



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2021-254: To authorize the special use of the properties known as 2012 East Broad Street, 2018 East Broad Street, and 304 North 21st Street for the purpose of (i) a mixed-use building containing commercial space and up to ten dwelling units and (ii) up to eight single-family attached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions.

To: City Planning Commission
From: Land Use Administration
Date: October 4, 2021

PETITIONER

Lory Markham – Markham Planning

LOCATION

2012 East Broad Street, 2018 East Broad Street, and 304 North 21st Street

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the properties known as 2012 East Broad Street, 2018 East Broad Street, and 304 North 21st Street for the purpose of (i) a mixed-use building containing commercial space and up to ten dwelling units and (ii) up to eight single-family attached dwellings, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit for the purpose of residential uses within an M-1 Light Industrial Zoning District. The proposed use, among other things, does not meet the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance regarding permitted principal uses, side-yard setbacks, off-street parking, and perimeter buffers for parking areas. A Special Use Permit is therefore required.

Staff finds that the proposal would be consistent with the Destination Mixed Use land use recommendation of the Richmond 300 Master Plan.

Staff finds that the proposal would be consistent with the recommendations of the Richmond 300 Master Plan pertaining to Objective 4.1c., which seeks to create "...development sites that encompass most of a city block or block frontage, require multiple buildings and/or façade articulation to increase visual interest, require massing that is responsive to the human-scale,..." The proposed development is a combination of housing types as well as the infill of a vacant, corner parcel along Broad Street. (p. 100)

Staff also finds that the proposal would be consistent with the recommendations of the Richmond 300 Master Plan pertaining to Objective 4.1o., which seeks to "Increase building permeability by requiring new buildings to have functioning entrances from the sidewalk and restricting blank walls at ground level." The proposed, new infill row houses have front doors and stoops at street level. (p. 100)

Staff further finds that the proposal would not pose an undue burden on the availability of on-street parking in the area due to the fact that the proposed use includes off-street parking spaces for each new unit.

Staff further finds that the proposed use would be consistent with the historic pattern of development in the area.

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 property is located in the Church Hill neighborhood on the northwest corner of North 21st and East Broad Streets. The property is currently improved with a 6,200 sq. ft. historic building, situated on a combined 10,044 sq. ft. (.23 acres) of land.

Proposed Use of the Property

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit for the purpose of residential and commercial uses within an M-1 Light Industrial Zoning District.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Destination Mixed Use which is defined as "Key gateways featuring prominent destinations, such as retail, sports venues, and large employers, as well as housing and open space. Located at the convergence of several modes of transportation, including Pulse BRT or other planned transit improvements." The Plan recommends higher density, transit-oriented development encouraged on vacant or underutilized sites. New development should be urban in form, may be of larger scale than existing context, and, where relevant, should pay special attention to the historic character of the existing context. Development should enhance the public realm and create a sense of place. Many buildings are vertically mixed-use. Developments continue or introduce a gridded street pattern to increase connectivity. Ground floor uses engage with, and enliven, the street. Monolithic walls are discouraged, while windows, doors, storefronts, and other features that allow transparency and interaction between building and street are encouraged. Active commercial ground floor uses are required on street-oriented commercial frontages. Pedestrian, bicycle, and transit access are prioritized and accommodated. Bike parking is provided. Driveway entrances are required to be of alleys whenever possible; new driveways are prohibited on priority and principal street frontages. Surface parking is prohibited as a principal use; when surface parking is provided as an accessory use, it should be located to the rear of buildings and screened. Parking requirements are reduced to allow more market-based parking strategies, including shared parking. Buildings typically a minimum height of five stories.

Primary Uses: Retail/office/personal service, multi-family residential, cultural, and open space.
Secondary Uses: Institutional and government. (p. 64)

The property is located in close proximity to the Downtown- Shockoe Priority Growth Node where the City intends to encourage growth in residents, jobs, and commercial activity over the next 20 years. (p. 25)

The portion of East Broad Street that abuts the property is designated by Richmond 300 as a Major Mixed-Use Street which is intended to:

- Carry high volumes of vehicles, pedestrians, and bicycles, through commercial and mixed-use areas
- Prioritize use and density-scaled sidewalks and crosswalks
- Require form elements, such as buildings to the street with parking in the rear, as well as building windows and entrances on the street
- Incorporate streetscape features, such as trees, benches, and trash receptacles
- Ideal locations for transit routes and transit stops
- Prioritize the curbside for walking, bicycling, transit, and short-term parking access and loading for local shops and restaurants.

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for these properties is M-1 Light Industrial. The City of Richmond Commission of Architectural Review has reviewed and approved the proposed plans.

The special use permit would impose conditions on the property, including:

(a) The Special Use of the Property shall be as (i) a mixed-use building containing commercial space and up to ten dwelling units, and (ii) up to eight single-family attached dwellings, substantially as shown on the Plans. However, if the commercial space in the mixed-use building is used for commercial purposes, principal uses permitted on corner lots in the R-63 district pursuant to section 30-419.3 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended, shall also be permitted in such commercial space and up to no more than nine dwelling units shall be permitted in the mixed-use building.

(b) No fewer than 17 parking spaces shall be provided on the Property, substantially as shown on the Plans.

(c) The height of the Special Use shall not exceed three stories, substantially as shown on the Plans.

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

(e) All mechanical equipment, including heating, ventilation, and air conditioning units, serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.

(f) Bicycle parking for no fewer than eight bicycle parking spaces shall be provided on the Property, substantially as shown on the Plans.

(g) Signs for the Special Use shall be limited to (i) signs permitted pursuant to sections 30-507.1(2) and 30-507.1(3) of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended, and (ii) signs permitted in all districts, pursuant to section 30-505 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2020), as amended.

(h) Prior to the issuance of any certificate of occupancy for the Special Use, the subdivision of up to nine residential lots, and one lot for a mixed-use building, substantially as shown on the Plans, shall be accomplished by obtaining subdivision approvals from the City and recording the appropriate plats and deeds 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, including the installation of two new street trees along West Broad Street, substantially as shown on the Plans, which improvements may be completed in one or more phases as approved by the Director of Public Works.

Surrounding Area

The properties are situated within a mix of B-5 Central Business, B-6 Mixed-Use, R-63 Multifamily Urban Residential, and R-8 Urban Residential and M-1 Light Industrial zoning districts.

Affordability

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

No pricing information has been provided for this application. The applicant has informed staff that all units for this application will be market rate.

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

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents, property owners, and the Church Hill Association of RVA of the proposed Special Use Permit. Staff received a letter of support for this application from the Church Hill Association of RVA.

Staff Contact: Jonathan Brown, Senior Planner, Land Use Administration, 804-646-5734