



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

SUBD 2020.003: Subdivision Exception Request for 1411 Bainbridge Street (Manchester Grand Subdivision)

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: May 4, 2020

PETITIONER

Amelia Wehunt, Timmons Group

LOCATION

1411 Bainbridge Street

PURPOSE

To approve an exception to Sec 25-219 of the Subdivision Ordinance to waive the requirement for an average lot depth of not less than 100 feet.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is proposing to record a subdivision plat establishing two lots, which is substantially in conformance with the Subdivision Ordinance, but does not meet the standard of Sec. 25-219 of the Subdivision Ordinance which requires an average lot depth of not less than 100 feet. The proposed lot depth of Parcel B, substantially as shown on the plat, is generally 67'. The applicant is therefore requesting, pursuant to Section 25-9 of the Subdivision Ordinance, an exception to Section 25-219 of the Subdivision Ordinance.

Staff finds that the proposed exception request would enable development of the proposed Parcel B that is generally consistent with the historic pattern of development throughout the area and with the recommendations of the Downtown Plan.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of the exception request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject property consists of a corner parcel totaling 83,200 SF, or 1.910 acres, of land improved with a former school currently used as a multi-family dwelling. The property is a part of the Manchester neighborhood, on Bainbridge Street between West 14th and West 15th Streets.

Proposed Use of the Property

The applicant intends to construct a by-right infill building on the proposed Parcel B.

Master Plan

The City of Richmond's Downtown Plan designates the property within a General Urban Area, which is characterized by medium-density, mixed-use development, distributed along medium-sized blocks. Old Manchester is an example of the general urban condition in Richmond. This district is characterized by single-family homes, sideyard houses, rowhouses, and small multi-family buildings, such as duplexes, triplexes, and quads. These buildings have variable setbacks and landscaping, and a limited mix of commercial and civic uses (3.23).

The Downtown plan recommends infill development that creates a continuous street frontage and respects the character of the neighborhood with similar massing and architectural elements. The plan states that "Manchester will benefit greatly from new construction and the infill of its many vacant properties. Such infill will introduce new energy to the district by increasing the residential population, repairing the streetscape, and enhancing safety by providing "eyes on the street." It is essential that while Manchester grows and fills in its vacant lots with new buildings, that these buildings respect the existing historic architecture of the district. The historic lot lines, setbacks, footprint, height, massing and details of the surrounding buildings should guide all decisions for new construction" (4.33).

Zoning

The property is located in the R-63 Multi-Family Residential District, which allows single-, two-, and multi-family dwellings, as well as limited commercial and service uses on corner lots.

The intent of the R-63 district is to encourage development of medium density neighborhoods comprised of a mix of residential uses and to promote a pedestrian oriented urban environment that is primarily residential in character, but that includes limited nonresidential uses that serve many of the day-to-day convenience needs of neighborhood residents and provide opportunities for residents to live and work within the neighborhood.

The district is intended to be applied within or in close proximity to areas of the City that reflect an urban scale of development and afford convenient access to major employment centers and community facilities, and to encompass undeveloped or underdeveloped properties comprising areas large enough and with sufficient residential density to enable establishment of a cohesive neighborhood.

The district regulations permit corner commercial uses that are limited in location, type and scale and are intended to provide for the convenience of neighborhood residents within walking distance, to respect the primary residential character of the neighborhood and to avoid traffic, parking, noise and other impacts that typically result from uses that draw patrons from outside a neighborhood.

The district regulations are also intended to promote a streetscape that is urban in character by requiring minimal building setbacks uninterrupted by parking areas along principal street frontages, and to enhance public safety and encourage an active pedestrian environment

appropriate to the residential character of the district by providing for windows in building façades along street frontages.

Finally, the district regulations are intended to ensure adequate accessible parking, safe vehicular and pedestrian circulation, and to provide for limited interruption by driveways and vehicular traffic across public sidewalk areas along principal street frontages.

Surrounding Area

The property is a part of a larger R-63 Multi-Family Residential District, with R-8 Urban Residential in close proximity to the north. A mix of single-, two-, and multi-family residential, commercial, institutional, and vacant land uses are present in the area. The majority of dwellings within the area are older dwellings located on small lots.

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