



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2019-270 - To authorize the special use of the property known as 1 East Main Street for the purpose of 20 single-family attached dwellings, and one single-family detached dwelling, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: October 21, 2019

PETITIONER

Lory Markham – Markham Planning

LOCATION

1 East Main Street

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 1 East Main Street for the purpose of 20 single-family attached dwellings, and one single-family detached dwelling, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is requesting authorization for twenty newly constructed single-family attached dwelling and one single-family detached dwelling. The proposal does not meet the 10-foot front yard requirement of the underlying TOD-1 Transit Oriented Nodal District (Sec. 30-457.5(1)) and includes lots with alley frontage rather than street frontage (Sec. 30-610.1). A special use permit is therefore required.

Staff finds that the project is consistent with the intent of the TOD-1 District and generally conforms with the Priority Street designation.

Staff finds that the project would replace a surface lot with infill development that is generally consistent with the Pulse Corridor Plan.

Staff finds that the project would not pose an undue burden on the availability of on-street parking in the area.

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 request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject property consists of a 42,614 SF (.97 acre) parcel of land improved with a surface parking lot constructed, per tax assessment records, in 1975. The property is located in the Monroe Ward neighborhood within the City's Downtown Planning District along South Foushee Street between the 1st block of East Main and Cary Streets. The property is also located within the Arts District Station area of the City's Bus Rapid Transit (Pulse) Corridor.

Proposed Use of the Property

The applicant is requesting authorization for twenty newly constructed single-family attached dwellings, and one single-family detached dwelling, at a density of approximately 22 units per acre, served by a minimum of 21 on-site parking spaces.

Pulse Corridor Plan

The City of Richmond's current Pulse Corridor Plan designates the subject property as Downtown Mixed-Use which "...features high-density development with office buildings, apartments, and a mix of complementary uses, including regional destinations. Higher-density pedestrian- and transit-oriented development encouraged on vacant or underutilized sites; new development should be urban in form and may be of larger scale than existing context. Active commercial ground floor uses required on street-oriented commercial frontages. Active ground floor uses and design required on priority street frontages. Driveway entrances required to be off alleys whenever possible; new driveways prohibited on street-oriented commercial and priority street frontages. Little to no setback of new development unless to create pedestrian-oriented amenities like plazas and outdoor dining. Surface parking prohibited as a principal use; when surface parking is provided as an accessory use, it should be located to the rear of buildings and screened by shade trees. Parking requirements are substantially less in these areas than other areas of the city and are largely eliminated" (p. XI).

Specifically for the Arts District Station Area, the Pulse Corridor Plan states: "The Downtown Mixed-Uses along W. Broad Street and throughout Monroe Ward encourage the redevelopment of surface parking lots and underutilized buildings into high-density buildings that focus on creating walkable environments with active ground floors, appropriate streetscape, and minimal driveway entrances. The future land use for Monroe Ward builds on the incredibly dynamic and diverse existing building stock, creating a truly eclectic urban neighborhood" (p. 84).

Station Area Recommendations include "Encourage and support the redevelopment of surface parking lots into uses that support transit" (p. 84).

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

-The current zoning designation for this property is TOD-1 Transit Oriented Nodal District. Per the Zoning Ordinance, "the intent of the TOD-1 district is to encourage dense, walkable transit-oriented development consistent with the objectives of the master plan and to promote enhancement of the character of this development along principal corridors, at key gateways, and at nodes of high activity located near transit service, bicycle infrastructure, and pedestrian-friendly

streetscapes. The district regulations are also intended to safeguard the character of adjoining properties by only being applied in areas that meet the criteria above, with buffering by setbacks and screening or transitional districts to lower intensity residential areas.

The district regulations are intended to encourage redevelopment and place-making, including adaptive reuse of underutilized buildings, to create a high-quality urban realm. They are intended to improve streetscape character by providing continuity of building setbacks, to enhance public safety by encouraging an active pedestrian environment consistent with the mixed-use character of the district by providing for windows in building facades along street frontages, and to promote an environment that is safe for walking and biking.”

The Main and Cary Street frontages of the subject property are designated as Priority Streets. According to the Pulse Corridor Plan, Priority Streets are “significant to a given property and the larger neighborhood, where buildings are required to face and engage with the street and new driveway entrances are prohibited in order to foster the pedestrian environment” (p. XIII).

Development conditions will be imposed on the property if the special use permit is approved, including:

3(a) The Special Use of the Property shall be 20 single family attached dwellings, and one single family detached dwelling, substantially as shown on the Plans.

(b) No less than one parking space for each dwelling use shall be provided on the Property.

(c) All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.

(d) The height of the Special Use shall not exceed the height shown on the Plans.

(e) All building elevations and site improvements shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.

(f) Storage for six bicycles shall be included, substantially as shown on the Plans.

4(e) The Owner shall make improvements within the public right-of-way, including the installation of nine street trees along South Foushee Street and multidirectional curb ramps at the corners of South Foushee and East Cary Streets and South Foushee and East Main Streets, substantially as shown on the Plans

Housing Affordability

The applicant has informed staff that the units associated with this Special Use Permit will be market rate.

Surrounding Area

Adjacent properties in the area are in the same TOD-1 Zoning District as the subject property. A combination of RO-3 (Residential Office) and B-4 (Central Business) districts are adjacent to this zone and a mix of office, commercial, institutional, and residential land uses are present in the vicinity.

Neighborhood Participation

The City has received a letter of support from the Downtown Neighborhood Association for this application and a letter of opposition from an owner of adjacent property.

Staff Contact: Jonathan Brown, Senior Planner, Land Use Administration 804-646-6304