



CITY OF RICHMOND

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

Ord. No. 2022-102: To authorize the special use of the property known as 908 West 31st Street for the purpose of two single-family detached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: April 18, 2022

PETITIONER

Mel G. Porter, Jr. Represented by Baker Development

LOCATION

908 West 31st Street

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 908 West 31st Street for the purpose of two single-family detached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The subject property is located in the R-5 Single-Family Residential District. Single-family detached dwellings are permitted uses on lots that are a minimum of 50 feet wide and contain 6,000 square feet. The proposed development will result in two lots that are 31 feet wide and 4,588 square feet in area. A special use permit is therefore required.

The subject property is located within the Woodland Heights Subdivision which was platted with lot widths in 31 foot increments. Over time, many of these lots were combined to create larger lots. Regardless of lot size, the properties were improved with single-family dwellings. While the proposed lot subdivision will result in lots that do not meet the width and area requirements of the R-5 Single-Family District, all other lot feature requirements are met including the provision of off-street parking.

Staff finds the proposed development is generally consistent with the land use recommendations of the Master Plan and with the historic pattern of development in the area.

Staff finds that the proposed development would not pose an undue burden on the availability of on-street parking in the area due to the provision of on-site parking spaces.

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 is located midblock on the western side of West 30th Street between Ferncliff Road and Chesterfield Street. A public alley runs behind the property, extending the full length of the block.

Proposed Use of the Property

The proposed Special Use Permit would allow two single-family detached dwellings on lots that would be 31 feet wide and approximately 4,588 square feet in area.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the property as Residential. This land use category is described as a neighborhood consisting primarily of single-family houses on large- or medium-sized lots more homogeneous in nature.

Development Style: Houses on medium-sized and large-sized lots in a largely auto-dependent environment. Homes are setback from the street. Future developments continue and/or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity. Future single-family housing, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, and small multi-family residential buildings are built to a scale and design that is consistent with existing buildings.

Mobility: Bicycle and pedestrian access are prioritized and accommodated. Low residential density means that it is not possible to provide frequent transit within these areas; however, frequent transit may be found at the edges of these areas within more intense future land use designations. Many homes have driveways and/or garages, which are located off an alley behind the home if an alley is present.

Intensity: Buildings are generally one to three stories. Lot sizes generally range up to 5,000 to 20,000+ sq. ft. Residential density of 2 to 10 housing units per acre.

Primary Uses: Single-family houses, accessory dwelling units, and open space.

Secondary Uses: Duplexes and small multi-family buildings (typically 3-10 units), institutional, and cultural. Secondary uses may be found along major streets (see Street Typologies Map).

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The subject property is situated in an R-5 Single-Family Residential District. The proposed use for the property calls for two single-family detached dwellings, which use, among other things, is not currently allowed by section 30-410.4, concerning lot area and width, of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended.

If adopted, the Special Use Permit would impose conditions on the property, including:

- (a) The Special Use of the Property shall be as two single-family detached dwellings, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- (b) No less than one off-street parking space per dwelling unit shall be provided for the Special Use. Each such parking space shall be accessible from the rear alley.
- (c) All building materials and elevations shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.
- (d) The height of the Special Use shall not exceed three stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- (e) All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.
- (f) Prior to the issuance of any certificate of occupancy for the Special Use, the establishment of 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

Affordability

The median household income for the Richmond region is currently \$68,529 per year. The affordability threshold is 30% of household income towards housing costs, which equates to \$20,559 per year, or \$1,713 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 fee simple units are projected to be affordable to households earning the Area Median Income (AMI)**

**(U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)*

*** (Based upon VHDA fixed-rate, 30-year mortgage, with 20% down and 4% interest)*

Surrounding Area

All properties surrounding the subject property are located within the same R-5 Single-Family Zoning District. Within the area of the subject property, properties are developed primarily with single-family detached dwellings.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents and property owners, as well as the Woodland Heights Civic Association. Staff has received a letter of support the civic association.

Staff Contact: David Watson, Senior Planner, Land Use Administration, 804-646-1036