



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2023-233: To authorize the special use of the property known as 2510 Semmes Avenue, for the purpose of a dwelling unit within an accessory building to a single-family detached dwelling, upon certain terms and conditions.

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

PETITIONER

Earl Sacra

LOCATION

2510 Semmes Avenue

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 2510 Semmes Avenue, for the purpose of a dwelling unit within an accessory building to a single-family detached dwelling, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to authorize a dwelling unit within an accessory building to a single-family detached dwelling, within an R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential District. While the use is permitted, it must be existing at the effective date of the ordinance subsection, which for this zone is 1995. A Special Use Permit is, therefore, required for the new accessory dwelling unit.

Staff finds that the proposal would be consistent with the recommendations of the City's Richmond 300 Master Plan pertaining to the Residential land use designation. Accessory dwelling units are a primary use within the Residential category. The existing scale and proposed building footprint are both aligned with neighboring properties with existing accessory buildings.

Staff also finds that the proposed is located on a designated Major Residential Street, which are intended for higher volumes of people interacting within residential uses.

Staff finds that the proposed adaptive re-use of the existing accessory building demonstrates a creative way towards implementing Objective 14.5c within the Richmond 300 Master Plan which states "Update Zoning Ordinance to allow for accessory dwelling units by-right with form-based requirements in all residential zones." (p. 152)

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 located in the Swansboro neighborhood on Semmes Avenue between West 25th and 26th Streets. The property is currently improved with an existing single-family detached dwelling constructed, per tax assessment records, in 1945. The property is a 9,191 sq. ft. (.21 acre) parcel of land.

Proposed Use of the Property

A dwelling unit within an accessory building

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Residential. This designation is defined 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

The property is located on a designated Major Residential Street which includes characteristics such as:

- Carry high volumes of vehicles, as well as pedestrians and bicycles, through residential neighborhoods
- Prioritize for creating sidewalks and crosswalks

- Install street trees as a buffer between sidewalk and street
- Ideal locations for transit routes and transit stops
- Ensure low street speed by utilizing traffic calming measures

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for this property is R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential District. The proposed use is not currently allowed by section 30-412.2 of the Richmond code concerning permitted accessory uses and structures within the R-6 zone.

This special use permit is conditioned on the following special terms and conditions:

- The Special Use of the Property shall be as a dwelling unit within an accessory building to a single-family detached dwelling, substantially as shown on the plans.
- No fewer than two off-street parking spaces shall be provided for the Special Use, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- The height of the accessory building shall not exceed two stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All building materials, elevations, and site improvements shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.
- All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way
- 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

Surrounding Area

Surrounding properties are primarily within R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential District. The surrounding land uses are primarily single-family residential with a few commercial and institutional uses in the larger vicinity.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents, property owners, and the Swansboro Neighborhood Association of the proposed Special Use Permit. To this date, staff has not received any letters of support, nor opposition regarding this application.

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