



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2023-136: To authorize the special use of the property known as 1700 North 21st Street for the purpose of a single-family detached dwelling and two single-family attached dwellings, with off-street parking, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: May 15, 2023

PETITIONER

Mark Baker – Baker Development Resources

LOCATION

1700 N 21st Street

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 1700 North 21st Street for the purpose of a single-family detached dwelling and two single-family attached dwellings, with off-street parking, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit for the purpose of one single-family detached dwelling, and two single-family attached dwellings, with off-street parking, which use, among other things, is not currently allowed by Sections 30-410.4, 30-410.5(1), 30-410.6, and 30-710.1(1) concerning lot area and width, front yards, lot coverage, and off-street parking requirements, respectively, of the Code of the City of Richmond. A Special Use Permit is therefore required.

Staff finds that the proposal would be consistent with the recommendations of the City's Master Plan pertaining to the development style and features within the Neighborhood Mixed-Use land use category, including the development style, intensity, building height, and primary uses. The proposed is consistent with the pattern of development in the area which contains several single-family attached, two-family, and small-scale, multi-family developments nearby.

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 Brauers neighborhood on the corner of Brauers Lane and North 21st Street. The property is currently improved with a 1,475 square foot residential building, constructed in 1949, situated on a 10,778 square foot (.25 acre) parcel of land.

Proposed Use of the Property

The applicant is proposing a Special Use Permit to authorize an existing single-family detached dwelling, and two, newly constructed, 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 are 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 (see Street Typologies Map). 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.

The density of the proposed development, overall, is approximately 12 units per acre.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for the subject parcel is R-5 Single-Family Residential Zoning District. The following sections of within the City's current zoning ordinance are not met by the application.

Sec. 30-410.4 - Lot area. Single-family dwellings require a minimum of 6,000 sq. ft.
The proposed lot areas are 5,767, 2,515, and 2,352 sq. ft.

Sec. 30-410.4 – Lot width. Single-family dwellings require a minimum lot width of 50 ft.
The proposed lot widths for the new dwellings are 26 ft.

Sec. 30-410.5(1) - Front yards. Single-family dwellings require a 25 ft. front-yard setback.
The proposed front yards are 11.8 ft. and 10 ft.

Sec. 30-410.6 - Lot coverage. The maximum lot coverage within the R-5 zone is 35% of the lot area.
The proposed lot coverage for the new dwellings is 36%.

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

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as a single-family detached dwelling and two single-family attached dwellings, with off-street parking, 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.
- No less than two off-street parking spaces shall be provided on the Property, 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 three residential lots, substantially as shown on the Plans, shall be accomplished by obtaining the necessary approvals from the City and recording the appropriate plats 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, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- The Owner shall make improvements within the right-of-way, including the installation of a new sidewalk and two street trees, substantially as shown on the Plans.

Surrounding Area

Nearby properties are primarily zoned R-5 Single-Family Residential. However, the blocks directly to the south and southwest of the property is zoned R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential. A mix of single-, and two-family residential, and institutional uses are also present in the vicinity.

Affordability

The median household income for the Richmond region is currently \$71,223 per year.* The affordability threshold is 30% of household income towards housing costs, which equates to \$21,367 per year, or \$1,781 per month, or less, to avoid a housing cost burden. Based upon the median household income for the Richmond region, and the estimated pricing provided by the applicant, the proposed fee simple units are projected to be affordable to households making between 108% of the Area Median Income (AMI) affordability threshold**

Based upon census tract 204, for which 1700 North 21st Street is located, these units are projected to be approximately 300% over the affordability threshold.***

*(U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates, Regional)

** (Virginia Housing, 2023., based upon 30-year term, 20% down payment, at 7% interest)

*** (U.S. Census Bureau, 2021 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, Census Tract 209)

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents, property owners and the Unity Civic League Civic Association of the proposed Special Use Permit. To this date, staff has not received any correspondence regarding the application.

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