



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review ***Staff Report***

Ord. No. 2025-096: To authorize the special use of the properties known as 2916 Semmes Avenue and 2918 Semmes Avenue for the purpose of one single-family detached dwelling and one two-family detached dwelling, upon certain terms and conditions. (5th District)

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: May 20, 2025

PETITIONER

Mark Baker

LOCATION

2916 and 2918 Semmes Avenue

SUMMARY

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to authorize the construction of one single-family detached dwelling and to retain an existing two-family detached dwelling. The current parcels cannot meet underlying zoning codes regarding lot area and width; therefore, an SUP is required.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the construction of a single-family home is appropriate for the future land use designation of Residential, which is defined as, "Neighborhood consisting primarily of single-family houses on large- or medium-sized lots."

Staff concludes that the proposed ordinance conditions substantially satisfy the safeguards established in the City Charter concerning the granting of Special Use Permits. 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.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of the Special Use Permit request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The property is located in the Woodland Heights Neighborhood, on the corner of West 30th Street and Semmes Avenue, in an R-6 Single-Family Attached zoning district. 2918 Semmes Ave is an improved two-family detached dwelling which will remain. The Property includes both lots and is 62 feet in width and contains 9,176 square ft of lot area.

Proposed Use of the Property

Divide the property to build a single-family detached home and retain the existing two-family detached home.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Residential, which is defined as a, "neighborhood consisting primarily of single-family houses on large- or medium-sized lots more homogeneous in nature" (Richmond 300, p. 54).

Development Style: Houses on medium-sized and large-sized lots in a largely auto-dependent environment. Homes are setback from the street. Future developments continue and/or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity. Future single-family housing, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, and small multi-family residential buildings are built to a scale and design that is consistent with existing buildings.

Mobility: Bicycle and pedestrian access are prioritized and accommodated. Low residential density means that it is not possible to provide frequent transit within these areas; however, frequent transit may be found at the edges of these areas within more intense future land use designations. Many homes have driveways and/or garages, which are located off an alley behind the home if an alley is present.

Intensity: Buildings are generally one to three stories. Lot sizes generally range up to 5,000 to 20,000+ sq. ft. Residential density of 2 to 10 housing units per acre.

Primary Uses: Single-family houses, accessory dwelling units, and open space.

Secondary Uses: Duplexes and small multi-family buildings (typically 3-10 units), institutional, and cultural. Secondary uses may be found along major streets.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

Zoning Administration provided the following comments:

The R-6 zoning district permits single-family homes, but the proposed use does not meet lot area and width, density, and unit width requirements.

This special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as one single-family detached dwelling and one two-family detached dwelling, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- No fewer than three off-street parking spaces shall be provided for the Special Use, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- The height of the Special Use shall not exceed two stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements, including landscaping, shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.

Surrounding Area

The current zoning for this property and properties to the east and west are R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential. Properties north and south of the Property are in R-5 Single-Family Residential, and there is a mix of R-7, R-48, and R-53 residential zones as well as B-7 business zones nearby.

Neighborhood Participation

The property is located within the Woodland Heights Civic Association area. Notices were mailed to surrounding property owners and a sign was placed on the properties. Staff has not received any public comment on this request.

Staff Contact:

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