area Neighbors Civic Association. The applicant provided letters of support from nearby neighbors as part of the application documents. No additional letters have been received to date.

**Staff Contact:** Shaianna Trump, Planner Associate, Land Use Administration, 804-646-7319