



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2025-255: To authorize the special use of the property known as 1915 5th Avenue, for the purpose of up to two two-family detached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions. (6th District)

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: December 2, 2025

PETITIONER

Rent RVA Now LLC (Sarah Stamper)

LOCATION

1915 5th Avenue

PURPOSE

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to authorize two duplexes an R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential District. While two-family detached dwellings are permitted uses in this district, the proposal does not meet certain lot feature requirements. A Special Use Permit is therefore required to pursue this development.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the subject property is designated as Residential on the Future Land Use Map in the Richmond 300 Master Plan. Two-family dwellings are identified as secondary uses for this designation.

Staff finds that the proposal includes the preservation of existing street trees. A sidewalk, curb and gutter system fronts the property.

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.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The 8,400 square foot property is in the Highland Park Southern Tip neighborhood on the east side of 5th Avenue approximately midblock between Chestnut and Althea Streets.

Proposed Use of the Property

Two two-family detached dwellings.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Residential, which is defined as a neighborhood consisting primarily of single-family houses on large- or medium-sized lots more homogeneous in nature.

Development Style: Houses on medium-sized and large-sized lots in a largely auto-dependent environment. Homes are setback from the street. Future developments continue and/or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity. Future single-family housing, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, and small multi-family residential buildings are built to a scale and design that is consistent with existing buildings.

Mobility: Bicycle and pedestrian access are prioritized and accommodated. Low residential density means that it is not possible to provide frequent transit within these areas; however, frequent transit may be found at the edges of these areas within more intense future land use designations. Many homes have driveways and/or garages, which are located off an alley behind the home if an alley is present.

Intensity: Buildings are generally one to three stories. Lot sizes generally range up to 5,000 to 20,000+ sq. ft. Residential density of 2 to 10 housing units per acre.

Primary Uses: Single-family houses, accessory dwelling units, and open space.

Secondary Uses: Duplexes and small multi-family buildings (typically 3-10 units), institutional, and cultural. Secondary uses may be found along major streets.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for this property is R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential District. The following features of the proposed development do not comply with the current zoning regulations:

30-412.4 – Lot area and width

The required lot area shall not be less than 6,000 square feet with a width of no less than 50 feet.

The lots resulting from subdivision will be approximately 30 feet wide and 4,200 square feet.

If approved, this special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as up to two two-family detached dwellings, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- The height of the Special Use shall not exceed two stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- 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.
- Prior to the issuance of any building permit for the Special Use, the establishment of no more than two residential lots, substantially as shown on the Plans, shall be accomplished by obtaining the necessary approvals from the City and recording the appropriate plats and deeds among the land records of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of the City of Richmond.

Surrounding Area

The surrounding area is primarily residential.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified the Highland Park Quality of Life Association, area residents and property owners. Staff has received no letters to date regarding the proposal.

Staff Contact: David Watson, Senior Planner, Land Use Administration, 804-646-1036