



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

ORD. 2017-017: To authorize the special use of the property known as 3407 Chamberlayne Avenue for the purpose of the installation of two solar panel structures within the front yard, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: February 21, 2017

PETITIONER

Brent Chermiside
3407 Chamberlayne Avenue
Richmond, VA 23227

LOCATION

3407 Chamberlayne Avenue

PURPOSE

Special use permit for 3407 Chamberlayne Avenue to authorize two solar panel arrays to be located within the front yard.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The subject property is located on the east side of Chamberlayne Avenue between Melrose and Westwood Avenues. The subject property is approximately 18,800 square feet in area and is currently improved with a single-family dwelling and an accessory structure located in the rear yard.

The applicant proposes to located two solar arrays that are approximately six and a half feet in height within the front yard, which is not currently permitted by the Zoning Ordinance. The front yard is currently enclosed by a fence that would block the view of the solar arrays from the street.

The subject property falls within the Multi-Family (Medium Density) land use designation established by the 2000-2020 City of Richmond Master Plan. Such areas are recommended for multi-family developments at up to 20 units per acre and include residential support uses such as church, day nurseries and schools.

Properties to the west across Chamberlayne Avenue are located in the R-53 Multi-Family Residential zoning district and are currently occupied by the Union Presbyterian. Properties to the north and south are located in the R-48 Multi-family zoning district and are occupied be a mix of multi-family, single-family and group home uses. The properties to the east are located in the R-1 Single-Family zoning district and are occupied by single-family dwellings.

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 subject property is located on the east side of Chamberlayne Avenue between Melrose and Westwood Avenues. The subject property is approximately 18,800 square feet in area and is currently improved with a single-family dwelling and an accessory structure located in the rear yard.

Proposed Use of the Property

The applicant proposes to located two solar arrays that are approximately six and a half feet in height within the front yard, which is not currently permitted by the Zoning Ordinance.

Master Plan

The subject property falls within the Multi-Family (Medium Density) land use designation established by the 2000-2020 City of Richmond Master Plan. Such areas are recommended for multi-family developments at up to 20 units per acre and include residential support uses such as church, day nurseries and schools.

Zoning & Ordinance Conditions

The subject property is located in the City's R-48 Multi-Family Residential zoning district, which requires a 15 foot minimum front yard. The proposed solar arrays would be located outside of the required 15 foot front yard; however, the definitions and the supplemental regulations in the Zoning Ordinance prohibit any structure other than a fence to be over three feet in height when located between the street line and the main building. The special use permit would also require the arrays to be screened by a fence.

Surrounding Area

Properties to the west across Chamberlayne Avenue are located in the R-53 Multi-Family Residential zoning district and are currently occupied by the Union Presbyterian. Properties to the north and south are located in the R-48 Multi-family zoning district and are occupied be a mix of multi-family, single-family and group home uses. The properties to the east are located in the R-1 Single-Family zoning district and are occupied by single-family dwellings.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff has received no letters of support or opposition.

Staff Contact: Matthew Ebinger, Acting Principal Planner, (804) 646-6308