



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2026-024 To authorize the special use of the property known as 401 West Marshall Street for the purpose of one single-family detached dwelling and a multifamily dwelling containing no more than three dwelling units, upon certain terms and conditions. (2nd District)

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: February 3, 2026

PETITIONER

Jeffery Sadler

LOCATION

401 West Marshall Street

PURPOSE

The applicant is requesting a special use permit to authorize a new multi-family building with three dwelling units. The property is located in a R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential District, which does not permit multifamily as a use. A Special Use Permit is therefore necessary to proceed with this request.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that subject property has a Neighborhood Mixed-Use future land use designation. Small multifamily dwellings, typically 3-10 units, are identified as a primary use in this designation.

Staff finds that the subject property is located in the Jackson Ward node. Goal 6, Objective 6.1 of the City's Richmond 300 Master Plan highlights the need to increase the number of residents and jobs at Nodes. This proposal includes the addition of three new dwelling units in addition to the existing dwelling unit on the property.

The vision for the Jackson Ward node includes incorporating infill developments that have high quality architecture and complement the character of historic buildings. Staff finds that the subject proposal underwent review at the Commission of Architecture Review and received approval, ensuring compatibility with the historic district.

Staff finds that the addition of a three-unit multifamily dwelling on the subject property supports Objective 14.5(e) in the Master Plan, which calls for allowing "the development of middle housing (2- to 4-unit buildings) by-right within a half mile of high-frequency transit stops." The subject property is located within one-half mile of 16 bus routes, eight of which provide service at 15- to 30-minute intervals (BRT Pulse, 5, 12, 14, 1A, 2C, 3A, 3B), thereby meeting the plan's intent to concentrate additional housing options, and specifically middle housing, in areas with access to frequent transit.

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 Jackson Ward neighborhood and historic district on the corner of West Marshall Street and North Monroe Street. It is currently a 4,304 square foot (0.09 acre) parcel of land improved with a two-story single-family detached dwelling.

Proposed Use of the Property

Division of the property into two parcels and the construction of a multifamily dwelling.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Neighborhood Mixed-Use, which is 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.

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

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for this property is R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential District. The following features of the proposed development do not comply with the current zoning regulations:

30-412.1 – Permitted Principal Uses
Multifamily is not a permitted use

This special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- Notwithstanding anything in Ordinance No. 82-252-239, adopted October 25, 1982, to the contrary, the Special Use of the Property shall be as one single-family detached dwelling and a multifamily dwelling containing no more than three dwelling units, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- No off-street parking shall be required for the Special Use.
- The height of the Special Use shall not exceed three stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements shall be substantially as shown on the Plans, subject to the conditions set forth in the Certificate of Appropriateness issued by the Commission of Architectural Review, dated January 30, 2025, in response to Application No. COA-160046-2025.
- 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 building permit for the Special Use, the establishment of no more than 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.

Surrounding Area

The surrounding area is a mix of residential and commercial uses.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified the Historic Jackson Ward Civic Association, area residents and property owners. Staff has received no letters to date regarding the proposal.

Staff Contact:

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