

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
July 25, 2017 Meeting**

20. **COA-019852-2017** (S. Barton & R. Lamb) **600 North 28th Street
Church Hill North Old and Historic District**

Project Description: **Construct a new single family dwelling.**

Staff Contact: **M. Pitts**

The applicant requests conceptual review and comment on the construction of a single family dwelling on a vacant lot at the corner of North 28th Street and East Leigh Street in the Church Hill North Old and Historic District. The lot was at one time occupied by a 2-story mixed use frame building which was destroyed by a fire in 2007.

The residential character of the surrounding blocks is a mix of historic buildings and new construction. The historic structures are 2 to 2 ½ stories in height, primarily frame structures in a mix of architectural styles with varying roof forms and full façade or entry porches. The subject block of North 28th Street consists of Italianate and Queen Anne frame double houses and Italianate inspired frame new construction. At the west corner of the North 28th and East Leigh Streets is a 2 story brick double house with a side gable roof. At the south corner, the property is developed with a 2 story, Italianate double house; and the east corner of the intersection is developed with a 2 ½ story home with a front gable roof that addresses East Leigh Street and is clad in stucco.

The applicant is proposing to construct a 2 ½ story home to address North 28th Street. The front mass of the home will have a metal clad side gable roof and be clad in brick on the façade and south elevation and siding on the north elevation. The applicant is proposing a storefront for the first floor of the façade with a simple cornice which wraps the corner and corner entry. On the second floor of the façade, the applicant is proposing three evenly spaced double hung 1/1 windows. On the East Leigh Street elevation of the brick portion of the structure, the applicant is proposing a mix of window sizes and an uneven placement pattern. At the rear, the applicant is proposing a shed roof projection to access a rooftop deck. The applicant is proposing a two story flat roof mass projecting from the rear of the gable roof structure. This element will be clad in lap siding. The applicant is proposing a 2nd story balcony at the rear and a 1st story deck.

The applicant is seeking **Conceptual Review** for this project. Conceptual review is covered under Sec. 30-930.6(d) of the City Code: The commission shall review and discuss the proposal with the applicant and make any necessary recommendations. Such Conceptual Review shall be advisory only. Commission staff reviewed the project through the lens of the “Standards for New Construction:

Residential” on pages 44 and 45 of the *Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* utilizing the checklist below.

S=satisfies

D=does not satisfy

NA=not applicable

S **D** **NA**

New infill construction should respect the prevailing front and side yard setback patterns in the surrounding district

The structure is built to the front and side lot lines. The applicant has not provided a context site plan for staff to determine the compatibility of the siting though staff notes that the adjacent buildings are not built to the property lines as the structures in the surrounding blocks have a front yard setback. The proposed lack of front yard setback is consistent with corner commercial development in the district.

Where the adjoining buildings have different setbacks, the setback for the new building should be based on the historical pattern for the block

The proposed siting is consistent with the siting of the mixed use building which previously stood on the property. The siting is also consistent with corner commercial properties found in the district.

New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site

The structure addresses North 28th Street with the commercial storefront though the front door faces the corner. Historically, development at this corner has addressed North 28th Street.

New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the district. Form refers to the combination of massing, size, symmetry, proportions, projections and roof shapes that lend identity to a building.

The project is similar in scale to the structure which historically stood on the property. The proposed side gable roof form is an element that can be found on homes in the district.

Staff has concerns that the shed roof projection that begins at the ridge of the gable roof at the rear is not a roof form found in the district. Though dormers from gable roofs are found in the district, the proposed projection does not read as a dormer and causes the rear of the structure to read as a three story building.

While the corner entrance and storefront are characteristics of commercial structures in the district, the Commission may wish to consider if this is an appropriate building form for a residential structure.

New construction should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps.

The proposed project incorporates human-scale elements including a store front cornice and an at-grade corner entry. The Commission may wish to consider if these commercial elements are appropriate on a residential building. The Guidelines encourage human scale elements to be included on the secondary, corner elevation for corner properties. The applicant has wrapped the storefront cornice around the corner and provided a corner entry. The Commission may wish to consider if additional elements are needed on the side elevation such as possibly incorporating the proposed triple window into a projecting bay.

New construction should respect the typical height of surrounding buildings

The typical heights of the surrounding buildings are 2 to 2 ½ stories. The applicant has not provided a dimensioned context elevation for staff to review. Staff has concerns that the rear of the structure will read as a three story structure.

New construction should respect the typical width, organization of bays, vertical alignment and symmetry of surrounding buildings.

The project is of similar width to the single family homes on the block and the mixed use structure which stood on the site. The proposed project does maintain the vertical alignment and the symmetry of the surrounding buildings on the facade. Staff has concerns that the symmetry is not maintained on the visible side elevation.

The size, proportion, and spacing patterns of doors and window openings should be compatible with patterns established in the district.

The typical fenestration pattern in the district includes evenly spaced ranked windows. The Commission's Guidelines for Corner Properties note that windows and doors on the corner elevations should be organized following the principals of the primary elevation to include being aligned vertically. Staff has concerns about the irregular rhythm of the windows on the East Leigh Street elevation. Staff recommends the applicant consider a more consistent pattern on this visible elevation.

Porch and cornice heights should be compatible with adjacent buildings

The applicant has not provided a dimensioned context elevation for staff to review. The Commission's Guidelines for Corner Properties note that particular attention should be paid to the height of foundations to create an appropriately scaled appearance that relates to neighboring structures and is consistent with neighboring properties and that heights should be kept to a level that will enhance, not detract, from the pedestrian experience. It appears the foundation height is appropriate but dimensions are needed to confirm.

- Materials used in new construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district. Vinyl, asphalt, and aluminum siding are not permitted.**

The applicant has not provided a description of materials. The structure appears to be clad in a mix of lap siding and brick. As the building sits proud of the adjacent structures and is setback approximately 3 feet, staff recommends the gable portion on the north elevation of the structure be brick not siding as proposed as it will be visible from North 28th Street and should be clad in a consistent material.

The following items will need to be included for final review (please refer to the Commission's New Construction Checklist and Required Dimensions document for additional details):

1. Fully dimensioned elevations
2. Roof plan
3. List of windows and doors to include size, material, and design
4. Description of all materials (attach specification sheets if necessary)
5. Site plan to include trash and mechanical equipment locations
6. Dimensioned context elevation
7. Dimensioned context site plan
8. Photographs of the site and neighboring properties
9. Statement of how the *Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* informed the proposed work.