



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

ORD. 2025-036: To authorize the special use of the property known as 3513 East Clay Street for the purpose of one two-family detached dwelling, upon certain terms and conditions. (7th District)

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: March 18, 2025

PETITIONER

Baker Development Resources

LOCATION

3513 E Clay Street

SUMMARY

The applicant requests to convert an existing single-family detached dwelling into a two-family detached dwelling. While the two-family use is permitted by the underlying R-8 Urban Residential zoning district, the lot width requirement is not met. Therefore, a special use permit is required.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the requested uses are consistent with the City's Master Plan future land use designation of Neighborhood Mixed-Use. This future land use category identifies duplexes as appropriate primary uses.

Staff finds that the proposed dwelling architecturally appears as a single-family detached dwelling, which ensures that the new dwelling maintains the character of the existing street, while still reflecting the recommendations of the City's Master Plan. Staff also finds the proposed dwelling units are consistent with the surrounding area, which contains a mix of residential uses, including single-family detached and single-family attached dwellings.

Staff concludes that the proposed ordinance conditions substantially satisfy the safeguards established in the City Charter concerning the granting of Special Use Permits. 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 Chimborazo Park neighborhood, on the south side of East Clay Street and east of North 35th Street. It consists of a 3,814.08 square foot (0.088 acre) lot with a two-story, single-family dwelling that built, per city records, circa 1910.

Proposed Use of the Property

Two-family detached dwelling

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the property for Neighborhood Mixed-Uses which consists of existing or new highly walkable urban neighborhoods that are primarily residential.

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 (see Street Typologies Map). Parcels are generally between 1,500 and 5,000 square feet.

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-8 Urban Residential. The following zoning regulation is not being met by the proposal, warranting special use permit approval.

Sec. 30-413.14. – Lot area and width.

(3) Two-family detached and attached dwellings. Two-family detached dwellings and two-family attached dwellings shall be located on lots of not less than 3,400 square feet in area with a width of not less than 28 feet.

(4) Maximum lot width for single and two-family dwellings. No newly created lot devoted to single-family or two-family use shall exceed a width of 45 feet, whether such lot is created by combination of existing lots or by subdivision of any parcel.

The subject property has a lot width of 24 feet and a lot depth of 158.92 feet. The lot width is not met.

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

- The special use of the Property shall be one two-family detached dwelling, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- The height of the Special Use shall not exceed two stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as to not be visible from any public right-of-way.

Surrounding Area

The current zoning for this property is R-8 Urban Residential District, surrounded by R-8 zoned dwellings. The adjacent zoning district to this zone is R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential District.

The density of the proposed is two units upon .088 acre, or 22.7 units per acre.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents, property owners, and the Church Hill Central Civic Association. Staff has not received any public comment on this request.

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