



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2020-265: To authorize the special use of the property known as 2515 Rear Hanover Avenue for the purpose of a single-family detached dwelling, storage, a parking area, and a community garden, upon certain terms and conditions

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: February 1, 2021

PETITIONER

Robert J. Adams

LOCATION

2515 Rear Hanover Avenue

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 2515 Rear Hanover Avenue for the purpose of a single-family detached dwelling, storage, a parking area, and a community garden, upon certain terms and conditions

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit which would allow for the adaptive re-use of an existing garage into a single-family dwelling within an R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential District, and would also authorize storage, a parking area, and a community garden. The proposed residential use is not currently allowed by section 30-610.1 of the Code of the City of Richmond, regarding public street frontage, a Special Use Permit is therefore required.

Staff finds the proposal to be generally consistent with the recommendations of the Master Plan, including the land use recommendations for Neighborhood Mixed-Use areas and Objective 14.5 which supports more housing types throughout the city and greater density along enhanced transit corridors and at Nodes. The property is located within a Micro-Node centered at the intersection of North Robinson Street and Hanover Avenue

Staff finds the proposal to be an adaptive reuse of a historic building, consistent with the historic pattern of development in the area, and would not pose an undue burden on the availability of on-street parking in the area.

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.

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

*Please note, amendments to the special use permit ordinance conditions have been suggested by the community. Communication is taking place between the applicant and staff regarding these amendments and an update will be provided by staff during or prior to the public hearing.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The property consists of 0.126 acres and is located in the Fan neighborhood on an internal alleyway between Robinson and Davis Streets. The property is currently improved with a 1,200 sq. ft. detached garage built, per tax assessment records, in 1910.

Proposed Use of the Property

Adaptive reuse of the garage into a two-bedroom, single-family detached dwelling and allow storage, on-site parking, and a community garden.

Master Plan

The City of Richmond's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Neighborhood Mixed-Use. This land use designation is described as 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: 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 (see Street Typologies Map). 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.

This property is also located within one of the Plan's designated Micro-Nodes, centered at the intersection of North Robinson Street and Hanover Avenue. A Micro-Node is defined as a notable place within a neighborhood that generally provides goods and services to the immediate residents but may attract visitors.

Objective 14.5 of the Master Plan states "Encourage more housing types throughout the city and greater density along enhanced transit corridors and at Nodes".

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for the subject parcel is R-6 (Single-Family Attached Residential).

The City's Zoning Administration reviewed the application and provided the following comments:

ZONING AND USE: The subject property is zoned in the R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential district. The proposed development consists of an existing two-story garage/outbuilding converted to a single-family dwelling with a unit on first floor and the second floor used for storage. Sec. 30-610.1 requires that every building erected and every use established shall be located on a lot having frontage on an improved public street or access thereto by means of a recorded permanent easement. Because the parcel has no current dwelling use, does not front on an improved public street, or have access thereto by means of a recorded permanent easement a Special Use Permit is required to be adopted by City Council to authorize this use.

The special use permit would impose conditions on the property, including:

3(a) The Special Use of the Property shall be as a single-family detached dwelling and storage within an existing brick building, existing storage shed, parking area, and community garden, substantially as shown on the Plans. The dwelling may be used for short-term rental purposes.

(b) The height of the Special Use shall not exceed the height as shown on the Plans.

(c) Elevations, building materials, and site improvements shall be substantially as shown on the Plans. The existing brick building and storage shed shall remain as brick.

(d) The parking area shall contain up to five off-street parking spaces, substantially as shown on the Plans, for use by residents of the block bound by Hanover Avenue, North Davis Avenue, Grove Avenue, and North Robinson Street.

(e) All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.

(f) No permit implementing the Special Use shall be issued until written evidence that the Director of Public Works, the Chief of Police, and the Chief of Fire and Emergency Services have confirmed that the alley access to the Property for all-weather travel by public and emergency vehicles is appropriate in accordance with applicable laws and regulations has been submitted to the Zoning Administrator.

(g) Prior to the issuance of any certificate of occupancy for the Special Use, the Owner shall submit a request to name the primary alley access to the Property in accordance with sections 8-7 through 8-10 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2015), as amended, and such alley shall be named pursuant to sections 8-7 through 8-10 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2015), as amended.

4(c) Facilities for the collection of refuse shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of the Director of Public Works. Such facilities shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from adjacent properties and public streets.

Surrounding Area

Surrounding properties are within the same R-6 District as the subject property. A mix of single-, two-, and multi-family residential, commercial, mixed-use, and institutional land uses are present in the vicinity.

Affordability

The applicant has stated that the proposed unit will be leased at the market rate.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents, property owners, the Fan District Association, and the Robinson Street Association of the proposed Special Use Permit. Staff has received letters of support, and letters of opposition. Staff has also received letters stating support for additional conditions being added to the ordinance, including such a letter from the Fan District Association.

Staff Contact: Jonathan Brown, Senior Planner, Land Use Administration, 804-646-5734