



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2023-098 – To declare a public necessity for and to authorize the acquisition of the parcels of real property owned by the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority and known as 400 East 15th Street, 426 East 15th Street, and 1421 Dinwiddie Avenue for the purpose of maintaining the properties as a City green space, playground, and recreational area.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Parks, Recreation, & Community Facilities
Date: April 3, 2023

PETITIONER

Christopher Frelke, Director of Parks, Recreation & Community Facilities

LOCATION

400 East 15th Street, 426 East 15th Street, and 1421 Dinwiddie Avenue

PURPOSE

To authorize the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) on behalf of the City of Richmond, to accept the transfer of real property from the Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) at 400 E. 15th Street (Parcel ID No. S0000226001), 426, 600, 602, 604, 606, 608, 610, and 660 E. 15th Street (Parcel ID No. S0000226012) and 1421 Dinwiddie Ave (Parcel ID No. S0000229019). This ordinance would also authorize the CAO to accept deed and title to such property for the purpose of maintaining such property as public green space, playground and for recreational uses.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) currently owns three (3) vacant lots adjacent to Charlie Sydnor Playground and has offered to gift the parcels to the City for use by its Department of Parks, Recreation, and Community Facilities (PRCF) to expand the playground and park facilities already existing at the Charlie Sydnor Playground site. PRCF desires to receive the parcels and preserve them as green space, playground, and recreational use sites for the public.

The parcels to be transferred were originally within the Blackwell HOPE VI Revitalization Program. The parcels were not developed during this program and are currently vacant. Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority (RRHA) requested review of their proposal to transfer these vacant parcels to the City of Richmond by (HUD). The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development has reviewed the title and survey documentation for the lots and have determined that no Deeds of Trust or Declaration of Restrictive Covenants are recorded on the parcels. HUD also reviewed documentation certifying that no funds associated with the Housing Act of 1937 have been used in the purchase or maintenance of the parcels. Therefore, HUD has determined that RRHA may proceed to transfer the ownership of these parcels to the City of Richmond's Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities for the purposes of creating a permanent park.

Approval is recommended by staff.

FINDINGS OF FACT

SITE DESCRIPTION

The subject properties consist of a combined 105,048 SF, or 2.4 acres of land, located adjacent to Charlie Sydnor Playground in the Blackwell neighborhood.

PROPOSED USE FOR THE PROPERTY

Public park and open-space.

MASTER PLAN

The Richmond 300 Master Plan recommends a Residential Land Use category for these properties. This designation is defined as a “Neighborhood consisting primarily of single-family houses on large- or medium-sized lots more homogeneous in nature.”

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 building.

Ground Floor: Not applicable.

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.

The expansion of an existing park also helps further the following objectives, found in the Richmond 300 Master Plan.

- **Objective 1.4:** Maintain and improve primarily residential areas by increasing their linkages to Nodes, corridors, parks, and open space, and maintaining high-quality design standards; and
- **Objective 4.3:** Increase neighborhood access to, and through, a well-designed network of open spaces.

ZONING

The surrounding area is located within the R-7 Single- and Two-Family Urban Residential District.

SURROUNDING AREA

The area surrounding the subject properties is primarily consists of two-family detached residential, with JH Blackwell Elementary School to the west and an industrial use located to the north.

Staff Contact:

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