



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2021-328: To authorize the special use of the property known as 939 Myers Street for the purpose of an outdoor event venue and farmer's market, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: December 6, 2021

PETITIONER

Rob Long, River City Roll

LOCATION

939 Myers Street

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 939 Myers Street for the purpose of an outdoor event venue and farmer's market, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is requesting to use a parking area that is accessory to a bowling alley as an outdoor event venue and farmer's market. The "farmer's market" use is considered a "flea market" per the definition in the zoning ordinance, which is not a use permitted in the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District. Additionally, entertainment uses are only permitted within fully enclosed buildings. A special use permit is therefore required.

Staff finds that the outdoor event venue and farmer's market are uses consistent with the recommendations of Richmond 300. The property has a land use designation of Destination Mixed-Use and is also located within the "Industrial Mixed-Use District" of the Greater Scott's Additional Priority Growth Node. Destination Mixed-Use is described as "key gateways featuring prominent destinations, such as retail, sports venues, and large employers, as well as housing and open space. Located at the convergence of several modes of transportation, including Pulse BRT or other planned transit improvements." The "Industrial Mixed-Use District" is described as a "continued evolution of Scott's Addition combining entertainment, residential, office and light industrial uses."

The applicant intends to have up to twelve outdoor events per year and limit the events to Saturdays ending by 10:00 PM. The events will be charity-partnered with organizations such as the Scott's Addition Boulevard Association's Livability Committee, Sparc, the Alzheimer's Association, Richmond City Schools, VA Pride, and Richmond Animal Care and Control Foundation. Events will include live music and will feature vendors that either promote an organization or sell locally made products. Food and beverage services are provided by River City Roll, which operates a full restaurant and bar inside the building. Secure fencing will be provided around the event space, and each event will be provided with private trash service and sanitation facilities.

There is no parking requirement in the underlying TOD-1 Zoning District. The venue is located within walking distance of Pulse and two other GRTC bus routes. There are also many housing units either built, under construction, or planned in the vicinity of the venue.

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.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject property consists of a single parcel of land that has a lot area of 76,665 square feet (1.76 acres) and is improved with a 22,917 square foot building that is used as a bowling alley, restaurant, and nightclub. A conditional use permit was adopted in July 2018 to allow for a nightclub use of the property, as defined in the zoning ordinance.

Proposed Use of the Property

The proposed Special Use Permit would allow for the use of the parking area accessory to a bowling alley as an outside events venue and farmer's market.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the property as Destination Mixed-Use. This land use category is described as key gateways featuring prominent destinations, such as retail, sports venues, and large employers, as well as housing and open space. Located at the convergence of several modes of transportation, including Pulse BRT or other planned transit improvements.

Development Style: Higher-density, transit-oriented development encouraged on vacant or underutilized sites. New development should be urban in form, may be or larger scale than existing context, and, where relevant, should pay special attention to the historic character of the existing context. Development should enhance the public realm and create a sense of place. Many buildings are vertically mixed-use. Developments continue or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity.

Mobility: Bicycle, pedestrian, 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. Parking requirements are reduced to allow more market-based parking strategies, including shared parking.

Intensity: Buildings typically a minimum height of five stories.

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

The property is also located adjacent to the Greater Scott's Addition Priority Growth Node. On the Greater Scott's Addition Framework Plan, this parcel is shown as being located within an "Industrial Mixed Use District," which is envisioned as a continuation of Scott's Addition combining entertainment, residential, office and light industrial uses.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The subject property is located within the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District. The proposed "farmer's market" use meets the definition of a flea market in the zoning ordinance, a use which is not permitted in the TOD-1 District. Additionally, entertainment uses are only permitted when located within completely enclosed buildings.

If adopted the ordinance would impose the following conditions on the property:

- (a) The Special Use of the Property shall be as an outdoor event venue and farmer's market, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- (b) No more than 12 outdoor events per year shall be permitted.
- (c) The Special Use shall be limited to Saturdays only and shall end by no later than 10:00 p.m.
- (d) Secure fencing shall be provided for the Special Use.
- (e) No parking shall be required for the Special Use.
- (f) Each event associated with the Special Use shall be provided with private trash service and sanitation facilities.

Surrounding Area

A variety of commercial uses and multi-family uses are located within the vicinity of the property. The subject property and all surrounding properties are located within the TOD-1 Transit-Oriented Nodal District.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents and property owners, as well as the Scott's Addition Boulevard Association (SABA). Staff has received a letter of support from SABA and a letter of opposition from a resident who lives near the property.

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