



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2021-193: To authorize the special use of the property known as 1624 Pollock Street for the purpose of up to six single-family attached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions.

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

PETITIONER

Jesse R. Penn, III – Maggie Walker Community Land Trust

LOCATION

1624 Pollock Street

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 1624 Pollock Street for the purpose of up to six single-family attached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The proposal is to construct six single-family attached dwellings. Under current R-6 Single-Family Attached Residential zoning standards, the proposal would not meet certain feature requirements. A Special Use Permit is therefore required.

Staff finds that the proposed use would be generally consistent with the land use recommendations of the Master Plan and historic pattern of development in the area.

Staff finds that the proposal would be support Objective 14.3 to create “10,000 new affordable housing units for low- and very low-income households over the next 10 years.” The new units are estimated to be affordable to households that are below the Regional Area Median Income. (p. 152)

Staff finds that the proposal would not pose an undue burden on the availability of on-street parking in the area due to the twelve off-street parking spaces included within the proposal’s design.

Staff finds that the proposed use would be consistent with the City’s Richmond 300 Master Plan pertaining to Objectives 6.1(b) and 15.1(a) which seek to “Increase the number of residents and jobs at Nodes and along enhanced transit corridors in a land development pattern that prioritizes multimodal transportation options”, and “Increase the number of Richmonders living in a development pattern that encourages density and reduces dependency on single-occupancy vehicles.” The proposed development is within walking distance to the Six Points Neighborhood Node which is viewed as a future nexus for enhanced transit and affordable housing developments. (p. 109, 153)

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 is located in the North Highland Park neighborhood on Pollock Street between Dill and 4th Avenues. The property is currently a 19,059 sq. ft. (.438 acre) unimproved parcel of land.

Proposed Use of the Property

The applicant is proposing a Special Use Permit which would authorize construction of up to six single family attached dwellings on newly created lots.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Residential which is defined as "Neighborhood consisting primarily of single family houses on large or medium sized lots more homogeneous in nature."

The development style includes houses on medium-sized and large-sized lots in a largely auto-dependent environment. Homes are setback from the street. Future developments continue and/or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity. Future single-family housing, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, and small multi-family residential buildings are built to a scale and design that is consistent with existing buildings. Bicycle and pedestrian access are prioritized and accommodated. Low residential density means that it is not possible to provide frequent transit within these areas; however, frequent transit may be found at the edges of these areas within more intense future land use designations. Many homes have driveways and/or garages, which are located off an alley behind the home if an alley is present. Buildings are generally one to three stories. Lot sizes generally range up to 5,000 to 20,000+ sq. ft. Residential density of 2 to 10 housing units per acre.

Primary Uses: Single family houses, accessory dwelling units, and open space.

Secondary Uses: Duplexes and small multi-family buildings (typically 3-10 units), institutional, and cultural. Secondary uses may be found along major streets (p. 54)

Neighborhood Node: Neighborhood Nodes are "...local crossroads typically within or next to larger residential areas that offers goods and services to nearby residents, employees, and visitors." The proposed single-family attached dwellings are within walking distance to the Six Points Neighborhood Node. (p. C-1)

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for the subject parcel is R-6 Single Family Attached Residential. The City's Zoning Administration reviewed the application and provided the following comments:

ZONING AND USE: Sec. 30-408.1. Permitted principal uses.

The subject property is zoned in the R-6 (Single-Family Attached Residential) district. The proposal is to construct what appears to be six (6) new single-family attached dwellings.

DENSITY: Sec. 30-412.4(2)a. Density.

The average density within an R-6 development site cannot exceed 10 units per acre. If six (6) units are proposed, then the density requirement will be exceeded and a Special Use Permit will be required to authorize this use.

DRIVEWAY WIDTH: Sec. 30-412.7 Driveways from streets.

Driveways from streets for single and two-family dwelling can't exceed 9' in width.

Conditions will be imposed by the special use permit, if approved, including:

3(a) The Special Use of the Property shall be up to six single-family attached dwellings, substantially as shown on the plans attached to this ordinance.

(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) The height of the Special Use shall not exceed the height shown on the Plans.

(d) All building materials, elevations, and site improvements, including landscaping, shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.

(f) No fewer than twelve off-street parking spaces shall be provided for the Special Use, substantially as shown on the Plans.

(g) Prior to the issuance of any certificate of occupancy, the establishment of up to six 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.

4(c) Facilities for the collection of refuse shall be provided in accordance with the requirements of the Director of Public Works. Such facilities shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from adjacent properties and public streets.

(e) The Owner shall make improvements within the right-of-way, substantially as shown on the Plans, including installation of a new sidewalk along Pollock Street, substantially as shown on the Site Plan, which improvements may be completed in one or more phases as approved by the Director of Public Works.

Surrounding Area

Surrounding properties are within the same R-6 District. A mix of single, and two-family residential, are present in the vicinity.

Affordability

The median household income for the Richmond region is currently \$68,529. The affordability threshold is 30% of household income which equates to \$20,559 or \$1,713 per month or less to avoid a housing cost burden.*

Based upon the median household income for the Richmond region and the estimated price of units provided by the applicant, the two housing units are projected to be affordable to households making 88% of the Area Median Income (AMI).**

*(U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates)

***(Based upon VHDA fixed-rate, 30-year mortgage, with 20% down and 4% interest)*

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents, property owners, and the Highland Park Civic Association of the proposed Special Use Permit. Staff has not received a letter of support or opposition for this application.

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