



## CITY OF RICHMOND

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

**Ord. No. 2021-012:** To authorize the special use of the property known as 821 Albemarle Street for the purpose of a personal service business, upon certain terms and conditions.

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**To:** City Planning Commission  
**From:** Land Use Administration  
**Date:** February 1, 2021

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#### **PETITIONER**

Robert and Marissa Freeman

#### **LOCATION**

821 Albemarle Street

#### **PURPOSE**

To authorize the special use of the property known as 821 Albemarle Street for the purpose of a personal service business, upon certain terms and conditions.

#### **SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

The request is to authorize personal service uses, specifically a beauty salon, in a residential building. The personal service business will occupy the first floor and the second floor will remain residential. Personal service businesses are not permitted uses in the R-7 Single- and Two-Family Urban Residential Zoning District in which the property is located. Therefore a special use permit is required. The original structure was built for a commercial use on the ground floor and residential use on the second floor. Later, the ground floor was converted to residential use.

Staff finds the reversion of the ground floor back to non-residential use in the form of a personal service use such as a beauty salon to be appropriate for the property. It is generally consistent with the historic pattern of development in the area as well as the recommendations of the Richmond 300 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 safety, health, morals and general welfare of the community.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of this special use permit request.

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#### **FINDINGS OF FACT**

##### **Site Description**

The subject property is 22 feet in width and contains 2,438 square feet (.056 acres). Improvements to the property are a two-story building located on the corner of Albemarle and South Cherry Streets. The structure was built in 1890 as a mixed-use building with retail on the

first floor and a residence on the second floor. The ground floor contained a legally nonconforming grocery store until the early sixties when the use was abandoned. The building remained vacant until 2005 when the Board of Zoning Appeals allowed the renovation and conversion of the property into a two-family attached dwelling.

### **Proposed Use of Property**

The proposal calls for the first floor area to contain personal service use, specifically a beauty salon. From the street, the first floor still retains the original appearance of a storefront with a residence on the second floor.

### **Richmond 300 Master Plan**

The Richmond 300 Master Plan recommends Neighborhood Mixed-Use land use for the properties. Areas with this designation are described 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 (see Street Typologies Map). 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 subject property is located in the R-7 Single and Two-Family Urban Residential Zoning District. In response to the Special Use Permit request for the above-referenced property, Zoning Administration offers the following comments:

*The subject property is zoned in the R-7 (Single and Two-Family Urban Residential) district. The proposal consists of converting an existing dwelling unit on the first floor into a personal service (salon) use. Personal service is not a permitted principal use in the R-7 zoning district. A Special Use Permit is required to be adopted by City Council to authorize this use.*

*R-7 Feature Requirements: No expansion of the existing building is proposed. The scope of the SUP request is limited to interior renovation.*

*Parking: Based on the provided floor plan 4 parking spaces would be required for the personal service use and need to be waived by the SUP. One additional space provided on-site and should be for the exclusive use of the possible residence on the second floor.*

If approved, the special use permit would impose development conditions, including:

- (a) The Special Use of the Property shall be as a personal service business occupying the first level of the existing structure, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- (b) The second floor of the existing structure on the Property shall remain as a residential use.
- (c) All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.
- (d) No off-street parking shall be required for the Special Use.
- (e) Signs for the Special Use shall be regulated by the sign requirements for the R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential District set forth in subsections (2) and (3) of section 30-507.1 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended.

### **Surrounding Area**

The land to the north, south and east of the subject property is located within the same R-7 Single and Two-Family Urban Residential Zoning District and contain residential uses. To the west, across South Cherry Street, is Hollywood Cemetery on land located in the R-5 Single-Family Residential zoning district.

### **Neighborhood Participation**

Staff notified the Oregon Hill Neighborhood Association and area residents and property owners. No notifications of opposition or support have been received.

### **Staff Contact**

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