



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2024-149: To authorize the special use of the property known as 1001 East Main Street for the purpose of a self-storage use within a mixed-use building, upon certain terms and conditions. (6th District)

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: June 18, 2024

PETITIONER

Jennifer Mullen, representative of the property owner

LOCATION

1001 E. Main Street

PURPOSE

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to authorize a multifamily dwelling and commercial, along with self-storage use, which use, among other things, is not currently allowed by section 30-440.1, concerning permitted principal uses, of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended. A Special Use Permit is, therefore, required.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed use would be consistent with the recommendations of the Richmond 300 master plan for Downtown Mixed Use that states the goal of creating “a mix of complementary uses” and “highly walkable urban environment.”

Staff finds that the provision of self-storage compliments the growing number of residential units located downtown.

Staff finds that the use’s location in a lower level of an existing apartment building will help generate a more active use in a difficult retail location, as well as become a model for providing self-storage in a way that is least impactful to the urban fabric when compared to other more typical storage layouts.

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 special 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 property is in the Central Office neighborhood situated on a block bounded by East Main Street and North 10th Street, South 12th Street, and East Cary Street. The property is currently

a mixed-use building, which includes multifamily and commercial on a 7,630 square foot (0.175 acre) parcel.

Proposed Use of the Property

Adding self-storage to an existing mixed-use building.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the property for Downtown Mixed-Use which is described as the "Central business district of the Richmond region [which] features high-density development with office buildings, residential buildings, and a mix of complementary uses, including regional destinations in a highly-walkable urban environment."

Development Style: Higher density pedestrian- and transit-oriented development encouraged on vacant or underutilized sites. Historic buildings are adapted for new uses. Future development should be urban in form and may be of larger scale than existing context. Plazas and setbacks create an engaging street life. Many buildings are vertically mixed-use. New 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. Active commercial ground floor uses required on street-oriented commercial frontages.

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 street frontages. Surface parking is prohibited as a principal use. Parking requirements are substantially less in these areas than other areas of the City and are largely eliminated.

Intensity: Buildings typically a minimum height of five stories.

Primary Use: Retail/office/ personal service, multi-family residential, cultural, institutional, government, and open space.

Secondary Uses: Not applicable

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The property is zoned for B-4 - Central Business, which does not permit publicly facing self-storage. The zoning does permit self-storage as amenity for residents of an apartment complex. The Applicant requests to permit public facing self-storage.

This special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as a self-storage use within a mixed-use building. The self-storage use shall be confined to the portions of the street level retail area and basement level of the building outlined in red on the Plans.
- Exterior doors and windows servicing the proposed use that are currently transparent shall remain transparent except for (i) artwork or graphic imagery; (ii) signs permitted in all districts pursuant to section 30-505 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended; or (iii) signs permitted in the underlying zoning district.
- There shall be no obstructions within 5 feet of exterior windows inside the self- 4 storage use, substantially as shown on the Plans.

Surrounding Area

The surrounding neighborhood is in the B-4 - Central Business district and contains a number of uses, including office, residential, and commercial.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents and property owners as well as the Downtown Neighborhood Association. No comments in support or opposition have been received.

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