

City Planning Commission
February 22, 2022

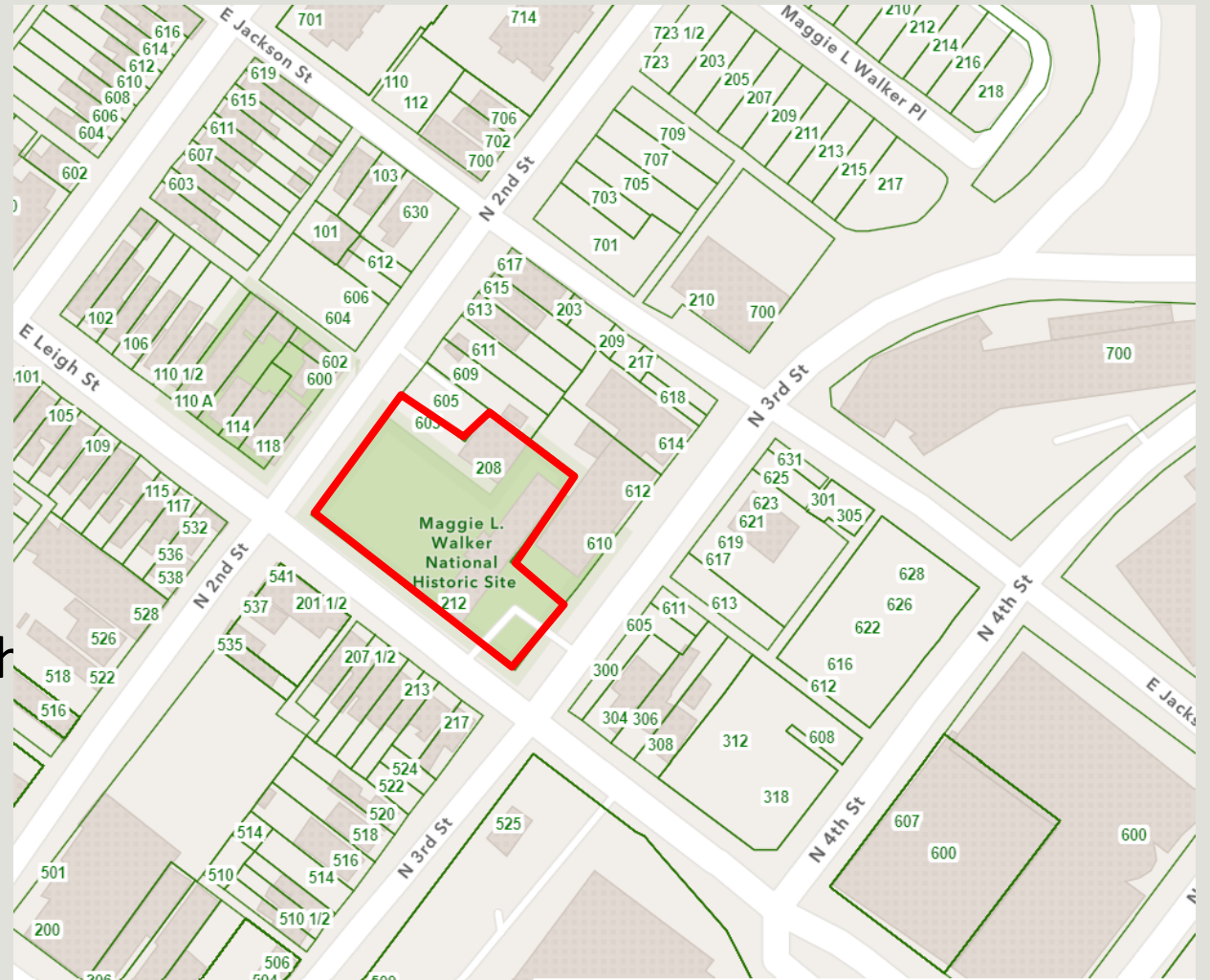
Ord. No. 2021 – 359
200-214 East Leigh Street

SPECIAL USE PERMIT



Existing Conditions:

- The property is located in the historic Jackson Ward Neighborhood, at the northeast corner of E Leigh & N 2nd Streets.
- The subject property consists a parcels of land and a private alley that collectively contain a lot area of 39,976 square feet (0.92 acres) and is currently improved with two buildings that contain a combined 22 dwelling units, 3,340 square foot commercial space and a parking area containing fifty street parking spaces.



Summary of Proposal

- The proposal will authorize the construction of a 5-story mixed-use building containing commercial uses and up to 63 dwellings units.
- The SUP amendment is necessary because of the building height and front yards (setbacks).
- The applicant has revised plans based on feedback received at multiple Historic Jackson Ward Association meetings.

Introduced Rendering:



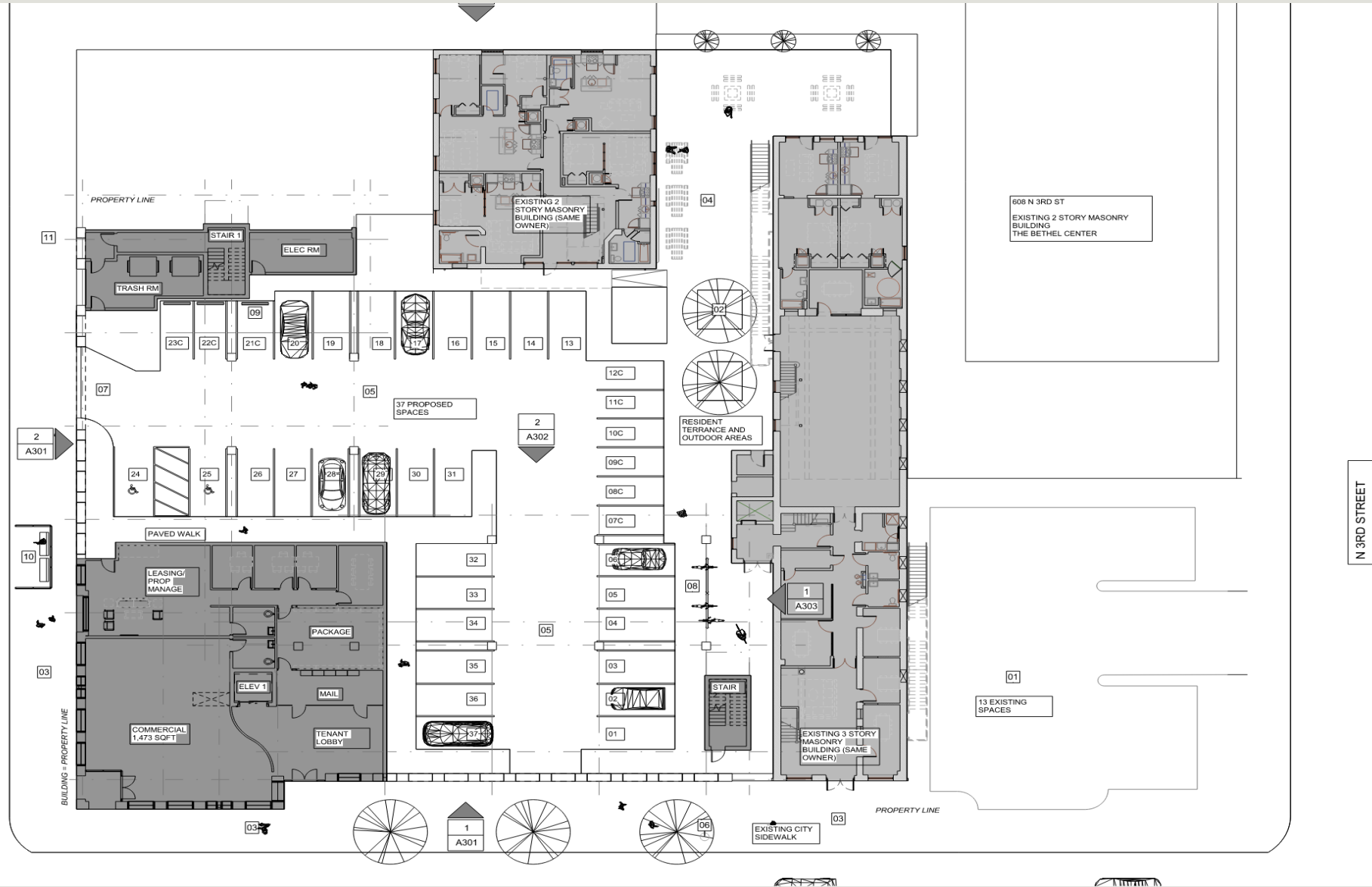
Revised Rendering Based on HJWA Feedback:



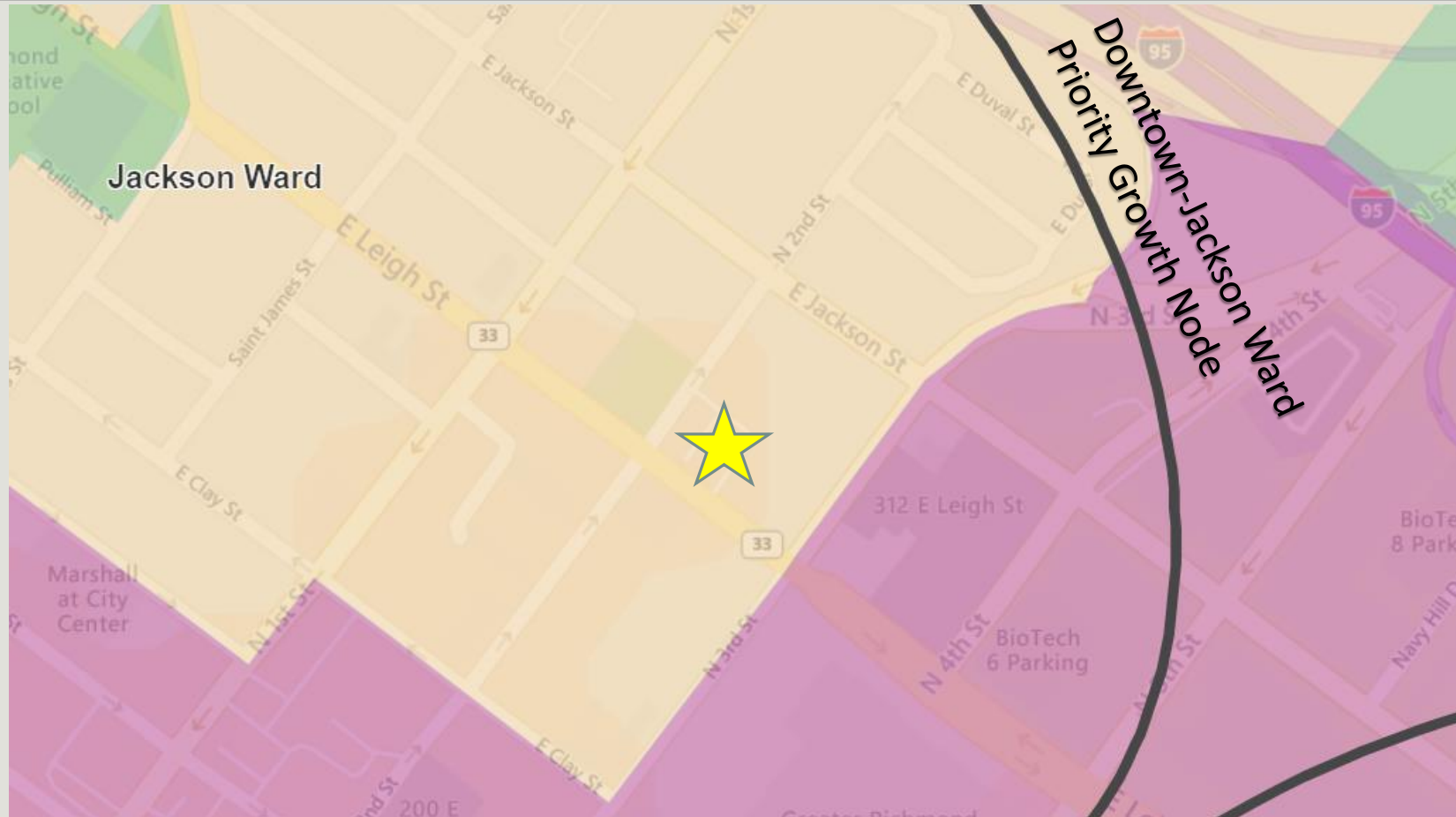
CORNER OF 2ND AND E LEIGH



Site Plan



Richmond 300 Land Use Designation: Neighborhood Mixed-Use



RICHMOND 300 MASTER PLAN DESIGNATION:

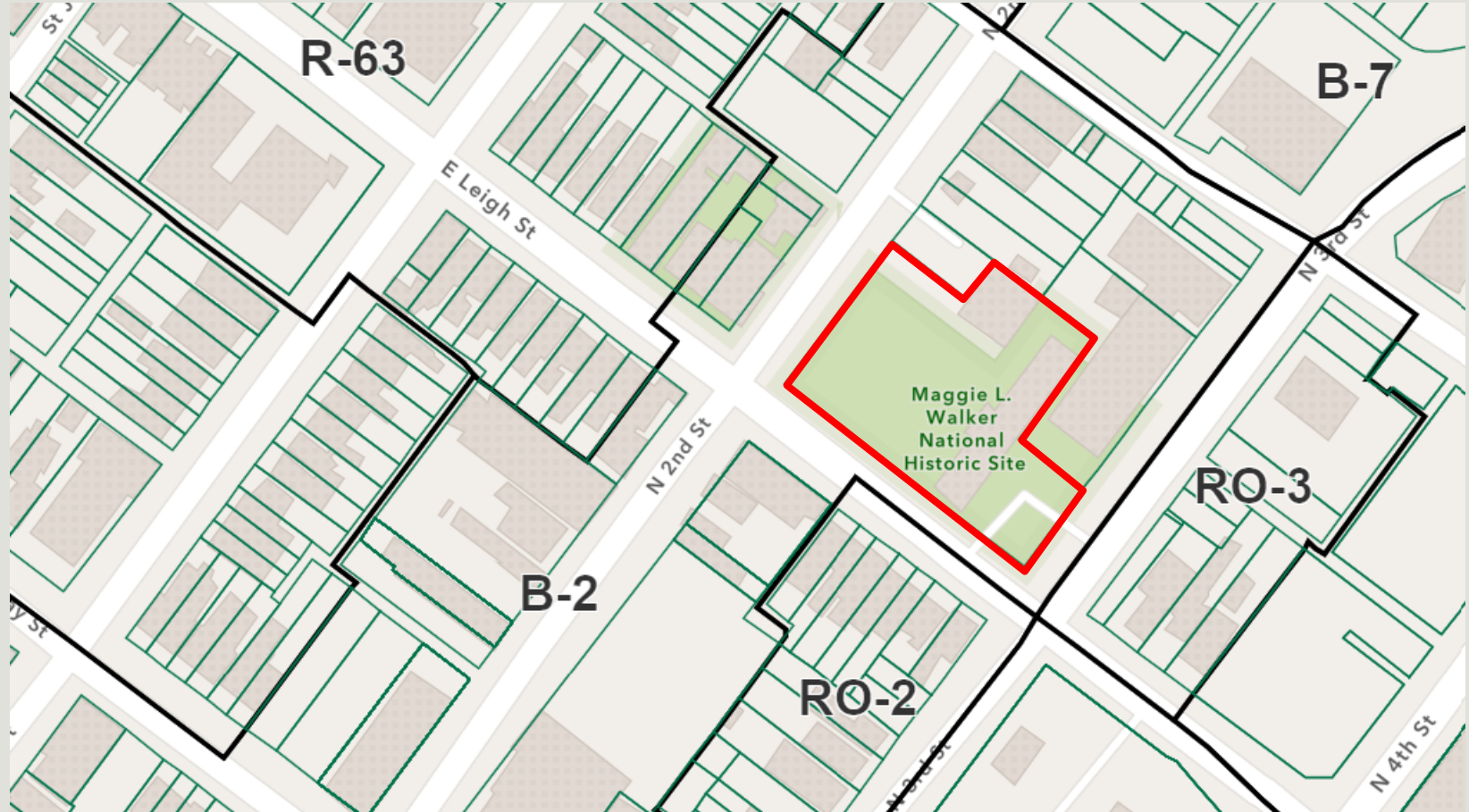
The proposed project is designated as Neighborhood Mixed-Use, is part of the Downtown-Jackson Ward Priority Growth Node, and each of its street frontages is designated as “Major Mixed-Use”

- **Neighborhood Mixed Use**...consists of 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:** Variety of building types that are close together to create a unified street wall. Future development should complement the existing context.
- **Mobility:** Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access should be prioritized and accommodated. Vehicular access should be provided off of alleys and not streets, and parking areas should be located to the rear of street-facing buildings.
- **Intensity:** Buildings heights generally 2-4 stories, parcels generally between 1,500 and 5,000 SF. **Additional height found along major streets.**
- **Primary Uses:** Single-family houses, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, small MF (3-10 units), and open space
- **Secondary Uses:** Large multi-family buildings (10+ units), retail/office/personal service, institutional, cultural, and government.
- The subject property also falls within the “**Downtown-Jackson Ward**” priority growth node as shown on the land use map of Richmond 300. The plan envisions this area to continue to be predominantly residential with non-residential uses scattered throughout at corners and along major roads. New infill development is encouraged to incorporate high-quality architecture and complement the character of historic buildings.



EXISTING ZONING: B-2 Community Business District

The proposed mixed-use building exceeds the height limit (35' req'd vs. 61'4" proposed) and does not meet the required front yard for either of the two street frontages. Proposed uses and parking provided meet zoning ordinance requirements.



ORDINANCE CONDITIONS:

If adopted, the Special Use Permit would impose the following new conditions on the properties:

- i) The use of the building labelled “212 E Leigh St Proposed 5 Story Masonry/Framed” on sheet CS01 of the plans shall be (i) commercial uses authorized by the underlying zoning district within which the Property is located and (ii) up to 63 dwelling units, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- j) A minimum of 50 parking spaces shall be provided on the Property, 37 of which shall be provided substantially as shown on the building labeled as “212 E Leigh St Proposed 5 Story Masonry/Framed” on sheet CS01 of the Plans and as shown on sheet A100 of the Plans. Parking for the multifamily use of the buildings shall be as required for dwelling units in the Community Business District pursuant to section 30-710.1 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended, provided that the parking required for the multifamily use may be shared with non-dwelling uses pursuant to section 30-710.2:3(a) of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended.
- k) A minimum of 15 covered long-term bicycle parking spaces shall be provided on the Property, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- l) All building materials and site improvements, including, but not limited to, building finishes and landscaping, shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.
- m) Any encroachment existing, shown on the Plans, or contemplated in the future, shall require separate authorization and shall be subject to the applicable provisions of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended.
- n) Signs for the buildings shall be consistent with the requirements authorized by the underlying zoning district within which the Property is located.



AFFORDABILITY, SURROUNDING AREA, & NEIGHBORHOOD PARTICIPATION

The applicant intends to rent the dwelling units at market rate. The rental rates have not yet been determined.

A variety of uses surround the property, including the Maggie L Walker Historic site to the west, Third Street Bethel AME Church and The Bethel Center to the east, two and three unit dwellings and the Eggleston Plaza mixed use building to the south and the Mocha Temple lodge to the north.

Staff notified area residents and property owners, as well as the Historic Jackson Ward Association. The Jackson Ward Association has provided a letter with feedback, but has not formally supported or opposed the project. The NPS, which manages the Maggie L Walker Historic site, has opposed the project primarily because of the proposed building height.



Staff Recommendation: Approval with Updated Plans

- Staff finds that the proposed mixed-use dwelling is consistent with the recommendations of Richmond 300. The property has a land use designation of Neighborhood Mixed-Use. Large multifamily buildings are a secondary use for the land use category. Both frontages of East Leigh Street and North Second Street have are designated as “Major Mixed-Use” streets.
- The property is walking distance to downtown, the Pulse, and many restaurants and services. While the general height range recommended for Neighborhood Mixed-Use is 2-4, additional height is permissible along major streets.
- The applicant has met with the Historic Jackson Ward Association on multiple occasions and has modified the color and a few other form elements of the building to address concerns that were raised. The association board has still not voted on the most recent plans, however the applicant has attempted to address the concerns of the association that have been raised during meetings.
- Staff also finds that the proposed development supports Objective 15.1a which states “Increase the number of Richmonders living in a development pattern that encourages density and reduces dependency on single-occupancy vehicles”.
- Staff finds that the proposed redevelopment is supported by Objective 1.3f which states “Implement housing strategies that increase housing at all income levels along corridors and at Nodes.”
- 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.

