



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2026-027: To authorize the special use of the properties known as 2708 Nine Mile Road, 2718 Nine Mile Road, and 2720 Nine Mile Road for the purpose of a mixed-use building, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: February 3, 2026

PETITIONER

Lory Markham – Markham Planning

LOCATION

2708 Nine Mile Road, 2718 Nine Mile Road, and 2720 Nine Mile Road

PURPOSE

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to authorize a mixed-use building within a B-2 Community Business zoning district. While mixed-use buildings are permitted uses in the B-2 zoning district, the request does not meet the requirements for front yard depth and building height. A Special Use Permit is therefore required.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposed use aligns with the Master Plan recommendations for Community Mixed Use land uses including the recommended height and primary uses.

Staff also finds that new residents will be within walking distance to goods, services, and institutions. The property is located near the 25th Street/Nine Mile Neighborhood Node where the addition of new housing units, at the scale proposed, will assist with the continuation and growth of existing goods and services in and around the Fairmount Avenue, North 25th Street, and Nine Mile Road intersection.

Staff finds that the proposed is located on a designated Major Mixed-Use Street. The site design incorporates many of the streetscape, pedestrian, and connectivity recommendations, found within the Major Mixed-Use Street typology such as mixed-uses, existing sidewalks with street trees, proper building, and entrance orientation, walking distance to existing transit, and on-street parking.

Staff finds that the proposed supports Objective 6.1 which aims to "Increase the number of residents and jobs at Nodes, Priority Neighborhoods, and along enhanced transit corridors in a land development pattern that prioritizes multi-modal transportation options." The project is located within walking distance to the Greater Richmond Transit Company's Blue Line Route 12 Church Hill providing access through Church Hill and to the GRTC Transfer Station on 9th and East Leigh Streets.

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 properties are located at 2708, 2718, and 2720 Nine Mile Road in the Woodville neighborhood. The properties total 39,170 square feet in area (0.9 acre) and are vacant.

Proposed Use of the Property

Two multifamily dwellings. According to the proposed plans, the density of the parcel is 30 units upon .9 acres, or 33 units per acre.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Community Mixed Use, which is defined as which is defined as clusters "... of medium-density, walkable commercial and residential uses that provide neighborhood services to nearby residential communities and sometimes feature regional attractions."

Development Style: The building size, density, and zoning districts for these areas may vary significantly depending on historical densities and neighborhood characteristics. Future development should generally complement existing context. Uses may be mixed horizontally in several buildings on a block or vertically within the same building. 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.

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 streets. Parking areas are located within the structure and to the rear of buildings and require screening; shared parking requirements are encouraged.

Intensity: Buildings generally ranging from two to six stories, based on street widths, and depending on the historic context and stepping down in height adjacent to residential areas, as necessary. New buildings that are taller than historical buildings should step back from the build-to line after matching the height of the predominant cornice line of the block.

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

Secondary Uses: Single-family houses, institutional, and government.

Major Mixed-Use Streets

- 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 B-2 Community Business District. The proposed does not meet the requirements of the following sections of the Zoning Ordinance:

Sec. 30-436.3(1) – Front yard.

There shall be a front yard with a depth of not less than 25 feet.

The proposed front yard is 5 feet.

30-436.5 - Height.

No building or structure in the B-2 Community Business District shall exceed 35 feet in height.

The proposed height is approximately 51 feet.

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

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as a mixed-use building, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- The height of the Special Use shall not exceed four stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements, including landscaping, shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.
- Signs on the Property shall be limited to signs permitted in the B-2 Community Business District, pursuant to section 30-514 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 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, which improvements may be completed in one or more phases as approved by the Director of Public Works.

Surrounding Area

Adjacent and nearby properties are located within a combination of B-2 Community Business along Nine Mile Road with R-5 Single-Family and R-6 Single-Family Attached zones to the north and south respectively. The area is a mixture of small commercial uses, single and multi-family residential, and some institutional uses present in the vicinity.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified the Church Hill Central Civic Association of the proposed Special Use Permit. To this date, staff has not received any letters of support nor opposition for this application from nearby residents.

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