



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2022-370: To authorize the special use of the property known as 100 West Leigh Street, for the purpose of a two-family attached dwelling, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: January 3, 2023

PETITIONER

Mark Baker – Baker Development Resources

LOCATION

100 West Leigh Street

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 100 West Leigh Street, for the purpose of a two-family attached dwelling, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to authorize a two-family attached dwelling within an R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential District. While the use is permitted the property does meet the current lot area and width, front yard, and side yard requirements for a two-family attached dwelling. A Special Use Permit is therefore required.

Staff finds that the proposal would be consistent with the recommendations of the City's Master Plan pertaining to the varied housing types within the Neighborhood Mixed-Use land use category including the varied lot sizes and tenure types.

Staff further finds that the proposal would not pose an undue burden on the availability of on-street parking in the area due to the availability of transit in the area, and location of the units, which have a walkability score of "90 and more" which, according to the City's Richmond 300 Plan, makes the site a "Walker's paradise". This level of walkability offers alternatives to vehicles and, therefore, may reduce parking demand. (p.113)

Staff further finds that the proposed use would be consistent with the historic pattern of development in the area which is a mix of multi-family, two-family, single-family attached, and detached dwellings. Specifically, the prevailing pattern of front and side-yard setbacks in the area do not align with the current zoning. Most properties in the neighborhood exhibit modest front and side-yards similar to the subject property.

Staff finds that the application and plans have been reviewed by the City's Commission on Architectural Review and have received a Certificate of Appropriateness.

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 property is located in the Jackson Ward neighborhood on West Leigh Street at the corner of West Leigh Street and Chamberlayne Parkway. The property is currently a 2,055 sq. ft. (.04 acre) parcel of land.

Proposed Use of the Property

The proposed use of the property is a two-family attached dwelling.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the subject property for Neighborhood Mixed Use which is viewed as "...highly-walkable urban neighborhoods that are predominantly residential with a small, but critical, percentage of parcels providing retail, office, personal service, and institutional uses." 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. 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. 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. 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. (p. 56)

The density of the proposed development is approximately 50 units per acre.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for this property is R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential District. The following zoning regulations are not being met by the proposal, warranting special use permit approval.

LOT AREA AND WIDTH

Sec. 30-412.4(3). Two-family attached and detached dwellings. Two-family attached and detached dwellings shall be located on lots of not less than 6,000 square feet in area with a width of not less than 50 feet.

The proposed lot is approximately 2,055 sq. ft. in area and is approximately 21.6 feet in width.

YARDS

Sec. 30-412.5(2)a. Front yard. There shall be a front yard with a depth of not less than 15 feet adjacent to public streets, private streets, parking areas and common spaces.

The proposed front yard is approximately 3.8 feet.

Sec. 30-412.5(2)b Side yard. There shall be side yards of not less than three feet in width except where buildings are attached. There shall be a side yard of not less than ten feet in width at each end of a series of attached units.

The existing dwelling has no side yards.

Additional conditions will be imposed by the amended ordinance, including:

(a) The Special Use of the Property shall be as a two-family attached dwelling, substantially as shown on the Plans.

(b) No off-street parking shall be required for the Special Use.

(c) All building materials and elevations shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.

(d) The height of the Special Use shall not exceed two stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.

4(c) Facilities for the collection of refuse shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of the Director of Public Works. Such facilities shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from adjacent properties and public streets.

Surrounding Area

Surrounding properties to the south are located in the same R-6 district as the property in question, with properties to the north primarily R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential District. Single-family and two-family attached residential is the dominant land-use in the vicinity.

Affordability

The median household income for the Richmond region is currently \$71,223 per year. The affordability threshold is 30% of household income towards housing costs, which equates to \$21,367 per year, or \$1,781 per month, or less, to avoid a housing cost burden. Based upon the median household income for the Richmond region, and the estimated pricing provided by the applicant, the proposed rental units are projected to be affordable to households making approximately 140% of the Area Median Income (AMI) affordability threshold* These units are projected to be above the affordability threshold for the Richmond Region.

**(U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates)*

Neighborhood Participation

The City notified area resident and property owners, and the Historic Jackson Ward Association neighborhood association about this application. To this date the City has not received any letters of support or opposition from the Association or nearby residents.

Staff Contact: Jonathan Brown, PDR, Land Use Administration, 804-646-5734