



## CITY OF RICHMOND

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

**Ord. No. 2025-090:** To authorize the special use of the property known as 2000 North 29<sup>th</sup> Street for the purpose of a private school, upon certain terms and conditions. (7<sup>th</sup> District)

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**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Land Use Administration  
**Date:** May 20, 2025

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#### **PETITIONER**

Jennifer Mullen

#### **LOCATION**

2000 N 29<sup>th</sup> Street

#### **SUMMARY**

The applicant is requesting the construction of a private school in an R-5 Single-Family Residential District. While the use is a permitted principal use, it exceeds height restrictions and permitted lot area coverage, therefore, a special use permit is required.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff finds that the construction of a private school is consistent with the character of the surrounding community, including the existing building for the Anna Julia Cooper School, which is located on the adjacent parcel.

Staff also finds that the proposed use is consistent with the Richmond 300 Master Plan future land use designation of Neighborhood Mixed-Use, which lists institutional uses as appropriate secondary uses.

Staff concludes that the proposed ordinance conditions substantially satisfy the safeguards established in the City Charter concerning the granting of Special Use Permits. 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 currently a vacant lot located in the Woodville neighborhood, between Tate Street and Purcell Street. The property is currently a 50,355.36 sq ft (1.156 acre) parcel of land.

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

Private school

## Master Plan

The Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the subject property for Neighborhood Mixed-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. 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 multi-family buildings (10+units), retail/office/personal service, institutional, cultural, and government.

## Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

Zoning Administration provided the following comments:

*The R-5 district allows private schools as principal uses. The proposed use does not meet requirements for height and lot coverage in this zoning district.*

This special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as a private school, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- The height of the Special Use shall not exceed two stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- Signs on the Property shall be limited to signs permitted in all districts pursuant to section 30-505 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended. Internally illuminated signs shall not be permitted.
- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements shall be 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**

The current zoning for this property and properties to the north and south of the property are R-5. The Creighton Court neighborhood is directly across from the property and is zoned R-53. There are a mix of B-2 and R-6 zoning districts beyond the immediate surrounding zoning district.

**Neighborhood Participation**

The property is located across from the Creighton Court Tenants Council. Notices were mailed to surrounding property owners and a sign was placed on the properties. Staff has not received any public comment on this request.

**Staff Contact:**

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