



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2025-217 To authorize the special use of the property known as 15 East Main Street for the purpose of up to three short-term rental units, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: October 7, 2025

PETITIONER

Michelle Shriver

LOCATION

15 E Main St.

PURPOSE

The applicant seeks to convert three apartments to short-term rental units and retain one commercial unit. The proposed use does not meet the zoning standards, which only permits one third of the dwellings to be a short-term rental, therefore, an SUP is required.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff has determined that the subject property is appropriately zoned for this rare exception to increase the standard allowance for short-term rentals within a mixed-use building. This determination aligns with its location in the Monroe Ward Node, which aims to “encourage the development of hotel rooms in Nodes and Priority Neighborhoods,” and the Master Plan Objective 12.3 to “increase the availability and options for lodging in the city.”

The applicant does not plan to change exterior aspects of the building including the façade, as all changes will be interior to the existing historic building.

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 amendment request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The property is a 2,277 sq ft (.052 acre) parcel located in the Monroe Ward Neighborhood, on the southern line of Main Street, between South Foushee Street and North 1st Street.

Master Plan

The City’s Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Downtown Mixed Use, defined as: Central business district of the Richmond region features high-

density development with office buildings, residential buildings, and a mix of complementary uses, including regional destinations in a highly-walkable urban environment.

Development Style: Higher density pedestrian- and transit-oriented development encouraged on vacant or underutilized sites. Historic buildings are adapted for new uses. Future development should be urban in form and may be of larger scale than existing context. Plazas and setbacks create an engaging street life. Many buildings are vertically mixed-use. New developments continue or 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 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 street frontages. Surface parking is prohibited as a principal use. Parking requirements are substantially less in these areas than other areas of the City and are largely eliminated.

Intensity: Buildings typically a minimum height of five stories.

Primary Use: Retail/office/ personal service, multi-family residential, cultural, institutional, government, and open space.

Secondary Uses: Not applicable.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for this property is within the TOD-1 (Transit-Oriented Nodal) District

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as up to three short-term rental units, 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

Neighboring parcels are within the same TOD-1 district, and neighboring zones are RO-3 (residential office) districts. The neighboring parcels are a mix of mixed-use buildings, apartments, businesses, and offices.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified the Downtown Neighborhood Association, area residents and property owners. Staff has not received feedback.

Staff Contact: Madison Wilson, Planner, Land Use Administration, 804-646-7436