



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2016-316: To amend Ord. No. 2016-016, adopted Feb. 22, 2016, which authorized the special use of the properties known as 105 East Duval Street, 701 North 1st Street, and 708, 708 A, 710, 712, 714, 718, 722, 724, 728, 730, 732, 736 and 744 North 2nd Street for up to 182 multifamily dwelling units, commercial uses, and accessory off-street parking, to authorize up to 194 multifamily dwelling units and amendments to the plans to reduce the height and mass of the proposed building, upon certain terms and conditions

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: January 3, 2017

PETITIONER

Matt Engel, Community Preservation and Development Corporation

LOCATION

105 East Duval Street
701 North 1st Street
708, 708 A, 710, 712, 714, 718, 722, 724, 728, 730, 732, 736 and 744 North 2nd Street

PURPOSE

To amend the special use of the properties at 1st and Jackson Streets to authorize up to 194 multifamily dwelling units and amendments to the plans to reduce the height and mass of the proposed building, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is proposing to develop 194 multi-family dwelling units with a corner commercial use and accessory off-street parking. The subject properties are zoned R-53 Multi-family Residential and R-63 Multi-family Urban Residential, which permit multi-family dwellings as well as corner commercial uses in the R-63 district. However, the proposed uses do not meet all the site requirements of the zoning ordinance.

A special use permit authorizing 182 dwelling units was approved for the site on February 22, 2016. However, the applicant wishes to increase the number of dwelling units authorized to 194 and make substantive changes to the plans, including reducing the height and the size and types of dwelling units. Therefore, the applicant has requested an amendment to the previously authorized special use permit.

Staff recognizes the potential positive impact of the development, including the proposed amendments, on the mostly vacant property, furthering the goals of the Richmond Downtown Plan to encourage higher-density mixed-used development in the Urban Center Areas. The combination of activated street frontages, corner commercial uses, and improved pedestrian amenities should also be an asset to the surrounding community.

Staff finds that the City Charter conditions relative to the granting of special use permits has been met. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the special use permit amendment request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject property is primarily vacant. The lone existing structure is the Franciscan convent building at the corner of North 1st Street and East Duval Street. The convent will be incorporated into the development of the property. The total land area for the development is 2.52 acres and is located in the Jackson Ward neighborhood on the block bounded by North 1st Street, East Jackson Street, North Second Street, and East Duval Street.

Proposed Use of the Property

The proposal is to develop up to 194 multi-family dwelling units and approximately 6,000 square feet of commercial space at the corner of North 1st and East Jackson Streets. This project is part of a joint partnership between the Richmond Housing and Redevelopment Authority (RRHA) and the Community Preservation and Development Corporation (CPDC). As part of the project, 72 of the dwelling units would serve as replacement housing for RRHA's Fay Towers senior development in the Gilpin neighborhood. The remaining units would be a mix of studio, 1- and 2-bedroom units ranging in size from 450 square feet to 1,063 square feet. The interior dwelling units would wrap around two outdoor, centrally located plazas.

The proposed amendment would require 152 parking spaces to serve the proposed residential and commercial uses of the property. These parking spaces would be located within a parking deck (139 spaces) located on the ground floor of the proposed building and within a surface parking area (13 spaces) located off of the alley from Jackson Street. The plans show extensive improvements to the streetscape surrounding the proposal, including pedestrian scaled lighting, brick sidewalks and street trees.

Master Plan

The Richmond Downtown Plan recommends General Urban and Urban Center Areas for the subject property. The Plan states, "Historic Jackson Ward is also an example of the general urban condition in Richmond. The district represents the historic pattern of settlement in Downtown Richmond, with a connected network of blocks and streets and buildings shaping the public space. A mix of buildings types exist in the neighborhood, ranging from single-family homes to rowhouses to mixed-use, main street buildings (p. 3.24)." "The Urban Center Area is characterized by higher density, mixed-use development, typically arranged on a fine-grained street network, with wide sidewalks, regular tree planting, and minimal setbacks. The apartment buildings along The Boulevard are an example of a residential urban center condition in Richmond, with a dense urban fabric of three to five story buildings, and limited retail at key intersections (p. 3.25)." The Urban Center Area designation is applied to the eastern half of the subject property, running along North 2nd Street.

Zoning & Ordinance Conditions

The development site for this mixed-use, multifamily and commercial project consists of fifteen (15) separate parcels, all located within the same block. Two of the parcels are collectively bounded by North 1st Street, East Duval Street, and East Jackson Street and are located in the R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential District. City blocks in the vicinity of these two parcels located to the west and south are also zoned R-63. The remaining thirteen (13) parcels are collectively bounded by North 2nd Street, East Duval Street, and East Jackson Street and are located in the R-53 Multifamily Residential District.

Multi-family dwelling units as well as corner commercial uses are permitted in the R-63 District and multi-family dwellings are permitted in the R-53 District. However, the proposed development does not meet a number of zoning requirements, including maximum building height, minimum parking, yard setbacks, minimal usable open space, and lot coverage and lot area per dwelling unit.

The amended SUP ordinance requires that a minimum of 152 parking spaces be required and that exterior building design, materials, and colors shall be substantially as shown on the attached plans.

In addition, the ordinance includes a condition which limits the types of alcoholic beverages sold and the hours during which alcohol can be sold.

Surrounding Area

The Richmond-Petersburg Turnpike I-95/I-64 is located to the north. The properties to the west are zoned R-63 and are occupied by one-, two-, and multi-family dwellings. The properties to the east are vacant and zoned R-53, and the properties to the south are zoned R-53 and R-63 with a mix of single-, two-, and multi-family dwellings as well as some vacant lots.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff has received a letter of support from the Historic Jackson Ward Association.

Staff Contact: Lory Markham, (804) 646-6309