



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2014-119: To declare that a public necessity exists and to authorize the acquisition of certain fee simple interests and permanent easements on the parcels of real property located on 26th Street and 27th Street between S Street and T Street for the purpose of constructing an alley running between S Street and T Street in the block bounded by 26th Street, T Street, 27th Street and S Street.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: June 2, 2014

PETITIONER

City of Richmond

LOCATION

Block bounded by 26th Street, T Street, 27th Street and S Street

PURPOSE

To acquire property to create a new alley running between S and T Streets

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

North model block is located at Church Hill area between 26th St. & 27th St. and S St. & T St. Most of the lots within the block are vacant. The project will restore the physical character of the neighborhood and compliment other future projects in the area. Improved streets tend to increase the value of the properties, encourage neighborhood revitalization, improve the street cleaning program, and improve the neighborhood safety.

The project will include the installation of curb & gutter, and sidewalk along T St. from 26th St. to 28th St.; a green alley installation between 26th St. and 27th St. from T St. to S St. The total construction cost is estimated at \$350,000.00. The project is budgeted for design and property acquisition. Future funding is needed for construction phase.

These improvements require additional right-of-way and/or temporary construction easements, from nineteen (19) parcels, as part of the project. This ordinance would authorize the acquisition of the right-of-way and temporary construction easements.

The actual acquisition cost is to be negotiated, and will be set at fair market value as determined by appropriate Federal, State and local regulations.

Department of Public Works recommends approval of this ordinance.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The project site is located in the interior of the block bounded by S, T, N. 26th and N. 27th Streets. The block is located within the Single-Family Attached Residential (R-6) zoning district and is mostly vacant with only a few occupied single-family residential structures. Surrounding the block is mostly single-family land uses as well as a mix of commercial, office, and institutional land uses. Traffic on all four streets is two-way, with posted speed limits of 25 mph.

A public gravel alley exists on the north side of the block, providing limited access to a fraction of the properties within the block. The majority of surrounding blocks have north-south oriented alleys within their interiors, most of which are constructed of gravel.

Proposed Use of the Property

The project consists of constructing a new “green” alley connecting T and S Streets between N. 26th and N. 27th Streets. The project is funded through the Neighborhoods in Bloom program and seeks to restore the physical character of the neighborhood and complement other future projects in the area. The proposed alley is one component of the Church Hill North Model Housing Block initiative. The Model Block site is bounded by T Street to the north and S Street to the south, Nine Mile Road to the northwest and includes both 26th and 27th Streets. This area was chosen for the creation of a demonstration project showing how affordable, infill single-family housing can be a catalyst for broader community revitalization. One of the principles in the Model Block initiative is to incorporate alley access for all lots. The plan notes that alley access should be used to respect the historical development pattern. Furthermore, the plan notes that alley access creates an uninterrupted pedestrian environment at the street, and moves services, such as trash pick-up, to the rear of houses and away from the street.

Master Plan

The subject block is located within the East Planning District of the Richmond Citywide Master Plan. While there is no specific language in this section of the Master Plan pertaining directly to the project, there is significant emphasis on community stabilization and revitalization. These goals will be furthered by the proposed alley by providing better access, increasing property values, and promoting redevelopment. Overall, the Citywide Master Plan is very supportive of improving water quality, decreasing stormwater runoff, and providing increased amenities and access to residents.

Zoning

The block is located within the Single-Family Attached Residential (R-6) zoning district, which permits single-family and two-family attached and detached residential uses as well as residential support uses such as schools and churches.

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