



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2024-020: To authorize the special use of the properties known as 1401 Hull Street and 1407 Hull Street for the purpose of a mixed-use building with off-street parking, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: February 6, 2024

PETITIONER

Lory Markham – Markham Planning

LOCATION

1401 Hull Street

PURPOSE

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit for the purpose of mixed-use building including 60 residential units and ground floor commercial, with 27 off street parking spaces, within a B-5 Central Business Zoning District. The proposed use is not currently permitted by section 30-442.4(2), concerning side yards, of the Code of the City of Richmond, 2023. A Special Use Permit is, therefore, required.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed use of a mixed-use building, including ground-floor commercial, multifamily residential, and off-street parking are well aligned with the goals of the Community Mixed Use land use category.

Staff also finds that the proposed is also well aligned with the objectives of the Manchester Priority Growth Node and the Major Mixed-Use Street designation, including “high volumes of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles”, “buildings to the street with parking in the rear”, and “streetscape features, such as trees, benches, and trash receptacles.”

Staff also finds that the proposed is supported by Objectives 15.1a and 15.1f, which are intended to “Increase the number of Richmonders living in a development pattern that encourages density and reduces dependency on single-occupancy vehicles” and “Increase use of mass and active transportation options”, respectively. (p. 159) The proposed is located on an active commercial street on a GRTC Red, high-frequency bus route.

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 properties are located in the Manchester neighborhood, between 14th and 15th Streets. The properties are currently improved with two buildings with a combined 9,404 sq. ft. of commercial space within buildings, constructed in 1920, situated on a combined 11,134 sq. ft. (.24 acres).

Proposed Use of the Property

A mixed-use building including 60 residential units and ground floor commercial, with 27 off-street parking spaces.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Community Mixed Use, which is defined as a "Cluster of medium-density, walkable commercial and residential uses that provide neighborhood services to nearby residential communities and sometimes feature regional attractions."

Development Style:

The building size, density, and zoning districts for these areas may vary significantly depending on historical densities and neighborhood characteristics. Future development should generally complement existing context. Uses may be mixed horizontally in several buildings on a block or vertically within the same building. Developments continue or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity.

Ground Floor

Ground floor uses engage with, and enliven, the street. Monolithic walls are discouraged, while windows, doors, storefronts, and other features that allow transparency and interaction between building and street are encouraged.

Mobility: Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated. Bike parking is provided. Driveway entrances are required to be off alleys whenever possible; new driveways are prohibited on priority and principal streets. Parking areas are located within the structure and to the rear of buildings and require screening; shared parking requirements are encouraged.

Intensity:

Buildings generally ranging from two to six stories, based on street widths, and depending on the historic context and stepping down in height adjacent to residential areas, as necessary. New buildings that are taller than historical buildings should step back from the build-to line after matching the height of the predominant cornice line of the block.

Primary Uses:

Retail/office/personal service, multi-family residential, cultural, and open space.

Secondary Uses:

Single-family houses, institutional, and government.

The density of the proposed development, overall, is approximately 60 units upon .24 acres equalling 250 units per acre.

The proposed is also within the Manchester, Region/National Priority Growth Node. These Nodes are defined as centers "...with significant cultural, entertainment, government, and business destinations as well as shopping, housing, and unique place-based attractions." (p. 24)

This portion of Hull Street is designated as a Major Mixed-Use Street which has the following characteristics:

- Carry high volumes of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles, through commercial and mixed-use areas
- Prioritize use and density-scaled sidewalks and crosswalks
- Require form elements, such as buildings to the street with parking in the rear, as well as building windows and entrances on the street
- Incorporate streetscape features, such as trees, benches, and trash receptacles
- Ideal locations for transit routes and transit stops
- Prioritize the curbside for walking, bicycling, transit, and short-term parking access and loading for local shops and restaurants.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The property is located within the B-5 Central Business District. The proposed use does not conform to the following sections of the Zoning Ordinance:

Sec. 30-442.4: Yards

The side yard requirement on this property is ten ft.

The proposed side yard of the development is 0 ft.

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

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as a mixed-use building with off-street parking, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- No less than 27 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 five stories, 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.
- 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.
- The Owner shall make improvements within the right-of-way, including visitor bicycle parking along Hull Street, substantially as shown on the Plans, which improvements may be completed in one or more phases as approved by the Director of Public Works.

Surrounding Area

The area is primarily commercial uses along Hull Street. Some multi-family residential and institutional uses are present in the vicinity. Single-family attached and detached dwellings are located to the Northwest and Southeast of the property.

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

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

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified nearby residents and the Hull Street Action Civic Association of the proposed Special Use Permit. To this date, staff has not received any letters of opposition nor support for this application.

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