



## CITY OF RICHMOND

### **Department of Planning & Development Review** ***Staff Report***

**Ord. No. 2025-173:** To authorize the special use of the property known as 2201 North Lombardy Street for the purpose of a mixed-use building, upon certain terms and conditions.

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**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Land Use Administration  
**Date:** August 19, 2025

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#### **PETITIONER**

Tarvaris McCoy

#### **LOCATION**

2201 North Lombardy

#### **PURPOSE**

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to authorize a mixed-use building within the UB-2 - Urban Business District, which use, among other things, is not currently allowed by sections 30-433.13(1)b, 30-433.15(b), 30-512(2), and 30-433.16(1) regarding front yards, driveways from streets, sign area, and maximum height limits, respectively, of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended; A Special Use Permit is therefore required.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff finds that the proposal is consistent with the City's Master Plan pertaining to the Corridor Mixed-Use land use category where mixed-use, multifamily buildings, are considered a primary use.

Staff also finds that the new mixed-use building is also located within the designated Virginia Union University (VUU)/Chamberlayne Neighborhood Node. The use will increase pedestrian activity and a safer intersection by providing additional "eyes-on-the-street" as it attracts immediate residents, visitors, and the VUU academic community. In addition, the small, neighborhood commercial use of the property supports Objective 6.1c which aims to "support the retention, creation, and attraction of businesses in and near Nodes..." (p. 109)

Staff also finds that the proposed site design aligns with objective 4.1o which aims to "Increase building permeability by requiring new buildings to have functioning entrances from the sidewalk and restricting blank walls at ground level." Staff worked with the applicant to properly site the building and parking area so that the building properly addresses the street giving pedestrians a larger and safer sidewalk. (p. 100)

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.

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## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **Site Description**

The property is located in the Virginia Union neighborhood at the southeast corner of Lombardy Street and Brook Road. The property is currently a 39,073 sq. ft. (.90 acre) parcel of land, improved with a two-story, vacant commercial building.

### **Proposed Use of the Property**

Mixed-use building with ground-floor commercial and 101 multi-family dwelling units.

### **Master Plan**

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Corridor Mixed Use. This designation is defined as development "Found along major commercial corridors and envisioned to provide for medium- to medium-high-density pedestrian- and transit-oriented development."

**Development Style:** The building size, density, and zoning districts for these areas may vary significantly depending on historical densities and neighborhood characteristics. Future development should generally complement existing context. Uses may be mixed horizontally in several buildings on a block or vertically within the same building. Developments continue introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity.

**Ground Floor:** Ground floor uses engage with, and enliven, the street. Monolithic walls are discouraged, while windows, doors, storefronts, and other features that allow transparency and interaction between building and street are encouraged. Active commercial ground floor uses are required on street-oriented commercial frontages.

**Mobility:** Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated. Bike parking is provided. Driveway entrances are required to be off alleys whenever possible; new driveways are prohibited on priority and principal streets. Parking areas are located within the structure and to the rear of buildings and require screening; shared parking requirements are encouraged.

**Intensity:** Buildings generally ranging from two to ten stories, based on street widths and depending on the historic context and stepping down in height adjacent to residential areas. New buildings that are taller than historical buildings should step back from the build-to line after matching the height of the predominant cornice line of the block.

**Primary Uses:** Retail/office/personal service, multi-family residential, cultural, and open space.

**Secondary Uses:** Single-family houses, institutional, and government.

**Neighborhood Node:** The property is located in a designated within the VUU/Chamberlayne Neighborhood Node which references the 2015 Neighborhood Plan envisioning future development with "...on-street parking, streetscaping, pedestrian lighting and signage. Curb cuts should be reduced to better control vehicular movement, and parking areas should be created behind buildings and in public lots. New commercial buildings with storefronts can be located along Lombardy and selected historic buildings can be reused for shops and restaurants. (p. C-24)

**Major Mixed-Use Street:** The property is located on a designated Major Mixed-Use Street. The Richmond 300 Master Plan designates these streets as a method of incorporating 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

### **Zoning and Ordinance Conditions**

The current zoning for this property is Urban Business-2 (UB-2) District. The following conditions of the proposed development do not comply with the current zoning regulations:

Sec. 30-433.13(1)b. – Front Yards.

*10 ft. front yards are required based upon adjacent properties building location. A portion of the proposed building has a 4 ft. setback on Lombardy Street.*

30-433.15(b). – Driveways from streets

*Driveways on principal street frontages are not permitted in the UB-2 District.*

30-512(2). – Sign area

*The maximum sign area is 32 sq. ft. The proposed is approximately 36 sq. ft.*

30-433.16(1). – Height limits

*The maximum height within the UB-2 zone is 3 stories. The proposed building is 5 stories.*

This special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as a mixed-use building, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- The height of the Special Use shall not exceed the height as shown on the Plans.
- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements, including landscaping, shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.
- Signs on the Property shall be limited to (i) signs permitted in all zoning districts, pursuant to section 30-505 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended, as well as the proposed signs, 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.
- 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.
- The Owner shall make improvements within the right-of-way, including the installation of new sidewalks along North Lombardy Street, Brook Road, and West Roberts Street, and the addition of two street trees along North Lombardy Street, two street trees along Brook Road, and five street trees along West Roberts Street, substantially as shown on the Plans, which

improvements may be completed in one or more phases as approved by the Director of Public Works.

**Surrounding Area**

The surrounding land uses are a mix of residential, commercial, and institutional uses.

**Neighborhood Participation**

Staff notified area residents, property owners, and the Chamberlayne Industrial Center and Edgehill Chamberlayne Court Civic Associations (ECCCA). The ECCCA has provided a letter of support.

**Staff Contact:** Jonathan Brown, Senior Planner, Land Use Administration, 804-646-7319