



BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2025

On Wednesday, November 5, 2025, the Board of Zoning Appeals held a public hearing in the Fifth Floor Conference Room, 900 East Broad Street, at 1:00 p.m.; display notice having been published in the Richmond Legacy Newspaper on October 22 and 29, 2025 and written notice having been sent to interested parties.

Members Present: Rodney M. Poole, Chair
 Mary J. Hogue, Vice-Chair
 Bryce L. Robertson
 Susan Sadid
 Edward H. Winks, Jr.

Staff Present: Roy W. Benbow, Secretary
 William C. Davidson, Zoning Administrator
 Brian P. Mercer, Planner
 Neil R. Gibson, Senior Assistant City Attorney

The Chairman called the meeting to order and read the Board of Zoning Appeals Introductory Statement, which explains the proceedings of the meeting. The applicant and those appearing in support of an application speak first, followed by those appearing in opposition.

BZA 38-2025

APPLICANT: Trek Properties LLC

PREMISES: 2417 WARWICK AVENUE
 (Tax Parcel Number S007-1628/012)

SUBJECT: A lot split and building permit to construct a new single-family (detached) dwelling.

DISAPPROVED by the Zoning Administrator on September 16, 2025, based on Sections 30-300 & 30-410.4 of the zoning ordinance for the reason that: In an R-5 (Single-Family Residential) District, the lot area and lot width requirements are not met. Lot areas of six thousand square feet (6,000 SF) and lot widths of fifty feet (50') are required. For zoning purposes, one lot having a lot area of 13,700 square feet and a lot width of one hundred feet (100') currently exists. A lot area of 5,905 square feet and a lot width of 43.1' are proposed (Lot 11).

APPLICATION was filed with the Board on August 14, 2025, based on Section 30-1040.3(2) of the City of Richmond Zoning Ordinance.

APPEARANCES:

For Applicant: Alessandro Ragazzi

Against Applicant: None

FINDINGS OF FACT: The Board finds from sworn testimony and exhibits offered in this case, Trek Properties LLC, have requested a special exception to construct a new single-family detached dwelling for property located at 2417 Warwick Ave. Mr. Alessandro Ragazzi, representing the applicant, testified the property is located at the northeast intersection of Warwick Avenue and Columbia Street and contains approximately 13,700 ft.² lot area measuring 100 feet in width. There is currently a detached single-family dwelling located on the eastern portion of the property and the goal is to divide the existing property while retaining the existing dwelling which will meet the requirements of the R-5 zoning district. The proposed lot would measure 43.1 feet in width containing 5905 ft.² of lot area which does not meet the R-5 district regulations. Mr. Ragazzi noted that the request is consistent with the special exception intent of creating infill housing that is compatible with neighborhood. The proposal is to construct a 1 ½ story frame dwelling with three beds and two in one half baths. The exterior will reflect existing dwellings in the area including a gable roof, a full-width front porch and cementitious siding. Mr. Ragazzi explained that the proposal meets the applicable special exception requirements. The property was originally lots 11 and 12 in block B of the original Melrose subdivision. The proposed lots are consistent with the predominant lot area and lot widths in the vicinity. Likewise, the new dwelling will be compatible with dwellings in the vicinity with a range of building materials, architectural styles and story height of one and half and two stories. Mr. Ragazzi explained that letters had been sent by all property owners within a 150-foot radius and the Bellemeade Neighborhood Association and no negative responses had been received.

The Board is satisfied that the property was acquired in good faith and pursuant to Section 30-1040.3 (2) of the zoning ordinance, the subject lots have previously consisted of legal lots of record that were subsequently combined by deed or other means, and the number of lots to be created do not exceed the number of previously existing lots of record, the new lots comply with Section 30-610.1 of the zoning ordinance and off-street parking requirements will be met, each lot created by the division will comply with the requisite side yard requirements, the division will comply with applicable requirements of the subdivision regulations, the areas and widths of the lots created by the division are consistent with the predominant lot areas and lot widths in the immediate vicinity of the property and that dwellings to be constructed on the lots will be compatible with the dwellings existing or to be constructed in the immediate vicinity of the property.

RESOLUTION: NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS that a request for a special exception from the lot area and lot width requirements be granted to Trek Properties LLC for a lot split and building permit to construct a new single-family (detached) dwelling, subject to substantial compliance with the plans submitted to the Board and provision of cementitious siding.

ACTION OF THE BOARD: (5-0)

Vote to Grant Conditionally

affirmative: Poole, Hogue, Robertson, Sadid, Winks

negative: None

BZA 39-2025

APPLICANT: WBB Homes LLC

PREMISES: 2201 VENABLE STREET
(Tax Parcel Number E000-0375/001)

SUBJECT: A building permit to construct a new single-family (detached) dwelling.

DISAPPROVED by the Zoning Administrator on September 12, 2025, based on Sections 30-300, 30-419.6(1) & 30-630.2(b)(2) of the zoning ordinance for the reason that:

In an R-63 (Multifamily Urban Residential) District, the front yard (setback) requirement is not met. A front yard of fifteen feet (15') is required; 1.01' is proposed.

APPLICATION was filed with the Board on September 12, 2025, based on Section 30-1040.3(1) of the City of Richmond Zoning Ordinance.

APPEARANCES:

For Applicant: Mark Baker

Against Applicant: None

FINDINGS OF FACT: The Board finds from sworn testimony and exhibits offered in this case that the applicant, WBB Homes LLC, has requested a special exception to construct a single-family detached dwelling for property located at 2201 Venable Street. Mr. Mark Baker, representing the applicant, testified the goal is to permit construction of a single-family dwelling and the request is consistent with the special exception intent. The parcel is located at the corner of Venable and N. 22nd St. and is vacant. It is a small and irregularly shaped lot with a variable depth from 43.3 feet to 46.93 feet and having 30 feet in width. The lot contains only 1361 ft.² of lot area. Mr. Baker noted that the R-63 zoning requires no front yard but the front yard may not be greater than 15 feet. The R-63 zoning mandates that you must be respectful of adjacent building setbacks. The adjacent dwelling at 2205 Venable St. is setback 15.89 feet which necessitates a 15-foot setback in this case that being the maximum allowable. As applied in this case the requirement is problematic given the urban environment. With the required setback the building envelope is only approximately 23 feet deep and that retains no reasonable rear yard area for use by the occupants. The property was historically developed with a structure built to the corner to overcome that issue which is consistent with the current development pattern. The owner is proposing to replicate the former situation. The dwelling will be three stories in height containing three bedrooms 2 ½ baths comprising approximately 2200 ft.² of area. Mr. Baker indicated that usable front porches are proposed on the first and second floors inset into the footprint. Mr. Baker noted the relief sought is the minimum necessary to accommodate the intended purpose of the dwelling while also ensuring the dwelling will remain in keeping with the character and development pattern of the neighborhood. In terms of the development pattern the request would allow the building to be pulled to the street which is frequently recognized in order to hold the corner. Mr. Baker noted that there are several examples of buildings sharing this configuration in the surrounding area. Mr. Baker also noted that within the last year there have been at least 21 three-story single-family dwellings with compatible design details/character approved within a ½ block distance of the property. Mr. Baker explained that CAR could not arrive at a definitive

conclusion concerning this project and that with the support of the councilperson and the CAR planning staff an appeal was filed to City Council which was approved. Mr. Baker concluded by stating the property is located within the Union Hill Neighborhood Association and the Association along with all property owners within a 150-foot radius were contacted and no objections were noted.

The Board is satisfied that the property was acquired in good faith and pursuant to Section 30-1040.3(1) of the City Code, the intended purpose and use of the proposed dwelling is consistent with the zoning district regulations; departure from the yard requirements is the minimum necessary to accommodate the intended purpose of the dwelling; the dwelling or similar construction serving the same purpose cannot reasonably be located elsewhere on the lot in compliance with the zoning ordinance; and the dwelling will be in keeping with the architectural character of development within the neighborhood.

RESOLUTION: NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS that a request for a special exception from the front yard (setback) requirement be granted to WBB Homes LLC for a building permit to construct a new single-family (detached) dwelling, subject to substantial compliance with the plans submitted to the Board and provision of cementitious siding.

ACTION OF THE BOARD: (5-0)

Vote to Grant Conditionally

affirmative: Poole, Hogue, Robertson, Sadid, Winks

negative: None

BZA 40-2025

APPLICANT: The Garden Club of Virginia

PREMISES: 12 EAST FRANKLIN STREET
(Tax Parcel Number W000-0083/013)

SUBJECT: A sign permit to erect a new freestanding sign.

DISAPPROVED by the Zoning Administrator on September 12, 2025, based on Sections 30-300 & 30-509.2(c) of the zoning ordinance for the reason that: In an RO-3 (Residential-Office) District, the proposed sign is not permitted as the yard

(setback) requirement is not met. A five-foot (5') setback is required from any street line; 6" is proposed off the street line along East Franklin Street.

APPLICATION was filed with the Board on September 12, 2025, based on Section 30-1040.3(15) of the City of Richmond Zoning Ordinance.

APPEARANCES:

For Applicant: Jennifer Lauer

Against Applicant: None

FINDINGS OF FACT: The Board finds from sworn testimony and exhibits offered in this case that the applicant, The Garden Club of Virginia, has requested a special exception to construct a new freestanding sign located at 12 E. Franklin St. Ms. Jennifer Lauer, representing the applicant, testified the building is occupied by the Garden Club of Virginia. Ms. Lauer stated that the current signage is inadequate in terms of visibility being located in the middle of the lot and that they are requesting permission to construct a new sign which would appropriately identify their use. It was noted that the zoning ordinance currently requires a 5-foot setback from Franklin Street and the proposed sign would be located approximately 6 inches from the street line. Ms. Lauer noted that there is no other suitable location. Ms. Lauer stated that the freestanding sign they are requesting represents the minimum necessary departure from the regulations necessary to enable adequate indication of the property. Further, the proposed freestanding sign will not impair public safety, will not interfere with visibility of traffic or traffic signs. Ms. Lauer concluded by stating that the project had been approved by CAR and DHR and there was no objection to the requested special exception.

The Board is satisfied that the property was acquired in good faith and pursuant to §30-1040.3 (15) of the City Code finds that evidence shows that adequate identification is not afforded due to yard regulations applicable to permitted freestanding signs and there is a need for flexibility in the application of yard regulations for freestanding signs to enable adequate identification for the convenience of the public and to promote the economic viability of uses since signs are intended to identify provided the public safety is safeguarded, other permitted signs in the area is not impaired and the character of the freestanding sign is appropriate for the property and the surrounding area..

RESOLUTION: NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS that a request for a special exception from the yard (setback) requirement be granted to The Garden Club of Virginia for a sign permit to erect a new freestanding sign, subject to substantial compliance with the plans submitted to the Board.

ACTION OF THE BOARD: (5-0)

Vote to Grant Conditionally

affirmative: Poole, Hogue, Robertson, Sadid, Winks

negative: None

BZA 41-2025

APPLICANT: Home Slice Properties LLC

PREMISES: 3108 GROVELAND AVENUE
(Tax Parcel Number N000-1054/013)

SUBJECT: A lot split and building permit to construct a new single-family
(detached) dwelling.

DISAPPROVED by the Zoning Administrator on September 18, 2025, based on Sections 30-300 & 30-410.4 of the zoning ordinance for the reason that: In an R-5 (Single-Family Residential) District, the lot area and lot width requirements are not met. Lot areas of six thousand square feet (6,000 SF) and lot widths of fifty feet (50') are required. For zoning purposes, one lot having a lot area of 5,250 square feet and a lot width of seventy-five feet (75') currently exists. A lot area of 3,150 square feet and a lot width of 45 feet is proposed for No. 3106. A lot area of 2,100 square feet and a lot width of 30 feet is proposed for No. 3108.

APPLICATION was filed with the Board on September 18, 2025, based on Section 30-1040.3(2) of the City of Richmond Zoning Ordinance.

APPEARANCES:

For Applicant: Alessandro Ragazzi

Against Applicant: None

FINDINGS OF FACT The Board finds from sworn testimony and exhibits offered in this case that the applicant, Home Slice Properties LLC, has requested a special exception to construct one new single-family detached dwelling for property located at 3108 Groveland Ave., Mr. Alessandro Ragazzi, representing the applicant, testified that the property is located midblock on the western line of Groveland Avenue between Craige and Highland View Avenues. The lot

measures 75 feet in width and 5250 ft.² in area and is currently improved with a single-family detached dwelling located on the northern portion of the property. The goal is to permit the construction of one new single-family detached dwelling while retaining the existing dwelling. The new dwelling would be located on the southern portion of the property on a lot measuring 45 feet in width and including 3150 ft.² of lot area. The existing dwelling is located a lot measuring 30 feet in width and containing 2180 ft.² of lot area. Mr. Ragazzi indicated that the request is consistent with the special exception intent of creating infill housing that is compatible with the neighborhood. Mr. Ragazzi explained that the existing property represents legal lots of record. The applicant is proposing a 1 ½ story frame dwelling including three bedrooms and 2 ½ baths. The exterior has been designed to be compatible with the existing dwellings in the neighborhood including a full width front porch, a front facing gabled roof and cementitious siding. With respect to the special exception tests the lot was multiple legal subdivision lots of record that were combined by deed, the zoning is R-5, street frontage requirements are met as are the side yard requirements and no subdivision is required. The proposed lots are consistent with other lot widths and lot areas in the vicinity and the new dwelling will be compatible with dwellings in the vicinity. In terms of neighborhood outreach letters were sent to all property owners within a 150-foot radius as well as the Highland Park Quality of Life Association and no negative responses were received.

The Board is satisfied that the property was acquired in good faith and pursuant to Section 30-1040.3 (2) of the zoning ordinance, the subject lots have previously consisted of legal lots of record that were subsequently combined by deed or other means, and the number of lots to be created do not exceed the number of previously existing lots of record, the new lots comply with Section 30-610.1 of the zoning ordinance and off-street parking requirements will be met, each lot created by the division will comply with the requisite side yard requirements, the division will comply with applicable requirements of the subdivision regulations, the areas and widths of the lots created by the division are consistent with the predominant lot areas and lot widths in the immediate vicinity of the property and that dwellings to be constructed on the lots will be compatible with the dwellings existing or to be constructed in the immediate vicinity of the property.

RESOLUTION: NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS that a request for a special exception from the lot area and lot width requirements be granted to Home Slice Properties LLC for a lot split and building permit to construct a new single-family (detached) dwelling, subject to substantial compliance with the plans submitted to the Board and provision of cementitious siding.

ACTION OF THE BOARD: (5-0)

Vote to Grant Conditionally

affirmative: Poole, Hogue, Robertson, Sadid, Winks

negative: None

BZA 42-2025

APPLICANT: Pearson Legacy Capital Inc

PREMISES: 3310 SEMMES AVENUE
(Tax Parcel Number S000-1598/003)SUBJECT: A lot split and building permit to construct a new single-family
(detached) dwelling.

DISAPPROVED by the Zoning Administrator on August 15, 2025, based on Sections 30-300 & 30-412.4(1) of the zoning ordinance for the reason that: In an R-6 (Single-Family Attached Residential) District, the lot area and lot width requirements are not met. Lot areas of five thousand square feet (5,000 SF) and lot widths of fifty feet (50') are required. For zoning purposes, one lot having a lot area of 8,453.76 square feet and a lot width of 57.12 currently exists. A lot area of 4,309.76 square feet and lot width of 29.12 feet are proposed for No. 3310. A lot area of 4,144 square feet and lot width of 28 feet are proposed for No. 3312.

APPLICATION was filed with the Board on August 15, 2025, based on Section 30-1040.3(2) of the City of Richmond Zoning Ordinance.

APPEARANCES:

For Applicant: Robert Spain

Against Applicant: None

FINDINGS OF FACT: The Board finds from sworn testimony and exhibits offered in this case that the applicant, Pearson Legacy Capital Inc., has requested a special exception to construct a new single-family detached dwelling for property located at 3310 Semmes Ave. Mr. Robert Spain, representing the applicant, testified that he is the owner of the property. The zoning is R-6 which requires a 5000 square-foot lot area and 50 feet of lot width. Mr. Spain stated that he is requesting development of two lots one of which contains 4309 ft.² and measures 29 feet in width and the other contains 4144 ft.² and measures 28 feet in width. The existing structure located on the western portion of the lot will be retained. Mr. Spain

explained that the proposed lot is consistent with other lots in the neighborhood as is the proposed dwelling. Mr. Spain indicated that the subject lot is a legal lot of record and that all setbacks have been met. Further, the siding will be cementitious and the dwelling will contain three or four bedrooms with the possibility of one of them being an office. Mr. Spain noted the parking will be provided at the rear of the lot. Mr. Spain concluded by stating the notices have been sent to all property owners within a 150-foot radius in addition to the Woodland Heights neighborhood. It was noted that with the exception of the adjoining property owner there was no negative responses received.

The Board is satisfied that the property was acquired in good faith and pursuant to Section 30-1040.3 (2) of the zoning ordinance, the subject lots have previously consisted of legal lots of record that were subsequently combined by deed or other means, and the number of lots to be created do not exceed the number of previously existing lots of record, the new lots comply with Section 30-610.1 of the zoning ordinance and off-street parking requirements will be met, each lot created by the division will comply with the requisite side yard requirements, the division will comply with applicable requirements of the subdivision regulations, the areas and widths of the lots created by the division are consistent with the predominant lot areas and lot widths in the immediate vicinity of the property and that dwellings to be constructed on the lots will be compatible with the dwellings existing or to be constructed in the immediate vicinity of the property.

RESOLUTION: NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS that a request for a special exception from the lot area and lot width requirements be granted to Pearson Legacy Capital Inc for a lot split and building permit to construct a new single-family (detached) dwelling, subject to substantial compliance with the plans submitted to the Board and provision of cementitious siding.

ACTION OF THE BOARD: (5-0)

Vote to Grant Conditionally
affirmative:

Poole, Hogue, Robertson, Sadid, Winks

negative:

None

Upon motion made by Mr. Winks and seconded by Ms. Hogue, Members voted (4-0) to adopt the Board's October meeting minutes.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 p.m.



Secretary



Chairman