



CITY OF RICHMOND

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

Ord. No. 2023-319: To authorize the special use of the property known as 3500 Hanover Avenue for the purpose of a single-family attached dwelling, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: November 6, 2023

PETITIONER

Melissa Vaughan, representative of owner

LOCATION

3500 Hanover Avenue

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 3500 Hanover Street to allow for an addition on the rear of an existing dwelling that does not meet the front yard setback requirements in the R-48 Multi-Family Residential zoning district.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit which would allow for an addition to a single-family dwelling within an R-48 – Multi-Family Residential zoning district. The proposed front yard depth along North Nansemond Street does not meet requirements within the R-48 district. The Secretary of the Urban Design Committee has found the proposal meets all applicable requirements of the West of the Boulevard Design Overlay District, and necessary notification of such has been completed

Staff finds that the proposal is generally consistent with the recommendations of the City's Master Plan pertaining to housing types within Neighborhood Mixed Use land use category, including the recommendation for residential as a primary use and the suggested Development Style that states "These areas feature a variety of building types that are close to one another and create a unified street wall."

Staff finds that the proposed addition would maintain the same front yard setback as the existing dwelling, is consistent with architecture of the neighborhood, and follows the guidelines of the West of the Boulevard Overlay District.

Staff finds that no change is proposed from current parking arrangements.

Staff finds that with the ordinance conditions, the safeguards contained within the City Charter, relative to the granting of Special Use Permits, are met. 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.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The property is located in the Museum District neighborhood at 3500 Hanover Avenue, between North Nansemond Street and North Thompson Street. The property is currently a 2,072 sq. ft. (0.048 acre) parcel of land that is currently occupied by an existing single-family dwelling.

Proposed Use of the Property

The application requests to construct an addition to an existing single-family dwelling. The proposed addition matches the yard depth along Nansemond of the existing dwelling, but does not meet the requirement of the R-48 Zoning District. A Special Use Permit is, therefore, required.

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 "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 (see Street Typologies Map). 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

Zoning Administration reviewed this request and recommended approval with the following comments:

“The property is in the R-48 (MULTIFAMILY RESIDENTIAL) District. The current use as a single-family attached dwelling is a permitted use in this district. The proposal is an addition to the existing house on the basement, first, and second floor levels, with a loft area from the second floor, to expand the current living space.

The property is also located in the West of the Boulevard Design Overlay District. The Design Overlay District requires a certificate of approval for any building constructed be approved by the Urban Design Committee (UDC), unless waived by this SUP.

R-48 Feature Requirements:

*The required front yard shall be not less than fifteen feet (15') in depth. The existing front yard along Hanover Avenue as indicated by the applicant is 25'. This dimension is not changed with the proposal; therefore, this requirement is met. A 15' front yard is required along Nansemond Street due to the adjacent property (306 North Nansemond Street) fronting on Nansemond Steet. The existing front yard of 0' along Nansemond Street is nonconforming. **There is no front yard provided for the addition along Nansemond Street; this is an expansion of the nonconformity and is not permitted. Additionally, the applicant must ensure that no siding, gutters, eaves, etc. project into the City Right-of-Way.***

The required side yards are not less than three feet (3') in width except where buildings are attached. The proposed side yard is 3' adjacent to the connected house; this requirement is met.

The required rear yard is not less than five feet (5'). The proposed rear yard is 15'; this requirement is met.

The maximum permitted lot coverage is 50% of the lot area, or 994.5 SF according to the applicant's provided site plan. The proposed lot coverage appears to be ~988 SF, or 49% of the lot area; this requirement is met.

Parking:

*One (1) parking space is required per dwelling unit. The proposed addition does not include elements that meet the definition of a dwelling unit; therefore, only 1 parking space is required for the single-family use. **There currently exists no parking space on the property; there is alley access available on the rear of the property, therefore the parking is nonconforming.***

If adopted, the Special Use Permit would impose conditions on the property, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as a single-family detached dwelling, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements, including landscaping and walkways, shall be substantially as shown on the Plans, subject to the applicable regulations of the West of the Boulevard Design Overlay District, pursuant to sections 30-940 through 30-940.9 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended.
- 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 current zoning for this property is R-48 - Multi-Family Residential. Adjacent properties are generally zoned the same R-48 zone to the west and R-6 to the east of the subject property. The surrounding land uses primarily include residential with the Carytown Commercial District located roughly 3 blocks to the south.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents and property owners, as well as the Museum District Civic Association.

Staff Contact: Ray Roakes, Planner, Land Use Administration, 804-646-5467