



CITY OF RICHMOND

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

Ord. No. 2023-204: To authorize the special use of the properties known as 2 Manchester Road and 4 Manchester Road for the purpose of a mixed-use development, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: July 17, 2023

PETITIONER

Preston Lloyd, Williams Mullen
Representative of the Property Owner

LOCATION

2 and 4 Manchester Road

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the properties known as 2 Manchester Road and 4 Manchester Road for the purpose of a mixed-use development, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The subject property is located in the B-4 Central Business zoning district. This district creates an inclined plane of one foot horizontal for each four feet vertical from the center line of an adjacent street for the purpose of limiting the height of buildings. This zone also states that circulation relating to vehicle use cannot be located between a proposed building and the street. The Application proposes to encroach upon the inclined plane and circulation location requirements; therefore, a Special Use Permit is required.

Staff finds that the proposal would be generally consistent with nearby recent development, typical development in the B-4 Zoning District, and the "Destination Mixed Use" Future Land Use designation in the Richmond 300 Master Plan in height, density, use, and site coverage.

Staff finds that the proposed development would not pose an undue burden on the availability of on-street parking in the area. The Application includes a proposal for structured parking and will include creating new street side 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 property is located in the Old Town Manchester neighborhood at 2 and 4 Manchester Road, between Hull Street and Maury Street. The property is currently 94,176.4 sq. ft. (2.16 acre) in size, is currently used for industrial purposes.

Proposed Use of the Property

The proposed use for the property includes multi-family, office, and commercial uses, with structured parking and enhanced streetscape.

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to allow a proposed building that does not meet inclined plane setback requirements and includes vehicle circulation between the building and street within the B-4 Central Business District, which is not permitted. Therefore, a Special Use Permit is requested to alter the inclined plane and vehicle circulation requirements. A Plan of Development Application will review the final elements of the project, including site circulation, pedestrian infrastructure, and streetscape design.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Destination Mixed-Use. This designation is defined as a "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 of 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.

Ground Floor: Ground floor uses engage with, and enliven, the street. Monolithic walls are discouraged, while windows, doors, storefronts, and other features that allow transparency and interaction between building and street are encouraged. Active commercial ground floor uses are required on street-oriented commercial frontages.

Mobility: Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated. Bike parking is provided. Driveway entrances are required to be off alleys whenever possible; new driveways are prohibited on priority and principal street frontages. Surface parking is prohibited as a principal use; when surface parking is provided as an accessory use, it should be located to the rear of buildings and screened.

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.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

Zoning Administration reviewed this request and recommended approval with the following comments:

There is no maximum height limit in the B-4 Central Business District, provided that no portion of a building shall penetrate an inclined plane originating at the centerline of each abutting street. According to plans submitted, the proposed building will penetrate the inclined plane from Manchester Road.

Additionally, areas devoted to the parking or circulation of vehicles shall not be located between the main building on a lot and the street line. According to plans submitted, parking along the northern right of way line of Manchester Road will be between the main building and the street line.

Therefore, a SUP is required.

Staff recommends approval of this request with the following conditions:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as a mixed-use development, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- Approval of a plan of development for the Special Use in accordance with Chapter 30, Article X, Division 4 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended, shall be a condition precedent to the issuance of any building permit for the Special Use, except that review by the Urban Design Committee of pedestrian plazas or outdoor dining areas located within front yards pursuant to section 30-440.3(1)(d) of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended, shall not be required prior to approval of the plan of development.

Surrounding Area

The property is located in the B-4 - Business (Central Business) zone. The majority of adjacent properties are located within the RF-1 Riverfront District, with one adjacent property located within the same B-4 District. Surrounding land uses include multi-family and industrial. The property is located just south of the Manchester Floodwall.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents and property owners and the Manchester Alliance Civic Association. The Manchester Alliance has provided a letter of support for this project.

Staff Contact: Ray Roakes, Planner, Land Use Administration, 804-646-5467