



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2024-035: To authorize the special use of the property known as 6422 Forest Hill Avenue for the purpose of ten single-family detached dwellings fronting on a private street, upon certain terms and conditions. (4th District)

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: February 20, 2024

PETITIONER

Lory Markham

LOCATION

6422 Forest Hill Avenue

PURPOSE

The proposal is to authorize the subdivision of the property resulting in lots that front a private road, which is not authorized in the zoning ordinance. The applicant is also requesting relief from the driveway width, front yard on corner lots, and front yard setback requirements.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposal would be consistent with the recommendations of the City's Richmond 300 Master Plan pertaining to the Residential Category, as well as the single-family detached housing pattern that is prevalent in the vicinity.

Staff finds that with the ordinance conditions, the safeguards contained within the City Charter relative to the granting of this special use 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.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of this request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The property is located in the Willow Oaks Neighborhood and fronts Forest Hill Avenue. The property consists of approximately 129,373 SF, or 2.97 acres, of land.

Proposed Use of the Property

The proposed special use will allow infill development as authorized within the R-4 Single-Family Residential District.

Master Plan

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

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. 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. (p. 54)

This property is located within a designated "Great Street" under the category of "Major Residential Street" which is characterized by the following:

- Carry high volumes of vehicles, as well as pedestrians and bicycles, through residential neighborhoods
- Prioritize for creating sidewalks and crosswalks
- Install street trees as a buffer between sidewalk and street
- Ideal locations for transit routes and transit stops
- Ensure low street speed by utilizing traffic calming measures (p. 72)

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

On January 27, 2021, City Council adopted Ord. 2021-368 authorizing the rezoning of the property from the R-2 Single-Family Residential District to the R-4 Single-Family Residential District. No proffers are proposed with the rezoning.

Zoning Administration provided the following comments:

Zoning: R-4 district. Site plan is showing "proposed private road" This development cannot be constructed with private road frontage, by right, therefore SUP is required. (Sec. 30-610.1.) Lot area of 7,500 sf and width of 60' required. (Met). Front yard of 25' required along Forest Hill Avenue and proposed new public road. 30' proposed along Forest Hill Avenue and 25' along proposed new road. 6' Side and rear yard setbacks required and proposed. Max height of 35' for dwellings and 20' max height for accessory buildings. Lot coverage max of 30% required, square footage of dwellings and accessory buildings required from applicant to determine if lot coverage is complying or if a waiver is required.

If adopted, the Special Use Permit would impose conditions on the property, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as ten single-family detached dwellings fronting on a private street, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- Permitted driveways within the front yards shall not exceed 20 feet in width.

- Prior to the issuance of a building permit for the Special Use, the establishment of ten residential lots, substantially as shown on the Plans, shall be accomplished by obtaining the necessary approvals from the City and recording the appropriate plats and deeds among the land records of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of the City of Richmond.

Surrounding Area

Adjacent properties are in the R-2 Single-Family Residential District. The surrounding land uses include primarily residential with some institutional and municipal uses present in the vicinity.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents, property owners, and the Willow Oaks/Clevedon Civic Association of the proposed Rezoning. As of this date, staff has not received any correspondence regarding the application.

Staff Contact: David Watson AICP, Senior Planner, Land Use Administration, 804-646-1036