



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review ***Staff Report***

Ord. No. 2025-149 To authorize the special use of the property known as 1720 North 29th Street for the purpose of one two-family detached dwelling and one dwelling unit within an accessory structure, upon certain terms and conditions. (7th District)

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: July 15, 2025

PETITIONER

William Gillette – Baker Development Resources

LOCATION

1720 North 29th Street

PURPOSE

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to authorize a two-family detached dwelling and one dwelling unit within an accessory structure in a R-5 Single-Family Residential District. The two-family use is not permitted in the district. As a result, a Special Use Permit is necessary to proceed with this request.

RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the requested use is consistent with the City's Master Plan future land use designation of Neighborhood Mixed-Use, where two-family dwellings and accessory dwelling units are identified as primary uses.

Staff finds that the proposal includes one front door with a vestibule. This design feature gives the structure the appearance of a single-family detached dwelling and further ensures compatibility with the existing context along North 29th Street.

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 property is located in the Woodville neighborhood on North 29th Street between Y Street and Route 33. The property is currently a 3,900 square foot (0.08 acre) parcel of land.

Proposed Use of the Property

Two-family detached dwelling and an ADU.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the subject area as Neighborhood Mixed-Use which is 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. 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.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for this property is R-5 Residential District. The following features of the proposed development do not comply with the current zoning regulations:

Sec. 30-410.1 – Permitted principal uses

-Two-family dwellings are not permitted.

The proposal includes a two-family dwelling.

This special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as one two-family detached dwelling and one dwelling unit within an accessory structure, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- No less than one off-street parking space shall be required for the Special Use, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- The height of the Special Use shall not exceed two stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.

- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements shall be 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

Surrounding Area

The surrounding land uses are a mix of residential and commercial.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents and property owners. Staff has received no letters to date regarding the proposal.

Staff Contact: Shaianna Trump, Planner Associate, Land Use Administration, 804-646-7319