

20. COA-055426-2019

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

June 25th, 2019

PROPERTY ADDRESS

2412-2416 Venable Street

DISTRICT

Union Hill

Commission of Architectural Review

STAFF REPORT



APPLICANT

Eastern Edge Development

STAFF CONTACT

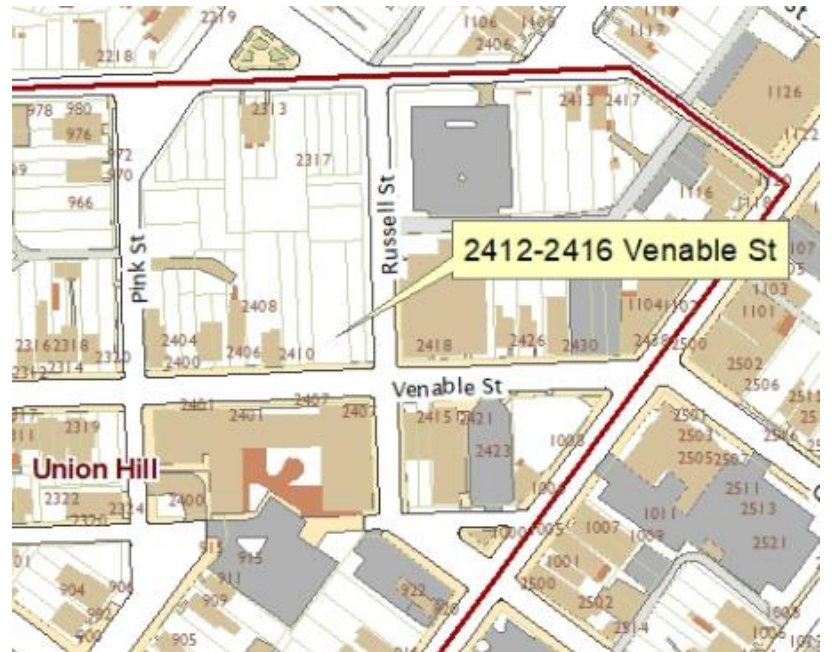
C. Jones

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Construct ten, new, single-family townhouses.

PROJECT DETAILS

- The applicant proposes to construct ten new, single-family townhouses on a vacant lot at the corner of Venable Street and Russell Street in the Union Hill City and Old Historic District.
- The ten townhouses will be divided evenly into two rectangular-shaped masses. One mass will have the long edge of the rectangle fronting onto Venable Street. The second mass will be placed parallel to it, with the short end facing onto Russell Street.
- The townhouses will be slab on grade, wood frame construction. They will be three stories, 33 feet, in height.
- Proposed materials include a TPO roof, masonry, fiber cement siding, metal panels, and fiberglass windows and doors.



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CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

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" on pages 44, and 46-56 of the Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines utilizing the Guidelines presented below.

PREVIOUS REVIEWS

The Commission has not previously reviewed this application.

SURROUNDING CONTEXT

The surrounding area is a mix of residential buildings and institutional buildings. On the same block of Venable Street there is a mix of historic and new residential buildings. The adjacent property contains a two-story, three-bay masonry building with a raised foundation and a one-story, full-width porch. Other residential buildings include a pair of semi-attached two-story dwellings, a single dwelling, and mixed use building on the corner of Venable and Pink Streets. Directly across Venable Street from the project site is a four- to five-story masonry warehouse that is now residential in use. Across Russell Street is Shiloh Baptist Church, a one-story masonry building. The other corner of Venable and Pink is developed with a pair of two-story, semi-attached, frame dwellings, also with raised foundations. There are also a number of vacant lots on the block including at the corner of Russell Street and Carrington, and facing onto Russell Street.

STAFF COMMENTS

- The two masses are not sited in a manner that is consistent with the historic development patterns in the district; staff recommends the siting be redesigned to reinforce the typical street walls on side streets and to address the corner property guidelines.
- Staff recommends that the design include human scale element such as front steps and porches.
- The perforated metal panels are not a material used to mimic openings in the surrounding district.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Siting, pg. 46, #s2-3	<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 applicant proposes two 3-story, 5-section masses placed parallel to each other. Staff finds that this is partially in keeping with the <i>Guidelines</i> . The Venable Street-facing mass will reinforce the traditional street wall, as suggested by the <i>Guidelines</i> . The Russell Street elevation is not in keeping with the historic development patterns for the district and does not maintain the street wall created by the side walls of corner buildings or buildings facing the street as is typical for the area.
	<i>3. New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site.</i>	The Venable Street massing faces the prominent street bordering the property. The rear mass faces the rear of the lot, not a street.
Form, pg. 46 #s1-3	<i>1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district.</i>	The surrounding area is a mix of free-standing residential buildings and row houses. Staff finds the proposed attached buildings are in keeping with the surrounding district.
	<i>2. New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic residential construction in the district.</i>	The proposed buildings are three stories in height. Staff finds this maintains the human scale of the surrounding district.
	<i>3. New residential construction and additions should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps into their design.</i>	The rendering for the proposal does not include a cornice line, porch, or front steps.
Height, Width, Proportion, & Massing, pg. 47, #s1-3	<i>1. New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.</i>	Based on the elevations provided, the buildings will be taller than the other residential buildings in the area.
	<i>2. New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in surrounding historic districts.</i>	In general, the proposed buildings will have vertically aligned openings on the facades.
	<i>3. The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i>	Based on the elevation provided, the cornice height will not align with the neighboring building.
Materials and Colors, pg. 47, #s2-4	<i>2. Materials used in new residential construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.</i>	The applicant proposes a mix of materials include fiber cement and masonry which staff finds are compatible with the original materials in the district.

		The applicant also proposes perforated metal panels in place of window openings. Staff finds that this is not visually compatible with other materials in the district.
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 within the district.</i>	The façades utilize a vertically aligned fenestration pattern, consistent with the other buildings in the historic district.
New Construction, Standards for New Construction: Corner Properties – Residential, pg. 48	<p><i>1. Secondary elevations of corner properties should reference massing similar to other corner locations in the historic district.</i></p> <p><i>2. The material used in the primary elevation should be continued along the second, corner elevation.</i></p> <p><i>4. Windows and doors on the secondary, corner elevation should be organized following the principals of the primary elevation: windows should be proportioned appropriately, aligned vertically, and arranged as though designing a primary elevation.</i></p> <p><i>5. For residential corner properties, we strongly encourage the use of architectural elements that are typical of residential corner properties in Richmond's historic districts: porches that turn from primary to secondary elevations, corner towers, projecting bay windows, side entrances (including porticos, and shed roofs, where appropriate), side porches, lighting related to that on the primary elevation, and other similar treatments that treat the secondary corner elevation as an architecturally important elevation.</i></p>	The applicant has not provided information about the proposed secondary elevations. Based on the available information, it appears that the rear mass is not sited in a manner that is consistent with the <i>Guidelines</i> for corner residential properties.
New Construction, Porches and Porch Details, pg. 49#4	<i>Faux balconies (flat, applied constructs with no depth) are discouraged. Small projecting balconies are acceptable.</i>	Staff finds the proposed Juliet balconies are not a feature found in the district and are not in keeping with the <i>Guidelines</i> .

FIGURES

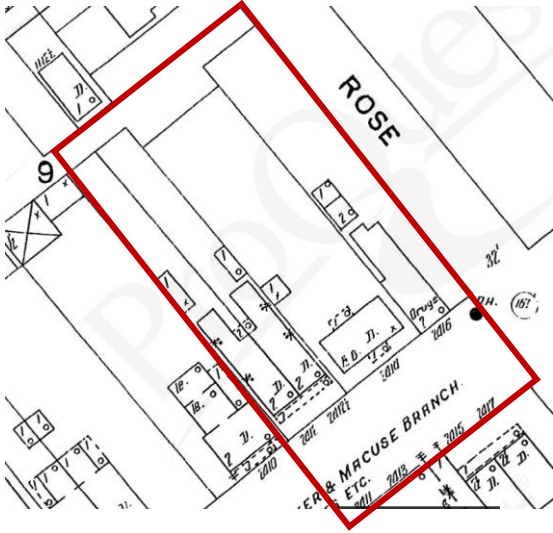


Figure 1. 1905 Sanborn Map.

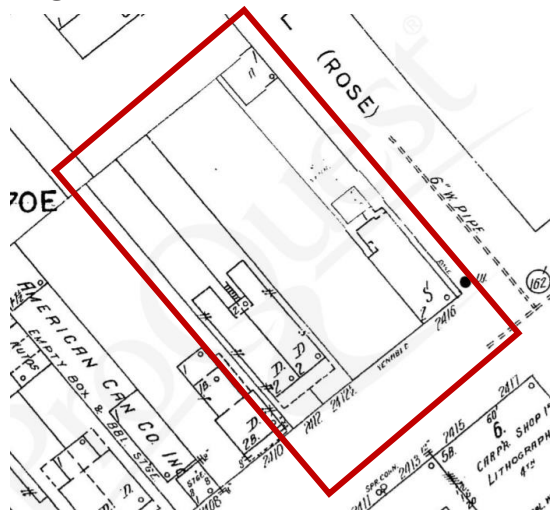


Figure 2. 1919-1952 Sanborn Map.



Figure 3. 2412-2416 Venable Street



Figure 4. 2412-2416 Venable Street, view from Russell Street.



Figure 5. Former warehouse, now residential building.



Figure 6. 2410 Venable Street.