



Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia



Commission of Architectural Review

4. COA-165910-2025	Final Review	Meeting Date: 5/27/2025
Applicant/Petitioner	Nathanial Marcus	
Project Description	Extend the rear porch of a single family home, and construct a pergola.	
Project Location		
Address: 601 North 23rd Street, Richmond, VA 23223		
Historic District: Union Hill		
<p>High-Level Details:</p> <p>The applicant proposes the extension of an existing porch and the construction of a new pergola, at the rear of the 2015 home. The porch extension will connect to the existing rear porch, while the pergola will serve as an overhead architectural feature above the extended deck, which will be visible from the public right-of-way. Materials proposed include wood framing and lattice, Richmond-style railings, and composite or pressure-treated decking.</p>		
Staff Recommendation	Approval, with Conditions	
Staff Contact	Yara Iwaz, Yara.Iwaz@RVA.gov, (804)646-6031	
Previous Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2015: The commission approved the construction of two attached single-family houses (at 601 and 601 ½ N 23rd) 	
Staff Recommendations	<p>Staff finds that the proposed porch extension and pergola are compatible with the guidelines for additions and rear-yard structures within the District. Staff recommends approval with the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confirm the total height of the pergola Submit final paint colors for all visible elements, including the pergola Ensure any new construction does not impact site drainage or neighboring foundation conditions. 	

Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
Standards For New Construction (Including Additions): Residential, Siting, Page 46	<i>1. Additions should be subordinate in size to their main buildings and as inconspicuous as possible. Locating additions at the rear or on the least visible side of a building is preferred.</i>	<p>The Guidelines offer little guidance about small, auxiliary structures such as arbors and pergolas. It does, however, note that outbuildings should be compatible with the design of the major buildings on the site, and respect the materials and colors of the main structure. The Guidelines also suggest that new auxiliary structures should be located to the rear or side of the property to emphasize that they are secondary to the main residence.</p> <p>The proposed porch extension is placed at the rear of the structure and appears to be compatible in both scale and material (Figure 1)</p> <p>The pergola appears to be aligned with the lowest point of the sloped roof; however, the total height is not clearly noted in the drawings.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends that the applicant confirms the total pergola height.</u></p>
New Construction, Residential Outbuildings, pg. 51	<p><i>1. Outbuildings, including garages, sheds, gazebos and other auxiliary structures, should be compatible with the design of the primary building on the site, including roof slope and materials selection.</i></p> <p><i>2. Newly constructed outbuildings such as detached garages or tool sheds should respect the siting, massing, roof profiles, materials and colors of existing outbuildings in the neighborhood.</i></p>	<p>The use of wood for the porch extension and pergola aligns with traditional materials found in the district.</p> <p>The applicant has provided image precedents of neighboring pergolas (Figure 10 and Figure 11), which appear to inform the design of the new pergola addition (Figure 1 and Figure 2)</p> <p>However, specific <u>paint colors have not been provided.</u></p> <p>Staff recommends that <u>applicant submits proposed paint colors for final review and approval.</u></p>
New Construction, Residential Outbuildings, Decks, pg. 51	<p><i>3. Deck design may include vertical picket balustrades or contemporary railing that is in scale with the house and the deck.</i></p> <p><i>4. Deck sub-decking should be screened with wood lattice work or with brick piers.</i></p>	<p>The use of painted Richmond rail and wooden lattice enclosure is consistent with district character and surrounding structures.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends ensuring any new construction does not adversely affect site drainage or adjacent building foundations.</u></p>

It is the assessment of staff that, with the conditions above, the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation and New Construction outlined in Section 30-930.7 (b) and (c) of the City Code, as well as with the Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines, specifically the pages cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.

Figures



Figure 1

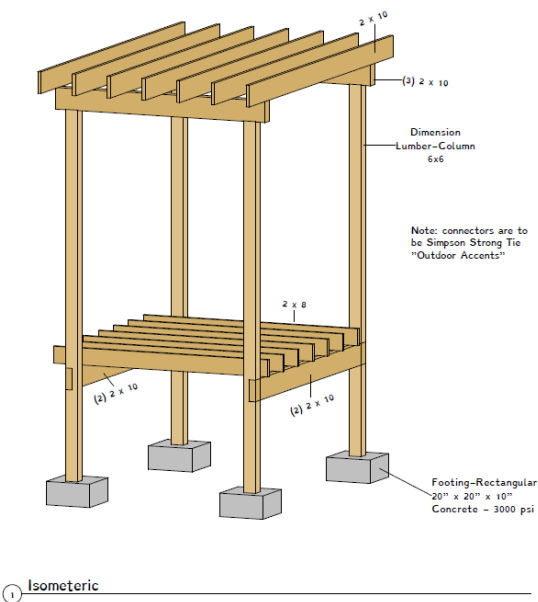
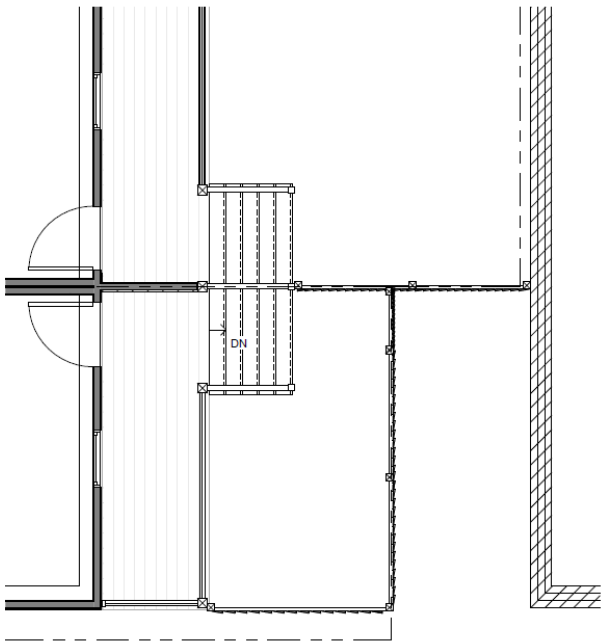
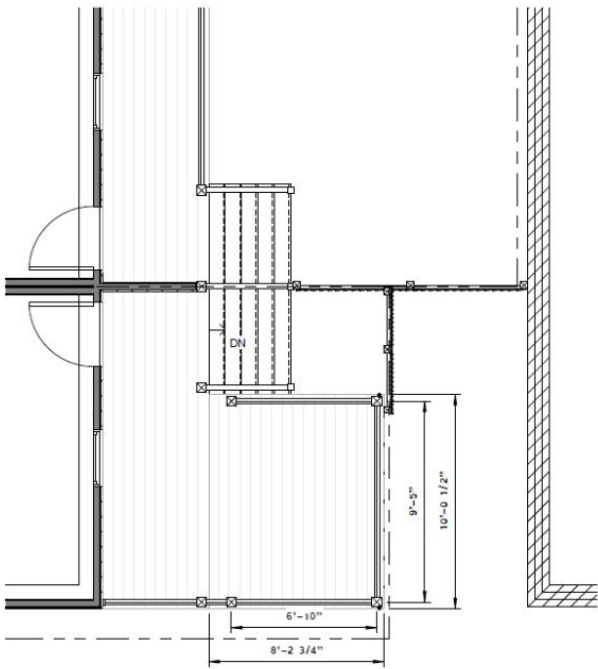


Figure 2



2 1st Floor - Existing
1/4" = 1'-0"

Figure 3: existing first floor



1 1st Floor - Proposed
1/4" = 1'-0"

Figure 4: proposed first floor

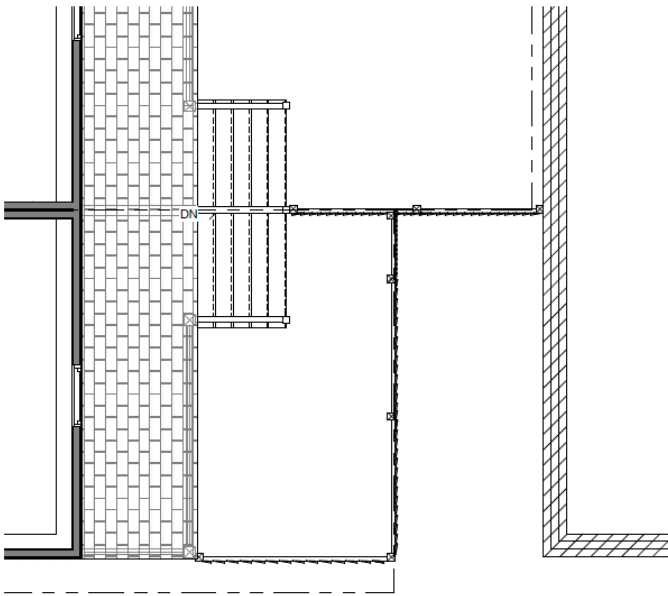


Figure 5: existing second floor

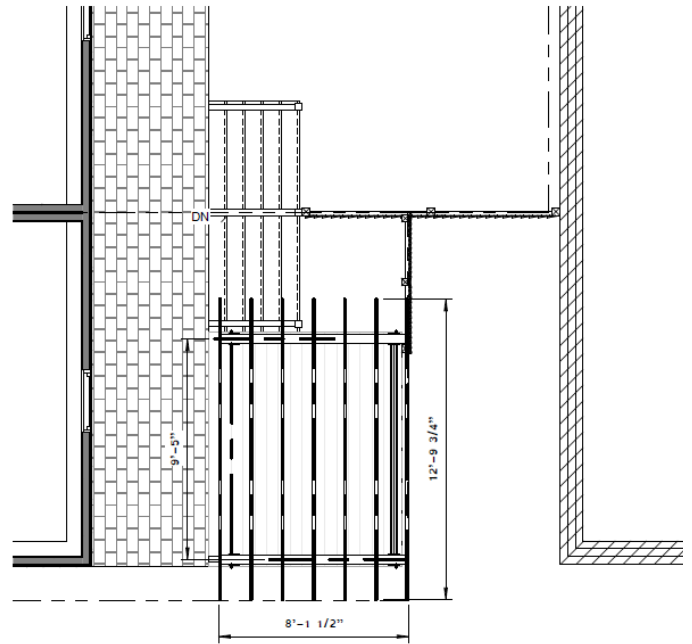
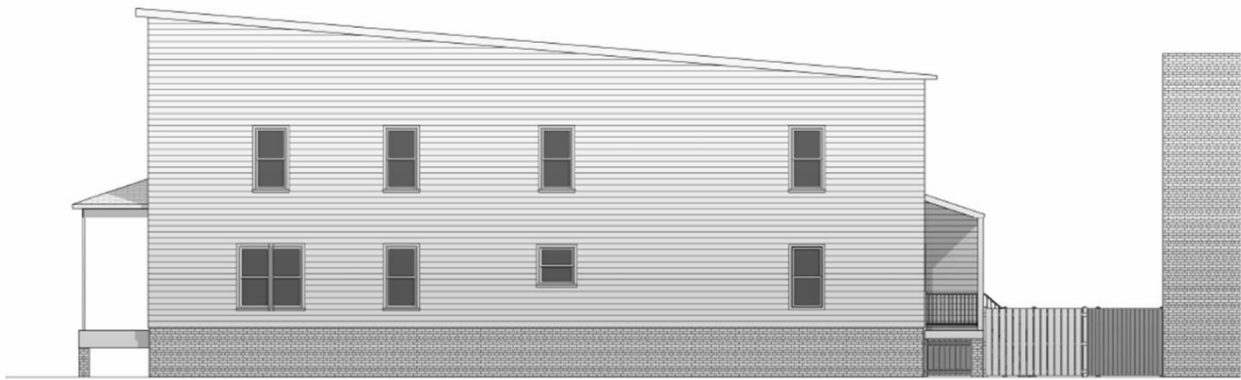
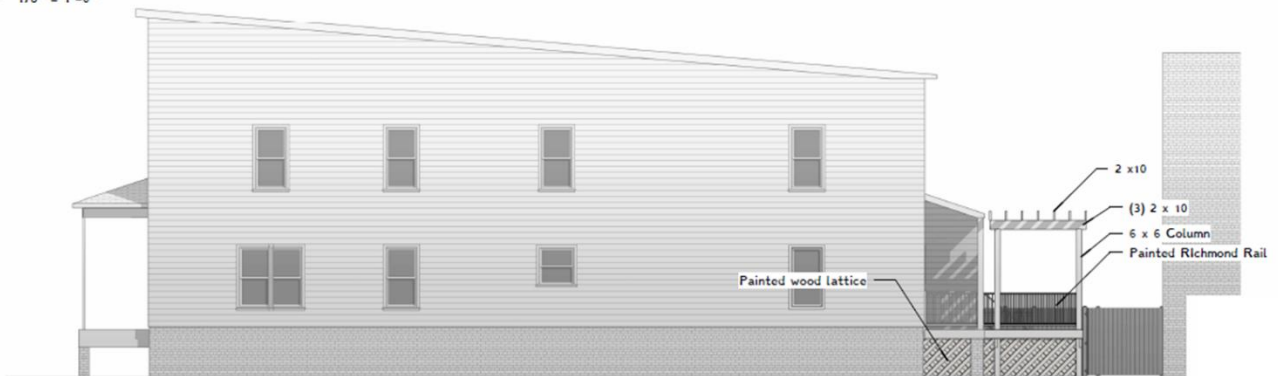


Figure 6: proposed second floor



2 Existing South
1/8" = 1'-0"



1 Proposed South
1/8" = 1'-0"

Figure 7: existing and proposed south elevations



Figure 8: backyard of 601 N 23rd St



Figure 9: backyard of 601 N 23rd St



Figure 10: example of neighboring pergola at 506 N 23rd St.



Figure 11: example of neighboring pergola on M St.