



Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia



Commission of Architectural Review

6. COA-115904-2022	Conceptual Review Meeting Date: 8/23/2022
Applicant/Petitioner	Katie Harrigan, 3North
Project Description	Rehabilitate an existing one-story commercial building, and construct a new four story, mixed-use building.
Project Location	
Address: 912 Tulip Street	
Historic District: Union Hill	
High-Level Details: The applicant requests conceptual review of a proposal to construct a new, 4-story, multi-family building and to rehabilitate a one-story masonry commercial building circa 1940's. The new multi-family building will be "L" shaped, and will wrap the north side and rear of the commercial building. The primary façade of the multifamily building will be clad in brick and feature front balconies. There will be 4th floor set back from Tulip Street. The existing commercial buildings will be rehabilitated including the repair of the existing slate mansard roof, parapet walls, and windows. The non-original, frame gable roof will be removed. A set-back rooftop patio and pergola will be added to the top of the existing buildings.	
Staff Recommendation	Conceptual Review
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, alex.dandridge@rva.gov , (804) 646-6569
Previous Reviews	None.
Staff Recommendations	Multi-Family Building: - Applicant consider additional ways to further subordinate the 4th floor. - First floor porch on the Tulip Street elevation feature steps and an entrance. - A uniform cornice, brick, or channel feature be used across all elevations to better visually unify the building.

	• A line of sight drawing be submitted with the final review that demonstrates the visibility of the side elevations of the new building, the portion of the new building behind the existing commercial building, and the rooftop pergola from Tulip Street. • A consistent fenestration pattern be used, and windows be wood or aluminum-clad wood. • Number of materials used be reduced. • Three story massing of the building be clad in brick, and the four story section be clad in either brick or a combination of brick and horizontal siding. • Location of all exterior mechanical equipment be submitted with the final review of the application. • A site plan which shows the location of all new sidewalks, landscaping, and parking lots in relation to the new construction be submitted with the final review. • Rear parking area feature a screening mechanism that encloses the parking area on the north and south facades. Commercial Building: • Gable roof on the commercial building be removed in a way that doesn't cause any damage to any existing historic material. • Brick be repaired and repointed using mortar that is similar in color and composition to the existing. • New storefront windows and brick pilasters match the historic photo provided by staff as closely as possible. • Four southern facade steel windows be restored and retained. • The 4-pane window on the north façade of the commercial building be repaired and maintained.
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Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
Siting, pg. 46, #2-3	<i>2. New residential infill construction should respect the prevailing front and side yard setback patterns of the surrounding block. The minimum setbacks evident in most districts reinforce the traditional street wall.</i>	The subject block has lost much of its historic fabric, with the exception of a small masonry service station at the corner of Tulip & Venable Street and a one-story commercial building. The primary façade of the new multi-family building will be setback from the sidewalk

		further than the neighboring commercial building, which has a zero setback, while the front porch and balconies of the new multi-family building will be aligned with the commercial building, abutting the sidewalk. Staff finds that the proposed setback gives deference to the neighboring commercial building, and is generally in-keeping with setback patterns established in the district.
Form, pg. 46, #1-3	<i>1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district.</i> <i>2. New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic residential construction in the district</i> <i>3. New residential construction and additions should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps into their design.</i>	The proposed new construction will be a maximum of 4 stories, which is taller than most residential and commercial buildings in the district. In the immediate area, there are 2 larger historic buildings, a 3-story masonry colonial revival building built in 1923 located at 2230 Venable street, and a 4-5 story masonry, industrial building built between 1890-1915 located at 2401-2413 Venable Street. More recently, new 3&4 story multi-family housing was reviewed and approved by the CAR in 2017 along Jessamine Street, which is located at the rear of the subject property. <u>Staff recommends that the applicant consider additional ways to further subordinate the 4th floor.</u> The new building will feature stacked, steel porches on the Tulip Street façade. The first level porch will not feature steps or a street entrance onto the porch. Staff finds that primary facades that feature front porches are common in the district, however include front stairs which enhance the pedestrian scale of buildings. <u>Staff recommends that the first floor porch on the Tulip Street elevation of the new multi-family building feature steps and an entrance.</u> The applicant proposes to rehabilitate the existing commercial building. Currently, the commercial building features windows that are smaller than the original storefront windows. Photographic documentation demonstrates that the building originally featured large store front windows. Staff notes that the configuration did include the glass block window located on the south bay of the front façade. The applicant proposes to remove this window.

		Staff does not find the glass block window to be a character defining feature and feels that increasing the amount of transparency between the store and street creates a more successful pedestrian realm. <u>Staff recommends that the new store front windows on the existing commercial buildings match the configuration seen in the historic photograph as closely as possible.</u>
Height, Width, Proportion, & Massing, pg. 47, #1-3	<i>1. New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.</i> <i>2. New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in the surrounding historic districts.</i> <i>3. The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i>	The new construction is taller than a majority of the surrounding historic residential buildings, but is compatible in height to the newer construction in the immediate area. The conceptual design features a few cornice features, most prominently on the primary façade, where a brick cornice detail separates the lower two stories from the third story, and then another more traditional cornice feature on the roof line of the third floor. Then another traditional cornice feature is present on the fourth floor. In addition there are horizontal bands used to reference cornice lines on the building. The brick cornice and traditional cornice features on the three story section of the multi-family building wrap front the front and around the sides, and then terminate on the southern and northern elevations of the building. Unsure of visibility, <u>Staff recommends that a uniform cornice, brick, or channel feature be used across all elevations to better visually unify the building.</u> Staff notes that many buildings within the Union Hill City Old and Historic District are simple in design and feature limited cornice elements and materials.
New Construction, Doors and Windows, pg.49 #3	<i>3. The size, proportion, and spacing patterns of doors and window openings on free standing, new construction should be compatible with patterns established in the district.</i>	The new construction will feature single and paired windows that are generally vertically aligned. Staff finds that this configuration is appropriate for the district. The windows on the portion of the new construction behind the existing commercial building are not vertically aligned, and feel disjointed from the overall fenestration pattern of the building. Staff is unsure of the visibility of these windows given the

		proposed pergola and setback of this portion of the building. <u>Staff recommends that a line of sight drawing be submitted with the final review that demonstrates the visibility of the side elevations of the new building, the portion of the new building behind the existing commercial building, and the rooftop pergola from Tulip Street. Staff also recommends that the proposed new building have a consistent fenestration pattern.</u> Staff notes that the rear of the building will not be visible from Tulip Street and there is no rear alley. Windows are proposed to be fiber glass, 1/1. Staff notes that fiberglass is not a common material approved with new construction and <u>recommends that the new multi-family building feature windows that are wood or aluminum clad wood.</u>
New Construction, Materials & Colors, pg. 53	<i>2. Materials used in new construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the surrounding neighborhood.</i> <i>5. Rooftop mechanical equipment should be located as discretely as possible to limit visibility. In addition, appropriate screening should be provided to conceal equipment from view. When rooftop railings are required for seating areas or for safe access to mechanical equipment, the railings should be as unobtrusive as possible, in order to minimize their appearance and visual impact on the surrounding district.</i>	The applicant is proposing to use a variety of materials on the new building including brick veneer, fiber cement panels, and 6" board and batten siding. While the material selection is generally compatible with historic materials used in the district, staff finds that the amount of materials should be reduced, as many buildings within the Union Hill City Old and Historic District are simple in design and feature a limited material selection. Furthermore, vertical siding, such as board and batten, is not a prevalent historic cladding material in the district. <u>Staff recommends that the number of materials used on the new multi-family building be reduced, noting that brick and horizontal siding are appropriate cladding materials for the district.</u> <u>Staff recommends that the three story massing of the new building be clad in brick, and the four story section be clad in either brick or a combination of brick and horizontal siding.</u>
Mechanical Equipment, pg. 68	<i>The visual impact of new mechanical equipment should be minimized to protect the historic character of the district.</i>	<u>Staff recommends that the location of all exterior mechanical equipment be submitted with the final review of the application.</u>

Site Improvements, Sidewalks & Curbs, #7, pg. 76	<i>Sidewalks and curbs should be built of common building materials found throughout the District. Generally, simple paving designs are more compatible with the diverse building styles and better unify the various elements found on streets</i>	<u>Staff recommends that a site plan which shows the location of all new sidewalks, landscaping, and parking lots in relation to the new construction be submitted with the final review.</u> Sidewalks in Union Hill are mostly constructed of either brick or concrete.
Site Improvements, Parking Lots, #1, pg. 77	<i>Parking lots should be broken up as much as possible with interior landscaped islands and should be well screened from the public right-of-way and adjacent properties.</i>	<u>A rear parking lot will be provided underneath the second story. To better visually ground the building, staff recommends that the rear parking area feature a screening mechanism that encloses the parking area on the north and south facades.</u>
Standards for Rehabilitation, #9, pg. 5	<i>New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.</i>	The applicant proposes to rehabilitate an existing commercial building located on the subject property which was built in two sections, the first being in 1941, and the second being in 1946. The commercial building currently features a non-original frame gable roof which may have been added sometime in the 1980's. The building is painted white and features non-original windows on the front facade, and original steel windows on the southern façade. The applicant proposes to remove the non-original gable roof form, to repaint the building white, remove the non-original front façade windows and install storefront windows to match the historic configuration, and to repot and repair brick as needed. No information was given on the four southern façade original windows. <u>Staff recommends that the gable roof be removed in a way that doesn't cause any damage to any existing historic material, that the brick be repaired and repointed using mortar that is similar in color and composition to the existing brick, that the new storefront windows and brick pilasters diving them match the historic photo provided by staff as closely as possible, and that the four southern facade steel windows be restored and retained.</u> There is one small four-pane window on the north façade of the commercial building. Staff

		believes that this window is a unique feature that will remain visible from Tulip Street. <u>Staff recommends that the 4-pane window on the north façade of the commercial building be repaired and maintained.</u>
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Figures



Figure 1. Existing Steel windows on commercial building



Figure 2. Existing conditions. Subject Block



Figure 3. Service station at Tulip Street and Venable Street. Subject property located behind.



Figure 5. Historic Image, approx. 1956



Figure 7. 4-pane window on north elevation of commercial building.

Figure 4. Existing commercial building looking southwest from Tulip Street.

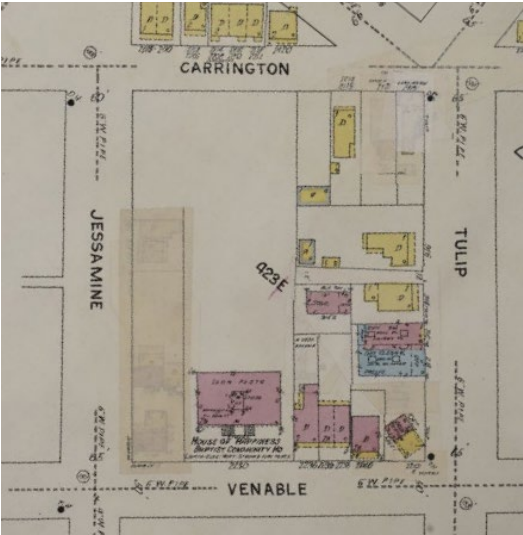


Figure 6. Sanborn Map 1950