



Application for **SPECIAL USE PERMIT**

Department of Planning and Development Review  
Land Use Administration Division  
900 E. Broad Street, Room 511  
Richmond, Virginia 23219  
(804) 646-6304  
<http://www.richmondgov.com/>

Application is hereby submitted for: (check one)

- special use permit, new**
- special use permit, plan amendment**
- special use permit, text only amendment**

**Project Name/Location**

Property Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Tax Map #: \_\_\_\_\_ Fee: \_\_\_\_\_

Total area of affected site in acres: \_\_\_\_\_

(See **page 6** for fee schedule, please make check payable to the "City of Richmond")

**Zoning**

Current Zoning: \_\_\_\_\_

Existing Use: \_\_\_\_\_

**Proposed Use**

(Please include a detailed description of the proposed use in the required applicant's report)

Existing Use: \_\_\_\_\_

Is this property subject to any previous land use cases?

Yes  No  If Yes, please list the Ordinance Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**Applicant/Contact Person:** \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Property Owner:** \_\_\_\_\_

If Business Entity, name and title of authorized signee: \_\_\_\_\_

(The person or persons executing or attesting the execution of this Application on behalf of the Company certifies that he or she has or have been duly authorized and empowered to so execute or attest.)

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_( ) \_\_\_\_\_ Fax: \_( ) \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Property Owner Signature:**  \_\_\_\_\_

The names, addresses, telephone numbers and signatures of all owners of the property are required. Please attach additional sheets as needed. If a legal representative signs for a property owner, please attach an executed power of attorney. **Faxed or photocopied signatures will not be accepted.**

**NOTE:** Please attach the required plans, checklist, and a check for the application fee (see Filing Procedures for special use permits)

# APPLICANT'S REPORT

*August 20, 2021*

*Special Use Permit Request  
617 China Street, Richmond, Virginia  
Map Reference Number: W000-0139/004*

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Submitted to: **City of Richmond**  
Department of Planning and Development Review  
Land Use Administration  
900 East Broad Street, Suite 511  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Submitted by: **Baker Development Resources**  
530 East Main Street, Suite 730  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

## Introduction

The property owner is requesting a special use permit (the "SUP") for 617 China Street (the "Property"). The SUP will authorize the construction of two single-family attached dwellings on the currently unimproved Property. While the single-family attached use is permitted by the underlying R-7 Single- and Two-Family Urban Residential zoning district, some of the underlying feature requirements cannot be met, and therefore, a SUP is required.

## Existing Conditions

### SITE DESCRIPTION AND EXISTING LAND USE

The Property is located on the south side of China Street, east of its intersection with S Pine Street. The Property is referenced by the City Assessor as tax parcel W000-0139/004. The currently unimproved Property is 45' wide by 60' in depth and contains approximately 2,700 square feet of lot area.



The properties in the immediate vicinity are developed with a wide range of uses and building forms. Single-family attached and detached dwellings are the most common uses found in the area. However, two-family, multi-family, and commercial uses as well as open-space are also found in

the vicinity. While many of the properties in the area have been developed, there are also still several small, vacant lots in the vicinity, several of which lie on the south line of China Street in this block. The typical neighborhood grid is disturbed in this block as the paved street does not connect to Belvidere Street to the east and is instead terminated in a cul-de-sac turnaround. The resulting dead-end street is comparatively less traveled than other east-west streets in the vicinity.

## **EXISTING ZONING**

The Property is zoned R-7 Single- and Two-Family Urban Residential, which generally permits the proposed single-family dwelling use. The surrounding properties are also zoned R-7. Two properties to the north, at the intersection of Spring and S Pine Streets are zoned B-1 Neighborhood Business District. To the east, beyond S Belvidere Street lies a RO-3 Residential Office District.

## **MASTER PLAN DESIGNATION**

The Richmond 300 Master Plan (the "Master Plan") suggests "Neighborhood Mixed-Use" for the Property. The Master Plan describes this land use designation 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." Recommended development styles are described as featuring "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. Single-family, two-family, and small multi-family buildings are contemplated as the primary uses in these areas."

In addition to the Property-specific guidance offered by the Vision and Core Concepts chapter, there are a number of other goals elsewhere within the Master Plan that support this request. In the High-Quality Places chapter, there are number of supporting objectives, such as:

- Ensure that building materials are durable, sustainable, and create a lasting addition to the built environment, and provide maximum adaptability for environmental change, change of use, and efficiency.
- Allow and encourage a variety of architectural styles.
- Implement urban design and architecture strategies that maintain and enhance the unique character of Richmond's residential districts.

There is also supporting guidance offered in the Inclusive Housing, Thriving Environment, and Equitable Transportation chapters, such as the below objectives:

- Allow the development of middle housing...within a half-mile of high-frequency transit stops (Inclusive Housing).
- Increase the number of Richmonders living in a development pattern that encourages density and reduces dependency on single-occupancy vehicles. (Thriving Environment).

# Proposal

## PROJECT SUMMARY

The applicant is proposing to split the Property into two lots and construct two new single-family attached dwellings, to be known as 617 and 619 China Street.

## PURPOSE OF REQUEST

The Property at 617 China Street consists of what was originally known as "Parcel I" from the 1945 plat of the neighborhood. It is wide for the vicinity with a lot width of 45' whereas most lot widths in the block range from 20 to 25 feet. At 60' in depth, the parcel is consistent with the depth of many existing parcels fronting both China Street and other east-west streets in the Oregon Hill Neighborhood. These smaller parcels on east-west streets are often not afforded rear alley access for parking and rely on on-street parking.

Consistent with exiting lot widths in the vicinity, the applicant proposes to split the Property into two lots and to develop them with two single-family attached dwellings. Each dwelling will be located on 22.5' wide lot containing 1,350 square feet of lot area. While the R-7 district generally permits the proposed uses and suggests the proposed lot widths are appropriate, due to the historical shallow lot configuration the lot area and lot coverage requirements applicable to single-family attached dwellings are not met. In addition, consistent with many similarly situated properties in the area, the lack of alley and rear access make it impractical to provide parking for the proposed development. Therefore, a SUP is required to permit the proposed development. The proposal will meet all other applicable R-7 district requirements.

In exchange for the SUP, the intent of this request is to ensure the development of high-quality infill dwellings. The overall project will be appropriately dense and efficient as contemplated by the Richmond 300 Master Plan. It will also be consistent with the uses permitted by-right by the underlying zoning. At the same time, it will remain respectful to the historic development pattern in the vicinity thereby remaining consistent with the predominant character of the area. Finally, the quality assurances conditioned through the SUP will guarantee a higher quality development and better neighborhood compatibility than might otherwise be guaranteed with a by right development.

## PROJECT DETAILS

The two new single-family attached dwellings would each be two stories in height and are intended to be consistent with historic development pattern found throughout the neighborhood. Each building would contain approximately 1,520 square feet of floor area and consist of three bedrooms and two and a half bathrooms. The first floor would have a modern and desirable layout with an open kitchen and living area at the rear of the dwelling and study toward the front. The second floor would contain two bedrooms with a Jack-and-Jill bathroom and a third bedroom with an en suite bathroom.

The new dwellings would be clad in quality building materials including cementitious lap siding in order to ensure durability. A full-width front porch on each dwelling would engage the street and provides usable outdoor living space. The proposed dwellings massing and architectural styles are

designed to be compatible with nearby dwellings and are consistent with the historical homes found in the neighborhood.

## Findings of Fact

The following are factors indicated in Section 17.11 of the Charter and Section 114-1050.1 of the Zoning Ordinance relative to the approval of special use permits by City Council. The proposed special use permit will not:

- ***Be detrimental to the safety, health, morals and general welfare of the community involved.***

The proposed special use permit for high-quality infill construction will not impact the safety, health, morals and general welfare of the nearby neighborhoods.

- ***Tend to create congestion in streets, roads, alleys and other public ways and places in the area involved.***

The proposed special use permit will not result in significant traffic impacts to nearby residential neighborhoods. The negligible traffic generation on the existing dead-end street will create no congestion on streets, roads, alleys or any other public right of way.

- ***Create hazards from fire, panic or other dangers.***

The Property will be developed in a manner consistent with the requirements of the building code and in accordance with the requirements of Fire and Emergency Services. The City's codes applicable to this development are designed to eliminate such hazards.

- ***Tend to overcrowding of land and cause an undue concentration of population.***

The proposed special use permit will not tend to over crowd the land or create an undue concentration of population.

- ***Adversely affect or interfere with public or private schools, parks, playgrounds, water supplies, sewage disposal, transportation or other public requirements, conveniences and improvements.***

The special use permit will not adversely affect the above referenced City services. To the contrary, the proposal will provide positive fiscal (tax) benefits that will enhance the City's ability to provide these services to the proposed development.

- ***Interfere with adequate light and air.***

The light and air available to the subject and adjacent properties will not be affected. The proposed buildings are of compatible massing and spacing to the existing in the vicinity. As a result, this request will not interfere with the provision of adequate light and air to the adjacent buildings.

## Summary

In summary we are enthusiastically seeking approval for the construction of the proposed single-family attached dwellings. The buildings have been thoughtfully designed in order to provide appropriate, high-quality, infill residential development. The request offers compatibility with the City's Master Plan in terms of use. The request would upgrade the Property while maintaining a desirable variation in housing style and density in the vicinity.

The proposed development would respectfully help restore an appropriate urban fabric in a block face in which several lots are vacant. It would help encourage a pedestrian friendly traditional streetscape in the block and contribute to the vibrancy of the block through the addition of street life in the form of a street-oriented full width front porches along China Street. The traditional building forms would provide the much-desired traditional neighborhood design which is appropriate to this area of the City. Finally, the quality assurances conditioned through the SUP would guarantee a higher quality development than might otherwise be developed by right.