



CITY OF RICHMOND

Department of Planning & Development Review *Staff Report*

Ord. No. 2021-263: To authorize the special use of the property known as 518 West 26th Street for the purpose of no more than one accessory dwelling unit, upon certain terms and conditions.

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

PETITIONER

Tim Meade

LOCATION

518 West 26th Street

PURPOSE

To authorize the special use of the property known as 518 West 26th Street for the purpose of no more than one accessory dwelling unit, upon certain terms and conditions.

SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to authorize construction of a 1-story attached accessory dwelling unit, within an R-6 Single Family Attached Residential District. Accessory dwelling units are not allowed in the R-6 district unless located within an existing two-story detached building. A Special Use Permit is therefore required.

Staff finds that the proposal would be consistent with the recommendations of the City's Richmond 300 Master Plan pertaining to the Residential use which recommends accessory dwelling units as a primary use.

Staff also finds that Objective 14.5c encourages more housing types throughout the city by updating the "...Zoning Ordinance to allow for accessory dwelling units by-right..." The proposed accessory dwelling unit supports this objective.

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 Woodland Heights neighborhood on West 26th Street between Spring Hill and Semmes Avenues. The property is currently improved with a 1,772 sq. ft. single family dwelling situated on a 9,176 sq. ft. (.21 acre) parcel of land.

Proposed Use of the Property

The applicant is requesting a Special Use Permit to authorize construction of a 1-story attached, accessory dwelling unit, within an R-6 Single Family Attached Residential District.

Master Plan

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates a future land use for the subject property as Residential consisting primarily of single-family houses on large- or medium-sized lots more homogeneous in nature." Primary uses include single family houses, accessory dwelling units, and open space. Secondary uses include Duplexes and small multi-family buildings (typically 3-10 units), institutional, and cultural. Secondary uses may be found along major streets. (p. 54)

The Residential land use consists primarily of single-family houses on large- or medium-sized lots more homogeneous in nature. Houses are 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 of 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)

Zoning and Ordinance Conditions

The current zoning for this property is R-6 Single Family Attached Residential. Accessory dwelling units are permitted in the R-6 provided that the unit was already existing prior to the date of the current subsection of the ordinance which is 1995. The application violates the following sections of the zoning ordinance:

Sec. 30-412.2(2) Permitted accessory uses and structures.

(2) One dwelling unit located in an accessory building, containing two or more stories, which is existing at the effective date of the ordinance from which this subsection is derived...

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

(a) The Special Use of the Property shall be as a single-family dwelling and no more than one accessory dwelling unit, substantially as shown on the Plans.

(b) Parking for no less than one vehicle shall be provided on the Property.

(c) All building materials and elevations shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.

(d) All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.

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.

Surrounding Area

Surrounding properties are within the same R-6 District. A majority of properties are single family detached dwellings within this portion of the Woodland Heights neighborhood. Properties along nearby Semmes Avenue have some single-family dwellings that have been adapted to small-scale commercial uses.

Neighborhood Participation

Staff notified area residents, property owners, and the Woodland Heights Civic Association of the proposed Special Use Permit. A letter of support has been received from the Association.

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