



# CITY OF RICHMOND

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

**Ord. No. 2022-043:** To authorize the special use of the property known as 617 China Street for the purpose of up to two single-family attached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions.

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**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Land Use Administration  
**Date:** March 7, 2022

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### **PETITIONER**

Canvas Development LLC represented by Baker Development Resources

### **LOCATION**

617 China Street

### **PURPOSE**

To authorize the special use of the property known as 617 China Street for the purpose of up to two single-family attached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions.

### **SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

The subject property is located in the R-7 Single and Two-Family Urban Residential zoning district and single-family attached dwellings are permitted uses in this district. The zoning ordinance requires one parking space per dwelling unit. As the property is not served by an alley the applicant requests a waiver from the parking requirement. A special use permit is necessary for this request.

Staff finds that the proposed development would be consistent with the recommendations of the Richmond 300 master plan. The recommended land use is Neighborhood Mixed-Use where the proposed single-family attached dwellings are a primary use.

Staff finds that, in order to develop the property in a manner consistent with the historic pattern of development in the neighborhood, on-site parking cannot be provided due to the lack of alley access. Transit stops on Belvidere Street are located in close proximity to the subject property.

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 amendment 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.

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### **FINDINGS OF FACT**

#### **Site Description**

The subject property is located on the southern side of China Street near its terminus at South

Belvedere Street. The property is 40 feet wide and 60 feet in depth for a total of 2,700 square feet of area. The lots on the street are generally 20 to 25 feet in width with a depth of 60 feet. The subdivision of the subject property would create lots consistent with the neighborhood as well as meeting the lot feature requirements of the R-7 Single and Two-Family Urban Residential zoning district. The area is not served by alley access and parking spaces are located on the street in front of the property.

### **Proposed Use of the Property**

Two single-family attached dwellings without on-street parking.

### **Master Plan**

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the property for Neighborhood Mixed-Use which consists 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. f.

**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 subject property is located within the R-7 Single and Two-Family Urban Residential zoning district. Single-family attached dwellings are permitted uses in this district and shall provide no fewer than one off-street parking space per dwelling unit. The request for special use calls for the elimination of this parking request. Staff recommends approval of this request with the following conditions:

- (a) The Special Use of the Property shall be as up to two single-family attached dwellings, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- (b) No off-street parking spaces shall be required for the Special Use.
- (c) All building materials, elevations, and site improvements, including landscaping, shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.
- (d) All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.
- (e) Prior to the issuance of any certificate of occupancy for the Special Use, the division of the Property into two residential lots, substantially as shown on the Plans, shall be accomplished by obtaining the necessary approvals from the City and recording the appropriate plats and deeds among the land records of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of the City of Richmond.

### **Surrounding Area**

Properties in the area generally contain single-family attached and detached dwellings, with some commercial, institutional, and multifamily uses present as well.

### **Neighborhood Participation**

Staff notified area residents and property owners and the Oregon Hill Neighborhood Associations. No letters of opposition or support have been received.

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