



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2021-009: To amend and reordain Ord. No. 81-82-68, adopted May 11, 1981, as previously amended by Ord. No. 87-49-74, adopted Apr. 27, 1987, which authorized the special use of the property known as 307 North Robinson Street for the purpose of a veterinary clinic, to increase the number of employees allowed from three to five persons, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: February 1, 2021

PETITIONER

Jeffrey W. Taylor, DVM

LOCATION

307 North Robinson Street

PURPOSE

To amend and reordain Ord. No. 81-82-68, adopted May 11, 1981, as previously amended by Ord. No. 87-49-74, adopted Apr. 27, 1987, which authorized the special use of the property known as 307 North Robinson Street for the purpose of a veterinary clinic, to increase the number of employees allowed from three to five persons, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

Since the ordinance authorizing the veterinary office was last amended 35 years ago, staffing requirements of the practice have changed. The current facility is limited to three staff and two doctors and the requested amendment will allow for a total of five staff to work at the facility.

The current use is a long-term use on the Robinson Street corridor and is generally consistent with the historic pattern of development in the area and the recommendations of the Richmond 300 Master Plan. The existing veterinary clinic will remain consistent with the approval of the proposed amendment.

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 safety, health, morals and general welfare of the community.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of this special use permit amendment request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The .064 acre subject property is located in the Fan Neighborhood midblock on North Robinson Street between Stuart and Hanover Avenues in the B-1 Neighborhood Business District. The improvements consist of a single-story structure with a full basement. The veterinary clinic will be the sole occupant of the premises. The property is located in the Fan neighborhood.

Proposed Use of Property

The proposed special use permit will authorize an increase of staffing in an existing veterinary clinic.

Richmond 300 Master Plan

The Richmond 300 Master Plan recommends Neighborhood Mixed-Use land use for the property. Such areas are described 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 (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 subject property is located in the B-1 Neighborhood Business District. In response to the Special Use Permit request for the above-referenced property, Zoning Administration provided the following comments.

An ordinance for veterinary clinic use, allowing three employees in addition to a veterinarian and including four off-street parking spaces, was adopted on May 11, 1981 (Ordinance No. 1981-082-68). An amendatory ordinance was adopted on April 27, 1987 (Ordinance No. 1987-049-74), allowing three employees in addition to two veterinarians and not less than five off-street parking spaces. However, the applicant of the 1987 ordinance did not complete the process to obtain the required certificate of occupancy, which made the SUP null and void. This SUP amendment requests the reinstatement of the authorization granted in the 1987 ordinance and allowing up to five employees in addition to two veterinarians with not less than five off-street parking spaces. The parking requirement for a veterinary clinic is one space per 300 square feet of floor area for the first 1,500 square feet and one space per 400 square feet in excess thereof. The veterinary clinic contains 2,520 square feet of floor area which requires eight (8) parking spaces. There are five off-street parking spaces and one on-street parking space credited for the property. All of the other conditions from the 1987 ordinance will be met. No construction changes are necessary or contemplated by the applicant at this time.

This special use permit amendment would make modifications to the current ordinance, including:

(e) Occupancy of the veterinary office shall not exceed [~~three~~] five persons employed in the conduct of the business in addition to two doctors of veterinary medicine.

(e.1) That hours of operation shall not extend later than 6:00 p.m., except that not more than two nights per week the hours of operation may extend to no later than 8:00 p.m. [~~There shall be not more than fifteen hours per week during which both doctors have scheduled appointments at the same time.~~]

Surrounding Area

The subject property and those properties to the south west are located in the B-1 Neighborhood Business District. Land uses in this area contain commercial uses. To the north and east are residential dwellings on properties located in the R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential District.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified the Fan Area Business Alliance, Robinson Street Association, the Fan District Association, as well as adjacent residents and property owners. The Fan Area Business Alliance provided a letter of support.

Staff Contact

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