



## CITY OF RICHMOND

### Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

**Ord. No. 2014-122:** To authorize the special use of the property known as 3210 West Leigh Street for the purpose of a multi-family dwelling with up to thirty (30) dwelling units and accessory parking, upon certain terms and conditions.

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**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Land Use Administration  
**Date:** June 16, 2014

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#### **PETITIONER**

Jeffrey P. Geiger, Esq. – Hirschler Fleischer

#### **LOCATION**

3210 West Leigh Street

#### **PURPOSE**

To authorize the special use of the property known as 3210 West Leigh Street for the purpose of a multi-family dwelling with up to thirty (30) dwelling units and accessory parking, upon certain terms and conditions.

#### **SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

The subject property is located in an M-1 Light Industrial zoning district which does not permit residential uses. The applicant is proposing to convert an existing industrial building and accessory structure for multi-family use with up to 30 units. The applicant is therefore requesting a special use permit that would authorize multi-family use of the property.

The proposal to create dwelling units is inconsistent with the Master Plan recommendation of "Industrial" land use for the subject property. However, since the adoption of the Master Plan by City Council in January of 2001, the Scott's Addition neighborhood and the Boulevard Corridor, which is identified as an image corridor and gateway to the City in the Master Plan, have received considerable private and public investments that have increased commercial and residential opportunities within the area. In addition to these developments, City-initiated improvements to the right-of-way on the Boulevard and private developments featuring commercial, office, and entertainment facilities have transformed the area from primarily industrial in nature to one that features a mix of land uses.

Staff finds that an important aspect of making the Boulevard transformation successful is promoting it as an urban place where one can live, work, and play. Promoting the continued adaptive reuse of Scott's Addition for commercial, office, and residential use would help bring a population to the area to support the recently established recreation, retail, office, and restaurant uses, as well as upcoming uses such as the craft brewery adjacent to the subject property, at 3204 West Leigh Street.

Staff further finds the proposed multi-family use would support this revitalization of the Scott's Addition neighborhood and the Boulevard corridor. The proposed adaptive reuse of the subject property would be a continuation of the development trend towards a multi-use neighborhood and would include the construction of new sidewalks along West Leigh Street and MacTavish Avenue, the installation of street trees, and the provision of useable open space.

Staff further finds that the proposed development would not pose an undue burden on street parking available in the Scott's Addition neighborhood as all parking for the development will be provided on-site. It should be noted however, that the proposed space-per-unit ratio (1.3 spaces/unit) exceeds the parking ratio normally established by special use permits (1 space/unit). If the number of on-site spaces was reduced, additional useable open space could be provided.

Staff further finds the units to be generally consistent with the City Planning Commission's June 4, 2012 "Windowless Dwelling Unit" resolution.

Staff further finds that with the conditions of the ordinance, the safeguards contained within the City Charter, relative to the granting of special use permits, are met.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of the special use permit request.

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## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **Site Description**

The subject property is located in the City's Scott's Addition neighborhood, at the intersections of West Leigh Street, MacTavish Avenue, and Moore Street. It is also located in the Scott's Addition National Historic District and this adaptive reuse project seeks to maintain the historic authenticity of the structure. The 0.9 acre property is improved with a main structure constructed, per tax assessment records, in 1916 that contains a gross building area of 26,926 square feet. A 937 square foot accessory structure is also located on the subject property

### **Proposed Use of the Property**

The main structure is currently being used for warehousing by a floral distributor; 29 dwelling units are proposed in this structure. One dwelling unit is proposed within the accessory structure. All units are provided with a window that penetrates the exterior wall of the building.

The proposed units range in size from 556 to 1,386 square feet in floor area, with an average floor area of 810 square feet. The unit schedule is as follows: 15 one-bedroom units, 3 two-bedroom units, 11 two-bedroom loft units, and 1 three-bedroom loft unit. Two parking areas containing a total of 39 parking spaces are proposed on the subject property, yielding a parking ratio of 1.3 parking spaces per dwelling unit.

**Master Plan**

According to the Richmond Master Plan, the subject property has an Industrial land use designation. Primary uses for the Industrial designation include “a wide variety of manufacturing, processing, research and development, warehousing, distribution office-warehouse and service uses. Office, retail and other uses that complement industrial areas are often secondary support uses” (p. 135).

**Zoning & Ordinance Conditions**

The subject property is located in an M-1 Light Industrial zoning district, which does not permit residential uses.

The special use permit would impose the following conditions:

Use of the property shall be a multi-family dwelling containing up to thirty (30) dwelling units, useable open space, and a minimum of thirty-nine (39) accessory parking spaces serving the multi-family dwelling.

Any outdoor lighting of the property shall be provided within the bounds of the property and directed or shielded so as not to shine directly on any adjacent residential properties.

Site landscaping, substantially as shown on the plans, shall be installed prior to the issuance of any certificate of occupancy.

Signage on the property shall be limited to two (2) wall mounted signs indicating the multi-family use of the property, provided that the sign mounted on the Leigh Street elevation shall be no more than eleven (11) square feet in area, and that the sign mounted on the Moore Street elevation shall be no more than eight (8) square feet in area, both substantially as shown on the plans.

Sidewalk improvements and street tree installation is to be done according to Public Works requirements.

Additional standard conditions ensuring payment of delinquent real estate taxes, proper grading, drainage, and refuse collection also apply.

**Surrounding Area**

The subject property is located in the Scott’s Addition neighborhood, an area marked by a transition from industrial land use to a mix of industrial, office, commercial, and residential land uses. All properties in the vicinity are within the M-1 Light Industrial zoning district. A mix of industrial, office, and multi-family land uses are found in the immediate vicinity of the subject property.

**Neighborhood Participation**

A letter of support was received from the Scott’s Addition Business Association.

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