



## CITY OF RICHMOND

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

**Ord. No. 2024-085:** To authorize the special use of the property known as 1205 North 34th Street for the purpose of two single-family attached dwellings, certain terms and conditions.

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**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Land Use Administration  
**Date:** April 2, 2024

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#### **PETITIONER**

Baker Development Resources

#### **LOCATION**

1205 North 34th Street

#### **PURPOSE**

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit for the purpose of two single-family attached dwellings, which use, among other things, is not currently allowed by Section 30-410.1, concerning permitted principal uses, of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended. A Special Use Permit is, therefore, required.

#### **RECOMMENDATION**

Staff finds that the proposal would be consistent with the recommendations of the City's Master Plan pertaining to the varied housing types within the Neighborhood Mixed-Use land use category including the varied lot sizes and tenure types.

Staff further finds that the proposal would not pose an undue burden on the availability of on-street parking in the area due to the inclusion of one off-street parking space for each of the dwellings.

Staff further finds that the proposed use would be consistent with the historic pattern of development in the area which is a mix of two-family, single-family attached, and detached dwellings.

Staff finds that the proposal provides opportunities for increasing the City's stock of affordable housing as recommended by the Plan's Objective 14.3 "Create 10,000 new affordable housing units for low- and very low-income households over the next 10 years". As the dwelling unit proposed is projected to be affordable to households that are below 80% of the Area Median Family Income, this application helps to achieve this objective.

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.

## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **Site Description**

The property is located in the Oakwood neighborhood, between R and S Streets. The property is currently a 6,031 square foot (.14 acre) parcel of land.

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

The proposed use of the property is a two, single-family attached dwellings.

### **Master Plan**

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Neighborhood Mixed Use, which is defined as "Existing or new highly walkable urban neighborhoods that are predominantly residential with a small, but critical, percentage of parcels providing retail, office, personal service, and institutional 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 multifamily buildings (10+units), retail/office/personal service, institutional, cultural, and government. (p. 56)

The density of the proposed development, overall, is approximately 14 units per acre.

### **Zoning and Ordinance Conditions**

The current zoning for this property is R-5 Single-Family Residential District. The following zoning regulations are not being met by the proposal, warranting special use permit approval.

**Sec. 30-410.1. Permitted principal uses.**

Any principal use permitted in the R-1 district as set forth in Section 30-402.1 shall be permitted in the R-5 Single-Family Residential District.

*Single-Family attached dwellings are not a permitted use within the R-1 district.*

Additional conditions will be imposed by the amended ordinance, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as two single-family attached dwellings, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- No fewer than two off-street parking spaces shall be provided on the Property, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements, including landscaping, shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.
- The height of the Special Use shall not exceed two stories, 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 up to 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.
- 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 a new street tree along North 34th 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**

Surrounding properties are located in the same R-5 district as the property in question. Single-family detached and attached residential are the dominant land-uses in the vicinity. Some neighborhood commercial and institutional uses are also in close proximity to the property in question.

**Affordability**

Median Family Income Richmond region = \$109,400 per year.\*

Affordability threshold = 30% of household income towards housing costs.

= \$32,820 per year

= \$2,735 per month

Est. price provided by Applicant: \$2,100 per month

Est. monthly payment = 77% of Median Family Income Richmond Region

*\*(U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 2023)*

**Neighborhood Participation**

Staff notified the Church Hill Central Civic Association about this application. Staff has received a comment letter from the Church Hill Central Civic Association, which has been included in the

application file. To this date staff has not received any other letters of support or opposition from nearby residents.

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