



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2021-135: To authorize the special use of the property known as 3511 P Street, for the purpose of a community center, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: June 7, 2021

PETITIONER

Shannon Castleman - Oakwood Arts Inc.

LOCATION

3511 P Street

PURPOSE: To authorize the special use of the property known as 3511 P Street, for the purpose of a community center, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The request is to authorize the use of a former church facility as a community center that is located in the R-5 Single-Family Residential zoning district. Private noncommercial community centers are permitted by the zoning ordinance, provided certain conditions are met, including the requirement that no building shall be located within 50 feet of an adjoining lot in an R and RO district. The facility is located within 50 feet of an adjoining lot that is located in an R-5 District. Therefore a special use permit is required.

Staff finds that the proposed special use is generally consistent with the Richmond 300 Master Plan land use designation of Neighborhood Mixed-Use and would authorize a community-supporting use within close distance of mass transit.

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 this special use permit request.

FINDINGS OF FACT

Site Description

The subject property is an 11,250 square foot (.258 acre) parcel improved with a vacant church building, a vacant day nursery building, and a vacant utility building. The property is located at the intersection of P Street and North 35th Street in the Chimborazo neighborhood.

Proposed Use of Property

Community Center

Master Plan

The Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the subject property for Neighborhood Mixed-Uses. Community centers are noted as secondary 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. 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 property is located in the R-5 Single-Family Residential zoning district. The proposed special use permit will not meet the requirement that no building shall be located within 50 feet of an adjoining lot in an R and RO district. The main building is approximately 20 feet from the adjoining lot line, a secondary building is approximately 4 feet from the adjoining lot line.

Zoning Administration approved the request without comment.

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

- (a) The Special Use of the Property shall be as a community center, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- (b) All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.
- (c) Signs for the Special Use shall be regulated by the sign requirements for non-dwelling uses permitted by right in the R-5 Single-Family Residential District, pursuant to section 30-506 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended.
- (d) No off-street parking spaces shall be required for the Special Use.
- (e) The Property may also be used for special events unrelated to the community center use, except that no more than 12 such events within any 12-month period shall be permitted. Six of such events shall host no more than 85 attendees, and the remaining six such events shall host no more than 50 attendees. Each special event shall be located within the buildings shown on the Plans. Each special event shall end no later than 11:00 p.m., Friday through Saturday, and no later than 10:00 p.m., Sunday through Thursday. No person associated with the special event shall perform any functions related to the event on the Property after midnight, Friday through Saturday, and no later than 11:00 p.m., Sunday through Thursday.

Surrounding Area

All properties surrounding the subject property are located within the same R-5 Single-Family Residential zoning district. Within the area of the subject property, those properties with improvements contain primarily single-family dwellings, with some two-family and multi-family residential, mixed-use, commercial, and institutional uses.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified the Church Hill Central Civic Association, as well as area property owners and residents. No letters of opposition or support have been received.

Staff Contact

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