



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2026-094: To authorize the special use of the property known as 3119 Napoleon Street for the purpose of a single-family detached dwelling, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: May 5, 2026

PETITIONER

Booker Jones

LOCATION

3119 Napoleon Street

PURPOSE

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to authorize the construction of a single-family detached dwelling in a R-5 Single-Family Residential District. The property was created when an illegal lot split occurred on May 8, 1967. The lot split created two (2) nonconforming lots: the subject property, as well as the adjacent property known as 3117 Napoleon Street. The lot split did not comply with the minimum lot area requirement specified in Section 30-410.4, resulting in a parcel that is not buildable by right. A Special Use Permit is therefore necessary to proceed with this request.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed use aligns with the Master Plan recommendations for Residential land uses and is a recommended Primary Use.

Staff conclude that the proposed ordinance conditions continue to 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 4,790 square foot (0.10 acre) property is in the Highland Terrace neighborhood on the eastern side of Napoleon Street near its intersection with Arnold Avenue to the north.

Proposed Use of Property

Single-family detached dwelling.

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

Lot area must be at minimum 6,000 square feet

The subject lot has an area of 4,790 square feet

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.
- 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 public right-of-way.

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.

Staff Contact: David Watson, AICP Senior Planner, Land Use Administration, 804-646-1036