



## CITY OF RICHMOND

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

**Ord. No. 2023-207:** To authorize the special use of the properties known as 219 South Stafford Avenue and 2329 Parkwood Avenue for the purpose of up to 26 single-family attached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions.

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

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#### **PETITIONER**

Madi Ford, Audeo Partners, LLC

#### **LOCATION**

219 South Stafford Avenue and 2329 Parkwood Avenue

#### **PURPOSE**

To authorize the special use of the properties known as 219 South Stafford Avenue and 2329 Parkwood Avenue for the purpose of up to twenty-six (26) single-family attached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions.

#### **SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit which would allow for the construction of up to twenty-six (26) single family attached dwellings within an R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential District. While single family attached dwellings are a permitted use within the R-63, the proposed development does not meet the feature requirements for lot area and width, side yards, rear yards, lot coverage, and frontage for attached dwellings. A Special Use Permit is therefore required.

Staff finds that the proposal is consistent with the recommendations of the City's Master Plan pertaining to the varied housing types within the Neighborhood Mixed-Use land use category, including the development style, intensity, mobility features, and primary uses. The proposed units are of housing types with similar massing of neighboring streets, and would create a unified streetwall along Stafford Avenue where one has not previously existed.

The subject properties are also located within a micro-node and are within one block of two Major Mixed-Use Streets; both of which call for higher densities and opportunities for walkability.

Staff also finds that the proposal would not pose an undue burden on the availability of on-street parking in the area due to the inclusion of twenty-nine (29) off-street parking spaces. The site layout proposes parking behind buildings via new and existing alleyways.

Staff further finds that the proposed use would be consistent with the historic pattern of development in the immediate area, which is primarily single-family attached dwellings.

Staff finds that the proposed development supports several objectives which emphasizes the property's high walkability score. Objective 15.1a which states "Increase the number of Richmonders living in a development pattern that encourages density and reduces dependency

on single-occupancy vehicles” (p. 159) The proposed units are located within one block of the commercial uses along West Cary Street and two blocks from those along West Main Street. These streets include many destinations for residents and their daily needs within walking distance. (p. 24) The location is also within 1 block from an existing GRTC transit route and a designated Enhanced Transit Route which is defined as a route “...to accommodate a higher number of future riders (residents, visitors, and employees) within close proximity of the Enhanced Transit Route. (p. 76)

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 request.

## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **Site Description**

The properties located in the Fan neighborhood on Stafford and Parkwood Avenues. The properties consist of a combined 40,946 square feet (0.94 acres). The parcels are improved with surface parking lots.

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

The application is for up to twenty-six (26) single family attached dwellings.

### **Master Plan**

The City’s Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the subject property for Neighborhood Mixed Use which is viewed as “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. 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. (p. 56)

The density of the proposed development is 26 units upon .94 acres, or approximately 28 units per acre.

**Zoning and Ordinance Conditions**

The current zoning for this property is R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential. The following zoning regulations are not being met by the proposal, warranting special use permit approval.

**LOT AREA AND WIDTH**

Sec. 30-419.5(2). Single-family attached dwellings shall be located on lots of not less than 2,200 square feet in area. Lot width shall be not less than 16 feet, except that the width of any lot at the end of a series of attached units shall be not less than 19 feet.

*The proposed lot areas vary between 923 square feet and 1,200 square feet and there is one lot that is 18' x 55' at the end of a series.*

**SIDE YARD**

Sec. 30-419.6(2). Side yards of 3' are required except where buildings are attached.

*There are several units at the end of series that do not meet the required side yards.*

**REAR YARD**

Sec. 30-419.6(3). Single-family and two-family dwellings and buildings accessory thereto. There shall be a rear yard of not less than five feet in depth.

*The lots fronting on Stafford Avenue have no rear yards provided, and lots A and B have rear yards less than the required 5 feet.*

**LOT COVERAGE**

Sec. 30-419.8. In the R-63 district, lot coverage for uses other than multifamily dwellings shall not exceed 65 percent of the area of the lot.

*Several parcels do not meet this requirement.*

**FRONTAGE FOR ATTACHED DWELLINGS**

Sec. 30-610.2. Individual lots within an attached dwelling development may front on private streets or common courts where the development site considered in its entirety has frontage on a public street and when the means of access to each lot is approved by the Director of public Works, the Chief of Police and the Chief of Fire and emergency services and when appropriate easements, agreements or covenants approved as to for by the City Attorney provide for permanent public access and continued maintenance.

*A special use permit is needed because the proposed alleys are not private streets.*

Additional conditions will be imposed by the amended ordinance, including:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be twenty-six (26) single family attached dwellings, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements, including landscaping, shall be substantially as shown on the Plans. Brick, brick veneer, stone, stone veneer, masonry, vinyl, fiber cement, and engineered wood shall be permitted building siding materials. Vinyl siding shall have a minimum wall thickness of 0.044 inches, as evidenced by the manufacturer's printed literature.
- The height of the Special Use shall not exceed four stories.
- All mechanical equipment, including HVAC units, serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.
- Prior to the issuance of any building permit for the Special Use, the establishment of up to twenty-six residential lots, substantially as shown on the Survey, shall be accomplished by obtaining the necessary approvals from the City and recording the appropriate plats among the land records of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of the City of Richmond.
- Facilities for the collection of refuse shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of the Director of Public Works. Such facilities shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from adjacent properties and public streets.
- All improvements and work within the public right-of-way, including the installation of six street trees shall be planted in the public right-of-way, substantially as shown on the Plans.

### **Surrounding Area**

Surrounding properties to the north are located in the same R-63 district as the property in question, with properties to the east and west primarily located within the R-7 Single-and Two-Family Urban Residential and B-6 Mixed-Use Business Districts, respectively. Single-family attached, multi-family residential, and commercial are the dominant land-uses in the vicinity.

### **Affordability**

The median household income for the Richmond region is currently \$71,223 per year.\* The affordability threshold is 30% of household income towards housing costs, which equates to \$21,367 per year, or \$1,781 per month, or less, to avoid a housing cost burden.\*\* The applicant has informed staff that the units will be sold at current market rates.

*\*(U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 1-Year Estimates)*

*\*\* (affordability threshold is \$1,781 per month or less)*

### **Neighborhood Participation**

The City notified the Uptown Association and the Fan Area Business Alliance about this application. To this date, staff has not received any letters of support or opposition from the Association or nearby residents.

**Staff Contact:** Jonathan Brown, PDR, Land Use Division, 804-646-5734