



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2019-204: To authorize the special use of the properties known as 224 South Cherry Street, 912 Idlewood Avenue, 914 Idlewood Avenue, 223 South Linden Street, 225 South Linden Street, and 239 South Linden Street for the purpose of a day nursery, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: September 3, 2019

PETITIONER

St. Andrews School

LOCATION

224 South Cherry Street, 912 Idlewood Avenue, 914 Idlewood Avenue, 223 South Linden Street, 225 South Linden Street, and 239 South Linden Street

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the properties known as 224 South Cherry Street, 912 Idlewood Avenue, 914 Idlewood Avenue, 223 South Linden Street, 225 South Linden Street, and 239 South Linden Street for the purpose of a day nursery, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The St. Andrews's School has operated at its Oregon Hill location of 227 South Cherry Street since 1894. The St. Andrews Association owns both the 227 and 224 South Cherry Street properties and seeks to renovate, and expand into, the 224 South Cherry Street facility. The renovated facility will provide additional space for both the existing St. Andrews School and a new pre-school day care program. This pre-school will be operated in partnership with the YWCA and will provide free and/or subsidized pre-school to Richmond families with limited financial resources.

Because the proposed special use will be staffed and operated by a second entity (YWCA), it is considered a principal use. Day nurseries are not permitted as a principal use in the zoning district in which the property(s) is located. Therefore a special use permit is required.

Staff finds the proposed special use would contribute to the mix of uses supported by the Downtown Plan and would be an appropriate residential support use.

Staff finds that the proposed special use would be allowed by the underlying zoning of the property if it were operated by the same entity as the school.

Staff finds that the proposed special use would not pose an undue burden on the availability of on-street parking in the area.

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 properties, collectively known as 224 S. Cherry Street, are comprised of approximately 1.02 acres and are located on the block bounded by the Downtown Expressway to the north, Idlewood Avenue to the south, S. Linden Street to the west, and S. Cherry Street to the east. The properties are located in the Oregon Hill neighborhood within the Near West Planning District.

Proposed Use of the Property

The special use will be a day nursery, in the same building as a school.

Master Plan

The City of Richmond's Master Plan designates a future land use category for the subject property as Downtown General Urban Area. The General Urban Area is characterized by medium-density mixed-use development.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The subject properties are located in the R-7 Single- and Two-Family Urban Residential District. Private elementary and secondary schools are permitted uses in this district. Day nurseries are a permitted accessory use. The proposed day nursery will be staffed and operated by a second entity (YWCA) and is therefore considered a second principal use within the building rather than an accessory use. Day nurseries are not permitted as a principal use in the R-7 Single- and Two-Family Urban Residential District and therefore a special use permit is required.

The special use permit ordinance will impose conditions on the property, including:

3(a) The Special Use of the Property shall be as a day nursery, substantially as shown on the Plans.

(b) The applicant shall obtain and maintain a license for a day nursery from the Virginia Department of Social Services.

(c) The total number of children permitted in the day nursery shall be in accordance with the Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code.

(d) The day nursery shall comply with all license requirements, standards, and regulations administered by the Virginia Department of Social Services.

(e) 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

All adjacent and nearby properties are located within the R-7 Single- and Two-Family Urban Residential District. Properties adjacent to the. A mix of residents and community facilities are in the area. The Hollywood Cemetery is located to the south across Idlewood Avenue.

Neighborhood Participation

The Oregon Hill Neighborhood Association and adjacent property owners were notified of the proposal. Concern from the public was expressed regarding details of the initial proposal, prior to revisions that were made and incorporated into the current proposal. Staff has not received notice of support or opposition regarding the current proposal.

Staff Contact: David Watson, Senior Planner, Land Use Administration, 804-646-1036