



## CITY OF RICHMOND

### **Department of Planning & Development Review** ***Staff Report***

**Ord. No. 2021-264:** To authorize the special use of the property known as 407 West Duval Street for the purpose of a multifamily dwelling containing up to three dwelling units, upon certain terms and conditions.

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

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#### **PETITIONER**

Mark Baker, Baker Development Resources

#### **LOCATION**

407 West Duval Street

#### **PURPOSE**

To authorize the special use of the property known as 407 West Duval Street for the purpose of a multifamily dwelling containing up to three dwelling units, upon certain terms and conditions.

#### **SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION**

The applicant is requesting to authorize the special use of the property known as 407 West Duval Street for the purpose of constructing a new three-story building containing three three-level dwelling units. The property is located in an R-53 Multifamily Residential District. While the proposed use is permitted in the R-53 District, the lot area, yard (setback), off street parking, and useable open space requirements are not met for multi family dwelling with the proposal. Therefore, a special use permit is necessary to authorize the proposed multi family dwelling.

Staff finds that the proposed office use is consistent with the recommendations of Richmond 300. The property has a land use designation of Neighborhood Mixed-Use. The proposed small multi-family use is a primary use that is recommended for Neighborhood Mixed-Use. The property also falls within the Downtown-Jackson Ward priority growth node. The node is envisioned to continue to be predominantly residential with non-residential uses scattered throughout at corners and along major roads. New infill development is encouraged to incorporate high-quality architecture and complement the character of historic buildings. Staff feels that the proposed building, which would be constructed with the appearance of a traditional row home with horizontal lap cementitious siding and a full length covered front porch, would be a quality infill development which complements the character of the neighborhood. While no off-street parking is provided, the ordinance requires that secure bike storage be provided within each unit. A parking study provided by the applicant shows that over a 6-day period, only 25% of on-street parking spaces within the immediate vicinity were occupied. Additionally, the site is proximate to many commercial uses in Jackson Ward and Carver, and within one half mile of two Pulse stations.

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.

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## **FINDINGS OF FACT**

### **Site Description**

The subject property consists of a single parcel of land that has a lot area of 2,075 square feet (0.048 acres) and is currently vacant. The property is located in the Jackson Ward neighborhood on the south side of West Duval Street, between Judah Street and Brook Road.

### **Proposed Use of the Property**

The proposed Special Use Permit would allow for the construction of a new building that would contain three dwelling units.

### **Master Plan**

The City's Richmond 300 Master Plan designates the property as Neighborhood Mixed-Use. This land use category is described as existing or new highly-walkable urban neighborhoods that are predominantly residential with a small, but critical, percentage of parcels providing retail, office, personal service, and institutional uses.

**Development Style:** 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.

**Mobility:** Bicycle, pedestrian, 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:** Buildings heights are generally two to four stories. Buildings taller than four stories may be found along major streets.

**Primary Uses:** Single-family houses, accessory dwelling units, duplexes, small multi-family buildings (typically 3-10 units), and open space.

**Secondary Uses:** Large multi-family buildings (10+ units), retail/office/personal service, institutional, cultural, and government.

The subject property also falls within the “Downtown Jackson Ward” priority growth node as shown on the land use map of Richmond 300. The plan envisions this area to continue to be predominantly residential with non-residential uses scattered throughout at corners and along major roads. New infill development is encouraged to incorporate high quality architecture and complement the character of historic buildings.

### **Zoning and Ordinance Conditions**

The property is located in an R 53 Multifamily Residential District. While the proposed use is permitted in the R 53 District, the lot area, yard (setback), off street parking, and useable open space requirements are not met for multi family dwelling with the proposal. Therefore, a special use permit is necessary to authorize the proposed multi family dwelling. If adopted, the Special Use Permit would impose the following conditions on the properties:

- (a) The Special Use of the Property shall be as a multifamily dwelling containing up to three dwelling units, substantially as shown on the Plans.
- (b) No parking shall be required for the Special Use.
- (c) Secure storage for at least one bicycle shall be provided within each dwelling unit.
- (d) All building materials and site improvements, including but not limited to building finishes and landscaping, shall be substantially as shown on the Plans.
- (e) All mechanical equipment serving the Property shall be located or screened so as not to be visible from any public right-of-way.

### **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. The applicant intends to rent the units at market rate.

### **Surrounding Area**

The subject property and all surrounding properties are located within the R-53 Multifamily Residential District. A mix of single family, two family and multi-family dwellings exist in the immediate vicinity. Interstate 95/64 is located directly across West Duval Street front the subject property.

### **Neighborhood Participation**

Staff notified area residents and property owners, as well as the Historic Jackson Ward Association. Staff has not received any letters of support or opposition.

**Staff Contact:** Richard Saunders Senior Planner, Land Use Administration, 804-646-5648