



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2025-047: To amend Ord. No. 2021-326, adopted Dec. 13, 2021, which authorized the special use of the property known as 1807 Harwood Street for the purpose of up to three two-family detached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions, to revise the plans, upon certain terms and conditions. (8th District)

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: April 1, 2025

PETITIONER

Zeb Becker

LOCATION

1807 Harwood Street

PURPOSE

A special use permit (Ord. 2021-326) authorized the subject property for up to three duplexes. The owner intends to build the approved duplexes but wants to significantly alter the designs that were proposed on the original SUP. The Department of Planning and Development review advised the owner that such changes to the designs warrant applying to amend the SUP, as shown in the current application.

The property is within the R-5 zoning district. The property is also subject to a special use permit (Ord. No. 2021-326), which, among other requirements, authorized the use of the property creation of up to three lots that will contain up to three two-family detached dwellings, upon certain conditions. One duplex has been built on the westernmost lot and received a certificate of use and occupancy.

The center parcel contains a legally nonconforming duplex built in 1925. The special use permit authorized the two-family dwelling as a permitted use. Upon later review, the condition and floor plan of two-story structure was determined such that demolition and building a new structure was a more feasible option. This structure, as well as the duplex on the third, easternmost parcel will be built with design modifications so that the duplexes read as two-story single-family dwellings from the street. The net density of the two-family attached structure is approximately 7 units per acre.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed two-family dwellings conform to the recommendations of the Richmond 300 Master Plan, which designates the subject property as residential. Duplexes are listed as an appropriate secondary use in this land use designation.

The existing block consists primarily of small single-family detached dwellings. Staff finds that the proposed duplexes are in keeping with the character of the existing area.

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.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject property is located on the north side of Harwood Street near its intersection with East 18th Street to the east. The property is 120 feet wide and 158 feet deep, for a total of 18,960 square feet of area.

Proposed Use of the Property

The subject property is in the R-5 Single-Family Residential District and two-family detached dwellings are not permitted uses in this zoning district. Ord. 2021-326 authorized the subdivision and construction of up to three two-family detached dwellings in substantial conformance with submitted plans. The proposed new plans call for the demolition and reconstruction of the existing nonconforming two-family dwelling as well as a redesign of the previously authorized two-family dwelling.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the property for Residential uses. Neighborhood consisting primarily of single-family houses on large or medium-sized lots more homogeneous in nature.

Development Style: Houses on medium-sized and large-sized lots in a largely auto-dependent environment. Homes are setback from the street. Future developments continue and/or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity. Future single-family housing, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, and small multi-family residential buildings are built to a scale and design that is consistent with existing buildings.

Mobility: Bicycle, pedestrian, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated. Low residential density means that it is not possible to provide frequent transit within these areas; however, frequent transit may be found at the edges of these areas within more intense future land use designations. Many homes have driveways and/or garages, which are located off an alley behind the home if an alley is present.

Intensity: Buildings are generally one to three stories. Lot sizes generally range up to 5,000 to 20,000+ sq. ft. Residential density of 2 to 10 housing units per acre.

Primary Uses: Single-family houses, accessory dwelling units, and open space.

Secondary Uses: Duplexes and small multi-family buildings (typically 3-10 units), institutional, and cultural. Secondary uses may be found along major streets.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

Zoning Administration recommended approval of the requested Special Use Permit without further comment. The Property is currently located within the R-5 Single-Family Residential District.

If adopted, the Special Use Permit would impose the following conditions on the properties:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as up to three two-family detached dwellings, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- No less than two off-street parking spaces per dwelling unit shall be provided, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All elevations and site improvements shall be substantially as shown on the Plans. Building siding shall consist of cementitious siding or similar material.
- 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 a certificate of occupancy for the Special Use, the subdivision of up to three 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.

Surrounding Area

All properties surrounding the subject property are located within the same R-5 Single-Family Residential zoning district. Within the area of the subject property, properties are improved with single-family and two-family attached dwellings. There are also five structures built as duplexes and still retain this use.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents and property owners, the Oak Grove Neighborhood Association, and the Oak Grove Civic Association. No letters of support or objection to the proposed SUP have been received.

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