



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2021-194: To authorize the special use of the property known as 3800 Grove Avenue for the purpose of up to six single-family attached dwellings and a parking area, and providing for the repeal of Ord. No. 2020 225, adopted November 9, 2020, upon certain terms and conditions.

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

PETITIONER

John Nolde

LOCATION

3800 Grove Avenue

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 3800 Grove Avenue for the purpose of up to six single-family attached dwellings and a parking area, and providing for the repeal of Ord. No. 2020-225, adopted November 9, 2020, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is requesting a special use permit to authorize the construction of six single-family attached dwellings and a parking area that will serve the dwellings. Single-family attached dwellings and parking areas are not permitted principal uses in the R-5 Single-Family Residential District. Additionally, yard, height, lot area, and lot coverage requirements of the R-5 District are not met with the proposal. Therefore, a special use permit is necessary.

Staff finds that the proposed single-family attached dwellings are consistent with the recommendations of Richmond 300. The proposed single-family attached use is consistent with the recommended land use of "Residential", which recommends single-family homes, accessory dwelling units and open space as primary uses. While the density (23 units per acre) exceeds the density generally specified for the "Residential" land use category, it is consistent with the range of densities found in the area, including the Mount Vernon Condominiums, which are directly across North Hamilton Street from the property. Additionally, the Master Plan supports duplexes and small multi-family buildings (3-10 units) for the Property, as North Hamilton Street and Grove Avenue are both designated as "major streets" on the Street Typologies Map.

Staff finds the proposed development, specifically its design and architectural elements, addresses several of the strategies within Objective 4.1 including the following: "Allow and encourage a variety of architectural styles", "Require adequate distribution of windows and architectural features in order to create visual interest", and "Increase building permeability by requiring new buildings to have functioning entrances from the sidewalk and restricting blank walls at ground level".

Staff finds the proposed development would provide additional housing units to support additional ridership for transit in the area.

Staff finds that the proposal would not pose an undue burden on the availability of on-street parking in the area due to the provision of off-street parking. Also, a bus stop for Local GRTC Route 77 is located directly in front of the property on Grove Avenue, and connects with Pulse near the VCU & VUU station.

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 consists of a single parcel of land that has a lot area of 11,124 square feet (0.255 acres) and is improved with a one story office building. The property is located in the Colonial Place neighborhood, and is bound by Grove Avenue, North Hamilton Street, and Reveille Street.

Proposed Use of the Property

The proposed Special Use is for six single-family attached dwellings and a parking area serving the single-family use.

Master Plan

The Richmond 300 master plan recommends a future land use of “Residential” for the property. The primary uses recommended for Residential are single family homes, accessory dwelling units and open space. Secondary uses include duplexes and small multi-family buildings (3-10 units), institutional and cultural uses. These uses should typically be located on major streets. The development style for Residential is houses on medium or large sized lots with homes setback from the street. Future development should continue or introduce a gridded pattern of development and new buildings should be built to a scale and design that is consistent with existing buildings. Buildings are generally one to three stories, with lots generally ranging up to 5,000 SF to 20,000 SF. General density is between 2-10 units per acre. Secondary uses are duplexes and small multi-family buildings (typically 3-10 units), institutional, and cultural. Secondary uses may be found along major streets.

The portion of Grove Avenue that abuts the property is designated as a “major residential street” as well as a “great street” on the Street Typologies and Great Streets Map. The portion of N Hamilton Street that abuts the property is designated as a “major mixed-use street”.

Objective 4.1 of Richmond 300 states: Create and preserve high-quality, distinctive, and well-designed neighborhoods and Nodes throughout the city.

Objective 14.5 of Richmond 300 states: Encourage more housing types throughout the city and greater density along enhanced transit corridors and at Nodes by amending the Zoning Ordinance.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The Property is currently located within the R-5 Single-Family Residential District. A Special Use Permit is necessary because single-family attached dwellings and parking areas are not permitted uses in the R-5 District. Additionally, the Special Use Permit will waive lot area, yard, height, and lot coverage requirements.

The ordinance for the Special Use would impose conditions on the Property, including:

- (a) The Special Use of the Property shall be as up to six single-family attached dwellings and a parking area, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- (b) The height of the Special Use shall not exceed 40 feet.
- (c) The lot sizes for the Special Use shall be a minimum of 1,000 square feet per lot.
- (d) The maximum lot coverage for each lot for the Special Use shall not exceed 80 percent of the lot size for each such lot.
- (e) A minimum of six parking spaces shall be provided on the Property.
- (f) The primary exterior materials for the townhomes shall be a combination of brick and cementitious siding. In no case shall vinyl siding be permitted. Exterior building designs shall be substantially as shown in one of the alternatives on sheets A2.1, A2.2, and A2.3 of the Plans.
- (g) Evergreen vegetative material of not less than 3 ½ feet in height shall be provided on the Property between the parking area and the residential properties to the north.
- (h) The minimum setback requirements for the Special Use shall be as shown on the Plans.

- (i) All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.
- (j) Prior to the issuance of any certificate of occupancy for the Special Use, the establishment of up to seven residential lots, substantially as shown on the Plans, shall be accomplished by obtaining the necessary approvals from the City and recording the appropriate plats among the land records of the Clerk of the Circuit Court of the City of Richmond.

Surrounding Area

The subject property and properties to the north, west and south are located within the R-5 Single-Family Residential District. Properties to the east are located within the R-53 Multi-Family Residential District.

Multifamily residential use is located to the east of the subject property. Single family uses are located to the west, north and south of the subject property.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents, property owners, and the Westhampton Citizens Association. Letters of support and opposition have been received.

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