



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2026-099 To authorize the special use of the property known as 310 North 25th Street for the purpose of up to one two-family attached dwelling and two dwelling units within an accessory structure, upon certain terms and conditions. (7th District)

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: May 19, 2026

PETITIONER

Robert Blake Jones

LOCATION

310 North 25th Street

PURPOSE

The applicant is requesting a special use permit to authorize the construction of a new accessory structure with two dwelling units in the rear of an existing two-family attached dwelling in a UB - Urban Business zoning district. The UB district does not permit ground floor dwelling units; the addition of dwelling units would be expanding an existing nonconforming use. Additionally, the proposed accessory structure does not meet rear yard setback requirements. A Special Use Permit is therefore necessary to proceed with this request.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed project supports Objective 14.5 of the City's Master Plan. This objective encourages an increase in more housing typologies throughout the city and greater density at Nodes. The subject property is located along a major-mixed use street, within the Jefferson, Marshall & 25th Neighborhood Node. The proposed project encourages a gentle increase in density and housing typologies by providing two one-bedroom units in the rear of an existing two-family dwelling.

Staff finds that the property is located in the St. John's Church City Old and Historic District and that the existing dwelling was built in 1889. The planned retention of the historic dwelling furthers Objective 3.2, to reduce the demolition of historical buildings.

Staff finds that due to the property's location within the City Old and Historic District, the proposal is subject to review by the Commission of Architectural Review (CAR). Staff finds that this review occurred and that CAR approved the proposal on November 25, 2025.

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 subject property is located in the Church Hill neighborhood and St. John's Church City Old and Historic District on North 25th Street between East Broad Street and East Marshall Street. The property has a lot area of 2,078 square feet (0.04 acres) and is improved with a two-story two-family attached dwelling.

Proposed Use of the Property

One two-family attached dwelling fronting on 25th Street (existing) and two new dwelling units within an accessory structure accessible via the rear alley.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the future land use for the subject property as Neighborhood Mixed-Use. In addition to the future land use designation, the property has further character-based designations, including being located on a Major Mixed-Use Street and within the Jefferson, Marshall & 25th Neighborhood Node.

Future Land Use Designation: Areas with the Neighborhood Mixed-Use designation are defined 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. These neighborhoods are identifiable by the following:

Development Style: These areas feature 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. Future development should generally complement existing context. Setbacks, plazas, and parks create a sense of place and community gathering areas. New developments on larger parcels continue or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity within the neighborhood and to adjacent neighborhoods. In historic neighborhoods, small-scale commercial uses exist today or should be allowed to reestablish. In new neighborhoods, small scale commercial buildings should be introduced.

Ground Floor: Regardless of use, buildings should engage the street with features such as street-oriented façades with windows and door openings along street frontages. Appropriate setbacks, open space, front porches, elevated ground floors, and other features that provide a sense of privacy should be provided for residential uses.

Mobility: Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated. Bike parking is provided. New driveways are prohibited on Priority and Principal Street frontages. Vehicular access to parcels should use alleys wherever possible. Parking areas should be located to the rear of street-facing buildings.

Intensity: Building heights are generally two to four stories. Buildings taller than four stories may be found along major streets. Parcels are generally between 1,500 and 5,000 sq. ft.

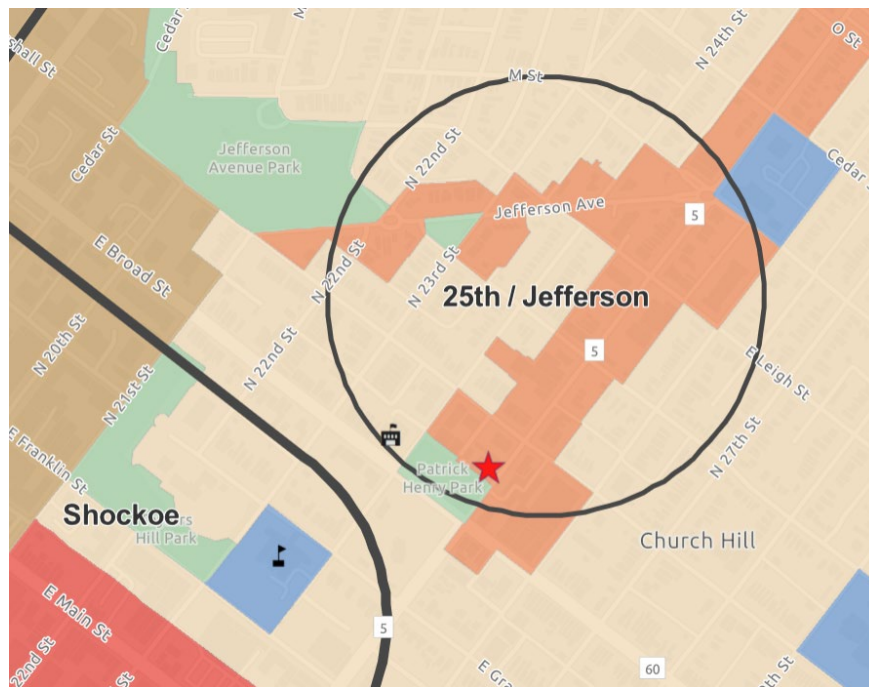
Primary Uses: Single-family houses, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, small multi-family buildings (typically 3-10 units), and open space.

Secondary Uses: Large multifamily buildings (10+units), retail/office/personal service, institutional, cultural, and government.

Street Typology Designation: Major Mixed-Use Streets are defined by the following characteristics:

- Carry high volumes of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles, through commercial and mixed-use areas
- Prioritize use and density-scaled sidewalks and crosswalks
- Require form elements, such as buildings to the street with parking in the rear, as well as building windows and entrances on the street
- Incorporate streetscape features, such as trees, benches, and trash receptacles
- Ideal locations for transit routes and transit stops
- Prioritize the curbside for walking, bicycling, transit, and short-term parking access and loading for local shops and restaurants

Node Designation: The Jefferson, Marshall & 25th Neighborhood Node is identified as being largely built out. The City’s Master Plan calls for infill development that complements the existing neighborhood character.



Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for this property is UB - Urban Business. The following features of the proposed development do not comply with the current zoning regulations:

Sec. 30-433.2. - Permitted principal and accessory uses.
Ground floor dwelling units are not permitted.

Sec. 30-680.1. - Location within required yards.

Any building accessory to a two-family dwelling that exceeds 12 feet in height cannot be located within a required rear yard.

The accessory structure is located less than an inch from the rear lot line.

This special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as up to one two-family attached dwelling and two dwelling units within an accessory structure, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- No off-street parking shall be required for the Special Use.
- The height of the Special Use shall not exceed two stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements shall be substantially as shown on the Plans, subject to the conditions set forth in the Certificate of Appropriateness issued by the Commission of Architectural Review, approved November 25, 2025, in response to Application No. COA-175460-2025.

Surrounding Area

The surrounding area has a wide range of land uses, including residential, commercial, institutional, and park space.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified the Church Hill Central Civic Association and Church Hill Association of RVA, area residents and property owners. Staff has not received any letters to date regarding the proposal.

Staff Contact: Shaianna Trump, Planner & Secretary to the City Planning Commission, Land Use Administration, 804-646-7319