



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2025-079 To authorize the special use of the properties known as 3801 Hanover Avenue and 3803 Hanover Avenue for the purpose of up to eight single-family detached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions. (1st District)

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: June 17, 2025

PETITIONER

William Gillette, Baker Development Resources

LOCATION

3801 Hanover Avenue and 3803 Hanover Avenue

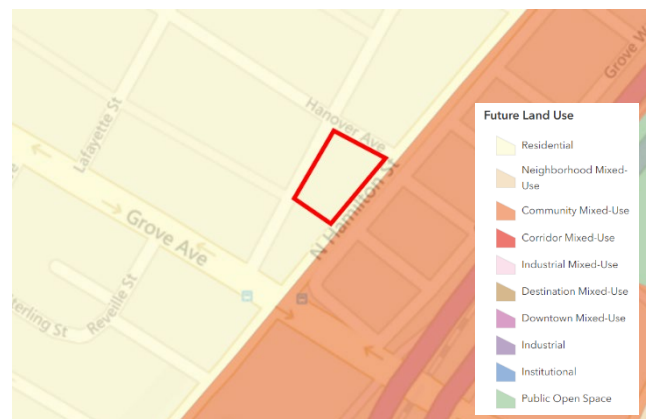
PURPOSE

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to authorize the construction of six single-family detached dwellings, in addition to two existing single-family detached dwellings in the R-5 zoning district. Certain R-5 lot feature requirements, including lot area, lot width, yards, and lot coverage, cannot be met. A Special Use Permit is, therefore, necessary to proceed with this request.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the requested use is consistent with the City's Master Plan future land use designation of Residential. This land use designation identifies single-family dwellings as a primary use.

The subject property is located immediately adjacent to the Community Mixed-Use Designation (see future land use map). Staff finds that its proximity to this higher-intensity future land use supports an increased density that surpasses 10 units per acre (p. 80, Richmond 300).



Staff finds that three of the proposed dwellings will front on North Hamilton Street, which is identified as a Major Mixed-Use Street (p. 98, Richmond 300). Major-Mixed Use Streets are ideal locations for transit stops. The subject property is located in close proximity to the Grove and Hamilton bus stop, which can connect residents to places such as the University of Richmond and Virginia Commonwealth University, without the need for a car.

Staff finds that the location of the proposal is also supported by Objective 15.1, which calls for the need to "increase the number of Richmonders living in a development pattern that encourages density and reduces dependency on single-occupancy vehicles" (Richmond 300, p. 185).

Staff finds that the Major-Mixed Use Street designation recommends that development should have, "form elements, such as buildings to the street...as well as building windows and entrances

on the street” (Richmond 300, p. 98). The proposed homes have a minimal front yard setback, addressing this recommendation.

Furthermore, this Street Typology calls for the incorporation of streetscape features such as trees. In addition to retaining the existing trees along Reville Street, the proposal includes the addition of three new street trees along North Hamilton Street, contributing to the neighborhood’s tree canopy.

Staff finds that the proposal supports Objective 8.1, which aims to “Improve pedestrian experience by increasing and improving sidewalks and improving pedestrian crossings and streetscapes.” The proposed project includes the installation of sidewalk along Reville Street and Hamilton Street, as well as the aforementioned street trees.

Staff finds that the proposal is an appropriate transition between housing types. To the east of the site are condominiums, while lower-density, two-story, single-family detached dwellings can be found to the west. The proposed three-story, single-family detached dwellings effectively bridge the scale and density between these two housing typologies. The additional story is supported by Objective 4.1 (i), which encourages, “design approaches that support creative solutions for transitions among varying intensities of building types and land uses” (p. 126, Richmond 300). The third story on the proposed dwellings is stepped back.

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 property is located in the Colonial Place neighborhood on Hanover Avenue between Reville Street and North Hamilton Street. The properties currently have a combined square footage of 17,163 (0.39 acres). Each lot is improved with a single-family detached dwelling. The existing dwellings will be retained.

Proposed Use of the Property

Ten single-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, “Neighborhood consisting primarily of single-family houses on large- or medium-sized lots more homogeneous in nature” (Richmond 300, p. 54).

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

Major Mixed-Use Street

North Hamilton Street is identified as a Major Mixed-Use Street in the City's Master Plan. The following elements are those found along this Street Typology.

- 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 R-5 Single-Family District. The following features of the proposed development do not comply with the current zoning regulations:

Sec. 30-410.4 – Lot area and width

Lot area is required to be 6,000 square feet and lot width is required to be 50 feet

Proposed lot areas and widths are as follows:

Lot 1- 35 feet lot width and 1,420 square feet of lot area

Lot 2- 35 feet lot width and 1,520 square feet of lot area

Lot 3- 35 feet lot width and 1,625 square feet of lot area

Lot 4- 35 feet lot width and 1,660 square feet of lot area

Lot 5- 35 feet lot width and 1,620 square feet of lot area

Lot 6- 35 feet lot width and 1,750 square feet of lot area

Sec. 30-410.5(1) – Yards: Front Yards

Front yards must be a minimum of 25 feet or the same as adjacent main buildings within 100 feet.

The proposed front yards for the dwellings facing Reville Street are approximately five feet. This requirement is not met.

The proposed front yards for the dwellings facing Hamilton Street are approximately five feet. This requirement is met

Sec. 30-410.5(2) – Yards: Side Yards

Side yards must be a minimum of five feet.

The proposed side yards are three and twelve feet for all lots. All lots have one side yard that is three feet. This requirement is not met.

Sec. 30-410.5(3) – Yards: Rear Yards

Rear yards must be a minimum of five feet.

The proposed rear yards meet the minimum requirement of five feet.

Sec. 30-410.6 – Lot coverage

No lot coverage cannot exceed 35%

No proposed lot meets this requirement.

This special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as up to eight single-family detached dwellings, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- No off-street parking shall be required for the Special Use.
- The height of the Special Use shall not exceed three stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.
- Private trash collection shall be provided for the Special Use.
- 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 a building permit for the Special Use, the establishment of up to eight 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 land uses are residential.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified the Grove Crest Colonial Place Civic Association, Westhampton Citizens Association, area residents and property owners. Staff has received letters to date regarding the proposal.

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