



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2025-260: To authorize the special use of the property known as 9 South Meadow Street for the purpose of a mixed-use building with outdoor dining, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: December 2, 2025

PETITIONER

Paul Bethel

LOCATION

9 South Meadow Street

PURPOSE

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to authorize a mixed-use building with outdoor dining within an Urban Business (UB) zoning district. While mixed-uses and outdoor dining are permitted uses, the application proposes outdoor dining beyond the proximity to Residential District limitations within section 30-433.2(21)a of the Code of the City of Richmond. A Special Use Permit is therefore required.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed use aligns with the Master Plan recommendations for Community Mixed Use land uses and is considered a Primary Use.

Staff also finds that the property is located on a dedicated Major Mixed-Use Street which are intended to "Carry high volumes of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles, through commercial and mixed-use areas." The proposed outdoor dining area aligns with the use objectives within this typology.

Staff further finds that the property is located within a designated "Micro-Node" which are places "...within a neighborhood that generally provides goods and services to the immediate residents but may attract visitors". Outdoor dining is seen as an effective tool for creating street-life and providing safer, urban environments through additional "eyes-on-the-street."

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 general welfare of the community involved and would not create congestion in the streets in the area involved.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The property is located in the Fan neighborhood on Main Street between Meadow and Granby Streets. The property is currently a 5,850 sq. ft., (.12 acre), improved parcel of land.

Proposed Use of the Property

Mixed-use building with outdoor dining.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Community Mixed Use, which is defined as a "Cluster of medium-density, walkable commercial and residential uses that provide neighborhood services to nearby residential communities and sometimes feature regional attractions."

Development Style: The building size, density, and zoning districts for these areas may vary significantly depending on historical densities and neighborhood characteristics. Future development should generally complement existing context. Uses may be mixed horizontally in several buildings on a block or vertically within the same building. 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.

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 streets. Parking areas are located within the structure and to the rear of buildings and require screening; shared parking requirements are encouraged.

Intensity: Buildings generally ranging from two to six stories, based on street widths and depending on the historic context and stepping down in height adjacent to residential areas, as necessary. New buildings that are taller than historical buildings should step back from the build-to line after matching the height of the predominant cornice line of the block.

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

Secondary Uses: Single-family houses, institutional, and government.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for this property is Urban Business District (UB). The proposed outdoor dining is situated within 100 feet of the adjacent R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential District.

The special use permit would impose conditions on the property, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as a mixed-use building with outdoor dining, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- No fewer than eight off-street parking spaces shall be provided for the Special Use, substantially as shown on Plans.
- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.
- Signs on the Property shall be limited to signs permitted in the R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential District, pursuant to section 30-507.1 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended.
- All mechanical equipment, including HVAC units, serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.
- The outdoor dining use shall only operate between the hours of 12:00 p.m. and 10:00 p.m., Tuesday through Saturday, and between the hours of 12:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on Sunday.
- No amplified music shall be permitted in the outdoor dining area.

- Facilities for the collection of refuse shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of the Director of Public Works. Such facilities shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from adjacent properties and public streets.

Surrounding Area

All adjacent and nearby properties are located within the same UB zone. The area is a mix of commercial, institutional, and residential uses.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents and the Fan Area Business Alliance and the Uptown Association of the proposed Special Use Permit. To this date, staff has not received any letters of support, nor opposition, for this application.

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