



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2023-223: To authorize the special use of the property known as 411 Brook Road, for the purpose of a two-family dwelling, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: August 21, 2023

PETITIONER

Fred Reis, FRob Consulting, LLC

LOCATION

411 Brook Road

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 411 Brook Road, for the purpose of a two-family dwelling, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to authorize a two-family dwelling, within an RO-2 Residential-Office District. While the two-family dwelling is permitted by the underlying RO-2 district, the requirements concerning lot area and width; yards; and lot coverage cannot be met. A Special Use Permit is therefore required.

Staff finds that the proposal would be consistent with the recommendations of the City's Master Plan pertaining to the two-family dwelling type within the Neighborhood Mixed-Use category.

Staff further finds that this use is not disruptive of the existing fabric of the neighborhood, as the two-family dwelling will be within an existing house.

Staff also finds that the proposed use is consistent with Objective 14.5 of the City's Master Plan, which seeks to encourage more housing types throughout the city at Nodes. The property is within the Jackson Ward National/Regional Node, which is considered a Priority Growth Node. Additionally, the property is located along Brook Road, which is defined as a Major Residential Street in the Master Plan.

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 property is in the Jackson Ward neighborhood on Brook Road, between West Marshall Street and West Clay Street. The property is currently a 1,228 sq. ft. (0.028 acre) parcel of land with a two-story single-family attached dwelling.

The current zoning for the property is RO-2 – Residential-Office District. The adjacent and nearby properties are located primarily within the same RO-2 district. The area is generally comprised of single-family attached residential and commercial properties.

Proposed Use of the Property

A two-family dwelling within an existing building.

Master Plan

The Richmond 300 Master Plan designates this property as Neighborhood Mixed-Use, which is defined 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 multifamily buildings (10+units), retail/office/personal service, institutional, cultural, and government..

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for the property is RO-2 – Residential-Office District. The following conditions of the proposed development do not comply with the current zoning regulations:

Sec. 30-426.4 - Lot area and width.

The required lot area is 4,400 sq. ft. for a two-family attached dwelling.

The proposed lot area is roughly 752 sq. ft.

The required width is 36 ft. for a two-family attached dwelling.

The proposed width is roughly 18 feet in the rear.

The proposed width is roughly 23 feet in the front.

Sec. 426.5 - Yards.

The required front yard depth is at least 25 feet.

The proposed front yard is roughly 3 feet.

Sec. 426.6:1 - Lot coverage.

Lot coverage shall not exceed 60% of the area of the lot.

The proposed lot coverage would be roughly 61% of the area of the lot.

This special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- (a) The Special Use of the Property shall be as a two-family dwelling, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- (b) The height of the Special Use shall not exceed two stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- (c) All building elevations 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.

Surrounding Area

The surrounding land uses are primarily residential and commercial properties.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents, property owners, and the Historic Jackson Ward Civic Association. Staff has received no letters to date regarding the proposal.

Staff Contact: Shaianna Trump, Associate Planner, Land Use Administration, 804-646-7319