



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2023-370: To authorize the special use of the property known as 1420 Spotsylvania Street for the purpose of two single-family attached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: January 2, 2024

PETITIONER

Mark Baker - Baker Development Resources

LOCATION

1420 Spotsylvania Street

PURPOSE

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit for the purpose of two single-family attached dwellings, with off street parking, which use, among other things, is not currently allowed by Sections 30-412.4(2)b, and 30-412.4(2)c, concerning lot area and unit width, respectively, of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended. A Special Use Permit is, therefore, required.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed intensity aligns with the Master Plan recommendations for Neighborhood Mixed Use land uses and is similar in density to many of the existing properties in the neighborhood, which are generally single-family attached dwellings on similar sized lots.

Staff also finds that the two new units will assist in contributing to the revitalization of this portion of the Fairmount neighborhood, which currently has several vacant lots and dwellings.

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 Mosby neighborhood between Redd and Littlepage Streets. The property is currently a vacant, 4,329 square foot (.09 acre) parcel of land.

Proposed Use of the Property

The application is for two single-family attached dwellings.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Neighborhood Mixed Use which are 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."(56)

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. 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 multi-family buildings (10+units), retail/office/personal service, institutional, cultural, and government.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for this property is R-7 Single- and Two-Family Urban Residential District. The proposed use does not meet the following sections of the zoning ordinance:

Section 30-412.4(2)b, Lot area. Single-family attached dwellings shall be located on lots of not less than 2,200 square feet in area, provided that such area may be reduced when an area equivalent to such reduction is provided in common ownership elsewhere on the development site and is accessible to residents of the lots so reduced in area and is available for their use. Each lot reduced to less than 2,200 square feet in area shall be provided with a private yard adjoining the dwelling unit and containing not less than 500 square feet of usable open space.

The proposed lot areas for each lot are 2,165 sq. ft.

Section 30-412.4(2)c, Unit width. No individual attached dwelling unit shall be less than 16 feet in width, provided that the average width of all units attached within a series shall be not less than 20 feet.

The proposed unit widths are 15 ft.

The special use permit would impose conditions on the property, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as two single-family attached dwellings, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- No less than two off-street parking spaces shall be provided on the Property, 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, including landscaping, shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.
- Prior to the issuance of any building permit for the Special Use, the establishment of up to two residential lots, substantially as shown on the Plans, shall be accomplished by obtaining the necessary approvals from the City and recording the appropriate plats and deeds among the land records of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of the City of Richmond.

Affordability

Median Family Income Richmond region = \$109,400 per year.*

Affordability threshold = 30% of household income towards housing costs.

= \$32,820 per year

= \$2,735 per month

Est. price provided by Applicant: \$1,500 / month rent.

Est. monthly payment = \$1,500 = 55% of Median Family Income Richmond Region

**(U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2023)*

Surrounding Area

All properties to the east and southeast are located primarily within the same R-6 Zone as the property in question with properties to the south and west are zoned R-53 Multifamily Residential.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified the Fairmount Neighborhood Association of the proposed Special Use Permit. To this date, staff has not received any letters or notifications of support or opposition for this application.

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