



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2025-253: To amend and reordain Ord. No. 2018-012, adopted Feb. 12, 2018, as previously amended by Ord. No. 2019-206, adopted Sept. 9, 2019, which authorized the special use of the property known as 10 West Leigh Street for the purpose of permitting a multifamily dwelling with up to 14 dwelling units, modified the parking requirements for 10 West Leigh Street, and excepted the properties known as 12 West Leigh Street, and 14 ½ West Leigh Street from certain lot area and width and open space requirements, upon certain terms and conditions, to eliminate the parking requirements. (2nd District)

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: December 2, 2025

PETITIONER

Elizabeth Drucker

LOCATION

10, 12 and 14½ West Leigh Street

PURPOSE

The applicant is requesting to amend ordinance No. 2019-206 authorizing the special use of 10 W. Leigh Street to remove the requirement for off-street parking. This change will be consistent with the underlying zoning, which does not require off-street parking.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the subject property is designated as Neighborhood Mixed-Use on the Future Land Use Map in the Richmond 300 Master Plan. Small multi-family buildings are a primary use. The zoning ordinance does not require off-street parking for residential uses.

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 3,720 square foot property is in the Jackson Ward neighborhood on the north side of West Leigh Street, midblock between Chamberlayne and St. James Street.

Proposed Use of the Property

Multi-family dwelling with no off-street parking.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Neighborhood Mixed-Use described 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.

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 property is R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential District. Off-street parking is no longer required in this zoning district. The proposal is to amend the existing Ordinance authorizing special use of the properties to be consistent with the underlying zoning.

If approved, this special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- The Special Use of 10 West Leigh Street shall be a multifamily dwelling with up to 14 dwelling units, 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.

- All building materials and elevations shall be substantially as shown on the Plans, unless otherwise approved by the Commission of Architectural Review prior to the issuance of a building permit for 10 West Leigh Street.

Surrounding Area

The surrounding area is primarily single-family attached and multifamily residential.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified the Historic Jackson Ward Association as well as area residents and property owners. A sign was posted on the property. Staff has received no communication to date regarding the proposal.

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