



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2022-267: To authorize the special use of the property known as 2818 Monument Avenue for the purpose of a multifamily dwelling, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: October 2, 2022

PETITIONER

Siwel Renovations LLC

LOCATION

2818 Monument Avenue

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 2818 Monument Avenue for the purpose of a multifamily dwelling, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The subject property is located in the R-48 Multifamily Residential Zoning District. Within this district, multi-family dwellings that contain 10 or fewer dwelling units within a single building are permitted uses. The proposed development does not meet the lot feature requirements of the zoning district. Therefore, a special use permit is requested.

The property is located within the Monument Avenue Old and Historic District. Therefore, construction plans shall be reviewed and approved by the city's Commission of Architectural Review (CAR.) This request received a Certificate of Appropriateness from CAR in January 2023.

Staff finds that the proposed development is consistent with the historic pattern of development in the area and the recommendations of the Richmond 300 master plan. The recommended land use is Neighborhood Mixed-Use, where the proposed eight-unit multi-family building is an appropriate primary use.

Staff finds that the proposed development supports objective 6.1(b) of Richmond 300 by "develop[ing] housing at all income levels in and near Nodes and along major corridors" (p. 109).

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 amendment 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 authorizing a multi-family dwelling.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The vacant subject property is 30x130 feet and contains 3,900 square feet. It is located on the northern side of Monument Avenue midblock between North Sheppard Street to the west and North Arthur Ashe Boulevard to the east. An alley runs along the rear property line.

Proposed Use of the Property

The proposed special use will authorize the construction of an 11,344 square foot building containing eight dwelling units.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the property for Neighborhood Mixed-Use which 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: 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 square feet.

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

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

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

Within the R-48 Multi-Family Residential district, multifamily buildings with ten or fewer dwelling units are permitted uses, provided certain criteria are met. No parking is required for the proposed use. However, plans indicate the provision of six off-street parking spaces. The zoning criteria not met are as follows.

- The lot area requirement is 2,200 square feet for each dwelling unit. As such, an eight-unit building requires 17,600 square feet. The subject property is 3,900 square feet.
- The proposed building meets the required 15 foot front and rear yard setbacks but does not meet the 15 foot side yard setbacks.
- The maximum lot coverage allowed in the zoning district is 50%, or 1,950 square feet. As proposed, the lot coverage is 2,839 square feet.

Staff recommends approval of this request with the following conditions:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as a multifamily detached dwelling, substantially as shown on the Plans, containing up to eight dwelling units.
- No off-street parking shall be required for the Special Use.
- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements shall be substantially as shown on the Plans, subject to the applicable regulations of Chapter 30, Article IX, Division 4 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended.
- The height of the Special Use shall not exceed four stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.

Surrounding Area

Properties in the area contain multi-family housing.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents and property owners and the Monument Avenue Preservation Society, the Museum District Association, and the Fan Area Business Alliance. Staff has received correspondence from the Museum District Association requesting additional time to consider the application.

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