



# CITY OF RICHMOND

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

**Ord. No. 2025-146** To authorize the special use of the property known as 1315 North 31st Street for the purpose of up to three single-family attached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions. (7th District)

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

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### **PETITIONER**

Baker Development Resources

### **LOCATION**

1315 North 31<sup>st</sup> Street

### **PURPOSE**

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to authorize the construction of three single-family attached dwellings. Requirements regarding unit width and side yards setbacks cannot be met. A Special Use Permit is therefore required.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff finds that the requested use is consistent with the City's Master Plan future land use designation of Neighborhood Mixed-Use, where single-family residential dwellings are identified as primary uses.

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.

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### **FINDINGS OF FACT**

#### **Site Description**

The property is located in the Church Hill North Neighborhood on North 31st Street between S Street and T Street. The property is currently a 7,858 square foot (0.1804 acre) parcel of land improved with a one-story single-family dwelling.

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

Three single-family attached dwellings

#### **Master Plan**

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the subject area as Neighborhood Mixed-Use which is defined as an "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” (Richmond 300, p. 82).

**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.

**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 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 Residential District. The following features of the proposed development do not comply with the current zoning regulations:

#### Sec. 30-412.4(2)(c) – Single-family attached dwellings: Unit width

- No individual attached dwelling unit shall be less than 16 feet in width, provided that the average width of all units attached within a series shall be not less than 20 feet.

*The end units are 15.3 feet' in width.*

#### Sec. 30-412.5(2)(b) – Yards: Side Yard

- There shall be side yards of not less than three feet in width except where buildings are attached. There shall be a side yard of not less than ten feet in width at each end of a series of attached units.

*The side yard setback is proposed to be 3.17 feet.*

This special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as up to three single-family attached dwellings, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- No fewer than three off-street parking spaces shall be provided for the Special Use, substantially as shown on the Plans.

- The height of the Special Use shall not exceed two stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements, including landscaping, shall be 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.
- Prior to the issuance of a building permit for the Special Use, the establishment 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**

The surrounding land uses are primarily residential.

**Neighborhood Participation**

Staff notified area residents and property owners. Staff has received no letters to date regarding the proposal.

**Staff Contact:** Alyson Oliver, Planner, Land Use Administration, 804-646-3709