



CITY OF RICHMOND

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

Ord. No. 2022-266: To authorize the special use of the property known as 4000 Government Road for the purpose of a mixed-use building containing (i) up to 31 dwelling units and (ii) commercial uses on the ground floor, upon certain terms and conditions.

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

PETITIONER

3012 Park Ave LLC, represented by Baker Development Resources

LOCATION

4000 Government Road

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 4000 Government Road for the purpose of a mixed-use building containing (i) up to 31 dwelling units and (ii) commercial uses on the ground floor, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The property is located in the B-3 General Business District and the properties adjacent to the north are located in the R-5 Single-family Residential District. The proposed multifamily dwellings are a permitted use in the B-3 General Business District but must meet certain setback requirements when adjacent to residentially zoned properties. The special use permit is requested in order to waive the required front yard setback along the western property line as required when abutting properties in the R-5 Single-family Residential District.

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 multi-family dwellings are a secondary use.

Staff further finds that the proposed use would result in a development that is not of greater density than that which is allowed by the underlying zoning.

Staff finds the proposed special use would not pose an undue burden on the availability of on-street parking in the area due to the provision of adequate off-street parking.

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 special 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 .48 acre vacant subject property is located on the corner of Government Road and Glenwood Avenue with an alley along the northern property line. Across this alley are two single-family homes located in the R-5 Single-Family Residential District.

Proposed Use of the Property

Mixed use multi-family housing containing 31 dwelling units and 1,688 square feet of ground floor commercial space.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the property for Neighborhood Mixed-Use which consists of 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. 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 property is located in the B-3 General Business Zoning District where the proposed 31 unit mixed use multi-family development is a permitted use. The special use is requested in order to waive the front yard setback requirement required because the adjacent property across the alley is in a residential district.

Staff recommends the approval of the requested special use permit with the following conditions:

- (a) The Special Use of the Property shall be as a mixed-use building containing (i) up to 31 dwelling units and (ii) commercial uses on the ground floor, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- (b) No fewer than 31 off-street parking spaces shall be provided for the Special Use, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- (c) No fewer than 12 bicycle parking spaces shall be provided on the Property.
- (d) The height of the Special Use shall not exceed three stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- (e) All building materials, elevations, and site improvement, including landscaping, shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.
- (f) 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

Single-family homes are located to the north. A convenience store is located on adjacent property to the east. Across Glenwood Avenue to the west is vacant property located in the R-63 Multi-family Urban Residential District. Across Government Road to the south is vacant land and a Norfolk Southern Railroad corridor.

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.* The applicant intends to build 18 one-bedroom and 13 two bedroom market rate units. The one-room units will rent for approximately \$1,450 and the two-room units will rent for \$1,700 - \$1,800.

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

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents and property owners and the Church Hill Central Civic Association. The association and an adjacent property owner expressed concerns with the project.

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