



CITY OF RICHMOND

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

SUBD 2021.006: Subdivision Exception Request for 3131 Kensington Avenue (Kensington Row).

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: April 19, 2021

PETITIONER

Christopher F. Blake, Miller & Associates

LOCATION

3131 Kensington Avenue

PURPOSE

To approve an exception to Sec 25-219 of the Subdivision Ordinance to waive the requirement for an average lot depth of not less than 100 feet.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is proposing to record a subdivision plat establishing five residential lots, which are substantially in conformance with Special Use Permit Ord. No. 2020-181, but do not meet the standard of Sec. 25-219 of the Subdivision Ordinance which requires an average lot depth of not less than 100 feet. Two of the five proposed lot depths, substantially as shown on the adopted special use permit plans, are approximately 67 ft. in depth. The applicant is therefore requesting, pursuant to Section 25-9 of the Subdivision Ordinance, an exception to Section 25-219 of the Subdivision Ordinance.

Staff finds that the proposed exception request would enable development that is substantially in conformance with the approved special use permit for the property and generally consistent with the historic pattern of development in the area.

Therefore, staff recommends approval of the exception request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject property consists of an 11,979 SF, or .28 acre unimproved parcel of land, and is a part of the Museum District neighborhood at the intersection of Kensington Avenue and Cleveland Street.

Proposed Use of the Property

The development will consist of five single-family attached dwellings located on lots ranging in size from 2,108 to 2,631 SF.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the subject 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." 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. 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. 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. 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

The property is located in the R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential District. The property is subject to Special Use Permit Ord. No. 2020-181, adopted September 14, 2020, which authorized up to five single-family attached dwellings.

Surrounding Area

Surrounding properties are located in the same R-6 district as the subject property. The existing land uses in the vicinity are comprised of single-, two- and multi-family residential and commercial land uses.

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