



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2019-140 - To authorize the special use of the property known as 319½ South Pine Street for the purpose of a dwelling unit within an accessory building, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: June 17, 2019

PETITIONER

Allen Townsend

LOCATION

319 ½ South Pine Street

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 319½ South Pine Street for the purpose of a dwelling unit within an accessory building, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is proposing to convert an existing two-story, 1,490 SF, detached garage into an accessory dwelling unit with studio space. The property is currently located in the R-7 Single- and Two-Family Urban Residential District. The existing building does not meet R-7 standards for accessory dwelling units. A special use permit has therefore been requested by the applicant.

Staff finds that the proposed special use would be consistent with the Downtown General Urban Area of the Downtown Plan and would not adversely affect the character of the neighborhood. Also, dwelling units within accessory buildings can be permitted by the underlying zoning of the property if specific requirements are met.

Staff finds that the proposed use will increase the availability of housing options within the City and, based upon an increase of one unit, would not pose an undue burden on the availability of on-street parking in the area.

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 subject property consists of a 4,350 SF (.10 acre) parcel of land improved with a 1,328 SF single-family dwelling. It is located on South Pine Street, between Idlewood Avenue and Albemarle Street, in the Oregon Hill neighborhood of the Near West Planning District. The detached garage, constructed per tax assessment records in 2006, is located to the rear of the property along a public alley.

Proposed Use of the Property

The applicant is proposing to use the detached garage as studio space on the first floor and a dwelling unit on the second floor.

Master Plan Recommendations

The City of Richmond's current Downtown Plan designates a future land use category for the subject property as "Downtown General Urban Area". The General Urban Area is characterized by medium-density, mixed-use development, distributed along medium-sized blocks. Old Manchester is an example of the general urban condition in Richmond. This district is characterized by single-family homes, sideyard houses, rowhouses, and small multifamily buildings, such as duplexes, triplexes, and quads. These buildings have variable setbacks and landscaping, and a limited mix of commercial and civic uses. (City of Richmond, Downtown Plan)

No residential density is specified for this land use category. The density of the parcel if developed as proposed would be approximately 20 units per acre.

The Downtown Plan further states "Oregon Hill is a unique residential neighborhood to the south of the Monroe Park Campus. It is characterized by historic wood-frame, single-family homes and is surrounded on three sides by parks. The neighborhood features dramatic views to the James River. The neighborhood greatly contributes to the character of Downtown and local preservation tools should be strongly encouraged the ensure preservation" (p. 4.15).

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for the property is R-7, Single- and Two-Family Urban Residential. One dwelling unit is allowed in an accessory building in the R-7 District. However, the detached garage was constructed after the date of adoption of the district regulations. Also, parking requirements would not be met and the required lot area would not be met. The special use permit is therefore required.

If approved, the special use permit would impose development conditions on the property, including:

3(a) The Special Use of the Property shall be as no more than one dwelling unit within an existing accessory building, substantially as shown on the Plans.

(b) No off-street parking shall be required for the Special Use.

(c) Outdoor lighting shall be located, directed, or shielded so as not to shine directly on adjoining properties.

(d) The height of the Special Use shall not exceed two stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.

(e) All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.

(f) Elevations and building materials for the Special Use shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.

4(c) 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.

Surrounding Area

Adjacent properties on the 300 Block of Pine Street are of similarly-sized houses, some with rear garages and accessory dwellings. Single-family and multi-family dwellings predominate the area, with some neighborhood commercial land uses and open space present as well. All surrounding properties are within the same R-7 Single- and Two-Family Urban Residential District as the subject property.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff has not received any letters of support or opposition to this application.

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