



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2026-102: To authorize the special use of the property known as 3415 Crenshaw Mews Alley for the purpose of up to thirteen attached garages, upon certain terms and conditions, and to repeal Ord. No. 2021-325, adopted Dec. 13, 2021, and all amendatory ordinances thereto.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: May 19, 2026

PETITIONER

Mark Baker - Baker Development Resources

LOCATION

3415 Crenshaw Mews Alley

PURPOSE

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to authorize the construction of up to thirteen attached garages within an R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential District. While the use is permitted within the R-6 zone, the garages must be accessory to dwellings within the same block. The applicant wishes to be able to rent the garages to individuals outside of the block. A Special Use Permit is therefore required.

The ordinance also includes the repeal of Ord. No. 2021-325, adopted Dec. 13, 2021, which originally authorized special use of the property for the purpose of a two-family dwelling and two single-family detached dwellings.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed use is aligned with the goals for the Neighborhood Mixed-Use land use category within the master plan. The category states that "...Parking areas should be located to the rear of street-facing buildings." Staff find that off-street parking, on what is currently a vacant lot, to be a reasonable use for the interior of a city block.

Due to all findings summarized above, staff concludes that the proposed ordinance conditions substantially satisfy the safeguards established in the City Charter concerning the granting of Special Use Permits.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The properties are located within the Museum District neighborhood, between Floyd and Ellwood Avenues. The property is currently vacant and totals 9,147 square feet (.21 acres) in area.

Proposed Use

Thirteen attached garages.

Master Plan

The City's 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 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

The current zoning for this parcel is R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential District. The proposed use does not conform to the following sections of the Zoning Ordinance:

Sec. 30-610.3. Alley frontage for accessory buildings, structures or uses.

A permitted accessory building, structure or use may be located on a lot or portion thereof having frontage only on an improved public alley, provided that: (1) Such lot is situated within the same entire block as the permitted principal use.

The proposed garages are intended to be allowed for property outside of same block.

The special use permit would impose conditions on the property, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as up to thirteen attached garages, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- The permitted principal use shall be permitted to be situated outside the same entire block as the Property.
- The height of the Special Use shall not exceed one story, substantially as shown on the Plans.

- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements shall be substantially as shown on the Plans, subject to the applicable regulations of Chapter 30, Article IX, Division 5 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended.
- All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any adjoining public right-of-way.
- 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 substantially as shown on the Plans, including, without limitation, the installation of gravel within the right-of-way of Crenshaw Alley, which improvements may be completed in one or more phases as approved by the Director of Public Works.

Surrounding Area

The area is primarily a range of residential densities with some small, neighborhood commercial uses.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified local residents and the Museum District Association of the proposed Special Use Permit. To this date, no letters of opposition have been received.

Staff Contact: Jonathan Brown, Principal Planner, Land Use Administration, 804-646-5734