

10. COA-091741-2021

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

May 25, 2021

PROPERTY ADDRESS

2516 E. Leigh Street/602-608 N.26th Street

DISTRICT

Church Hill North

Commission of
Architectural Review

STAFF REPORT



APPLICANT

Evolve Development, Inc

STAFF CONTACT

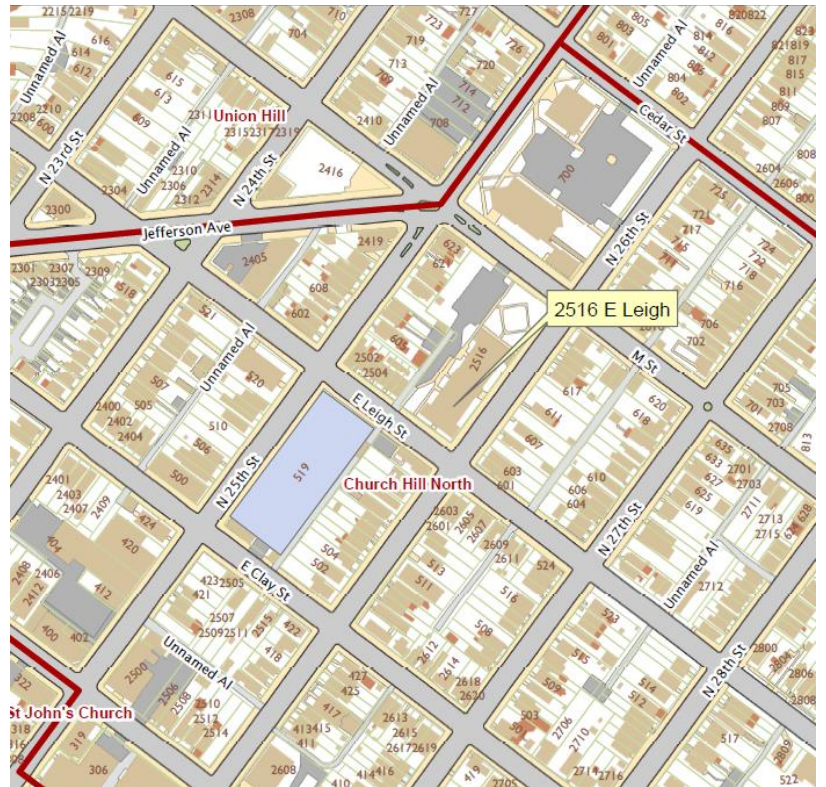
C. Jones

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

New construction of nine single-family attached and detached dwellings.

PROJECT DETAILS

- The applicant proposes new construction of nine single-family attached and detached dwellings on a vacant portion of the Bowler School parcel. Seven of the units will face M Street, the other two will face N. 26th Street.
- The proposed buildings are a mix of configurations including:
 - Two stories above a crawl space with an attic level (618 & 620 N. 26th Street)
 - three stories above a full English basement (2501, 2501, 2509 M Street)
 - three stories with a full English basement with a mansard roof with a single, central dormer (2503, 2505, 2511 M Street)
- The applicant proposes a mix of brick and lap siding, one-over-one double-hung windows, and standing seam metal for the mansard roofs and membrane for the porch roofs.



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The seven residences facing M Street will have two-car garages served by a newly created alley. The application will require a special use permit.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

DEFER

PREVIOUS REVIEWS

The Commission previously reviewed this application at the April 27, 2021 meeting. In terms of the proposed siting, the Commission suggested that greater separation between the historic school building and the proposed buildings is necessary and referenced a recently approved similar project as an example. In terms of the overall design, form, and massing the Commission recommended joining the two dormers, consideration of front porches, and a design element that turns the corner such as a brick course. A Commission member stated that it appears that there is an English basement design, which would require the additional feature of a guardrail. The Commission also discussed the windows and shutters and suggested that the windows on the lower level should be taller than the ones on the upper level, and that in general the proportions should be addressed for consistency. The color of the brick was also discussed.

The Commission also addressed the issue of the green space currently on the lot, and whether this was historically open space for the school. The Commission expressed concern about that open space adjacent to the school, stated that it appears to have been there for about 100 years, possibly used as a playground, and discussed whether the Commission should preserve it.

Finally, the Commission discussed with the applicant the need for a special use permit. The applicant responded that the permit was necessary to address reconfiguring the lot, which will change the by-right use of the number of units in the former school building, and that the applicants wanted one extra unit for lower-income residents, which also requires a special use permit.

APPLICANT RESPONSE

In response to Commission feedback the applicant has: relocated the 620 M Street unit, added a horizontal element at the first-floor level, changed the porches to a one-story full-width pattern and removed the metal screening, removed the shutters and incorporated large windows on the first floor, removed the second dormers and updated the roofing materials.

The applicant submitted a copy of a Sanborn map showing the original school and dwellings on the site. Staff notes that the school shown on this Sanborn map was demolished in order to construct the current building on the site. Staff could not confirm if the dwellings were also demolished to accommodate the new school building and playground spaces.

STAFF COMMENTS

- a consistent window size be used on the M Street elevation of 620 N. 26th Street and a complete window schedule with the window sizes be submitted
- the applicant consider ways to screen the garage door
- the applicant submit information about the location of the HVAC units

STAFF ANALYSIS

Siting, pg. 46,
#s2-3

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.

Currently there are no buildings facing M Street on the subject block. Staff notes the applicant proposes to set the façades back five feet on both M and North 26th Streets.

The applicant has moved the building proposed for 620 N. 26th Street to the corner lot lines. Staff notes that the applicant did not respond to the Commission suggestion to increase the space between the historic school building and the proposed building at 618 N. 26th Street, and recommends the applicant reconfigure the siting, form, and massing of this unit to respond to Commission feedback. Staff notes the side yard for 620 N. 26th Street increased in size, and suggests this could allow for moving the building at 618 N. 26th Street closer to M Street as well.

3. New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site.

The proposed buildings face both M and North 26th Streets.

Form, pg. 46
#s1-3

1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district.

The applicant proposes three-bay, three-story buildings with one-story, full-width porches. Staff notes that there are a variety of building forms and heights in the surrounding area. The applicant proposes a variety of roof forms including mansard with dormers, shed, and front gable with side dormers. Staff finds there are a variety of roof forms in the immediately surrounding areas including stepped parapets, hipped, and shed.

2. New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic residential construction in the district.

The applicant proposes three-story buildings with different roof forms. Staff finds the majority of the purpose-built residential building are two stories in height with one-story porches. However, there are a number of taller buildings in the immediate area, including the former Bowler School and the funeral home.

3. New residential construction and additions should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps into their design.

In response to Commission feedback, the applicant has changed the proposed porches. The applicant now proposes one-story, full-width porches. Staff finds that this is in keeping with the historic buildings found in the surrounding area.

Height, Width,
Proportion, &
Massing, pg.
47, #s1-3

1. New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.

Based on the elevation provided, it appears the buildings will be approximately 36'-6" on the corner of M Street and North 26th Street and approximately 41 feet from grade for the end unit at 2501 M Street.

2. New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in surrounding historic districts.

The applicant proposes horizontally and vertically aligned openings in keeping with patterns found in the district.

The applicant has updated the plans to include larger windows on the first story and smaller windows on the second and third story. Staff notes the building at 620 N. 26th Street has differently sized windows on the first story facing M Street, and recommends a consistent window size be used in this location. The applicant has also removed one of the dormer windows from the buildings at 618 and 620 N. 26th Street. Staff requests a complete window schedule with the window sizes be submitted.

3. The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.

The applicant proposes three-story buildings on M Street which will be a story taller than the neighboring building at 623 N 25th Street, though as noted above there are a number of taller buildings in the surrounding area.

Materials and Colors, pg. 47, #s2-4	<p><i>2. Materials used in new residential construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.</i></p>	<p>In response to Commission feedback, the applicant has updated the roofing materials to be standing seam metal on the visible roof slopes, and lightened the color of the exterior brick veneer. Staff recommends <u>the final material specifications, including colors, be submitted for review and approval.</u></p> <p>Staff notes that in response to Commission feedback the applicant has removed the metal porch screens.</p>
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>The applicant proposes a unit facing M Street and a freestanding unit facing North 26th Street. The applicant proposes brick material and horizontally and vertically aligned windows along both elevations.</p> <p>In response to Commission feedback, the applicant has added a stringcourse at the level of a raised foundation. Staff notes the new porch roofs also add a continuous horizontal element along M Street.</p> <p>Staff notes that the buildings proposed for 2501 – 2507 M Street follow an A-B-B-A pattern while the buildings at 2509 M -620 N 26th Street follow an A-B-B-C pattern. Staff notes that the corner building faces N. 26th Street; however, staff also finds that it does not relate to the neighboring buildings that face M Street.</p>
New Construction, Doors and Windows, pg. 56, #5	<p><i>5. With larger buildings, applicants are encouraged to develop multiple entry points (doors), in keeping with historic precedent for the building type in question. Single entry points - such as a single garage entrance accompanied by single pedestrian entrances are not in keeping with historic precedent, which demonstrates that most large buildings had multiple pedestrian entry points.</i></p>	<p>The applicant proposes interior garages accessed by a newly created alley. Staff finds that this is not a feature found in the historic district and recommends the applicant <u>consider ways to screen the garage doors.</u></p>
Mechanical Equipment, pg. 68	<p><i>The visual impact of new mechanical equipment should be minimized to protect the historic character of the district.</i></p>	<p>The applicant has not provided information about the location of the proposed HVAC equipment <u>and staff requests this be submitted in a subsequent application.</u></p>
Shutters, pg. 70	<p><i>21. Wood shutters must be functional (mounted on hinges) and not nailed or fixed to the wall surface...</i></p>	<p>The applicant has removed the shutters from the proposed plans.</p>

22. Metal and vinyl shutters are not recommended, particularly for the front façades of buildings.

Fences & Walls,
pg. 51

- 1. Fence, wall, and gate designs should reflect the scale of the historic structures they surround, as well as the character of nearby fences, walls, and gates.*
- 2. Fence, wall, or gate materials should relate to building materials commonly found in the neighborhood.*

Brick walls are proposed between the North 26th Street townhouses and the two groups on M Street. Staff finds that they are in scale with the proposed buildings, though notes that there are not many brick walls in the surrounding area.

FIGURES

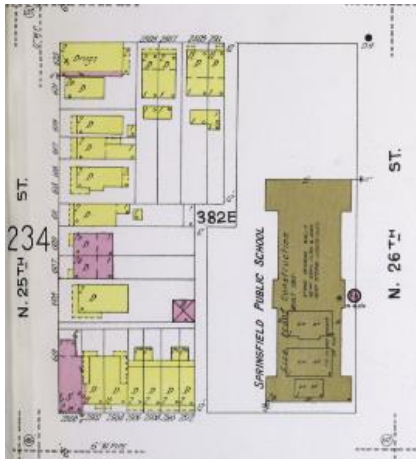


Figure 1. Sanborn map, 1925.

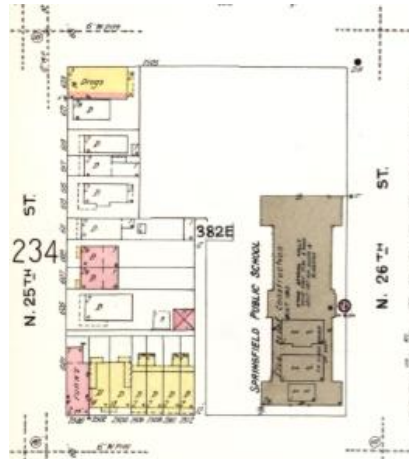


Figure 2. Sanborn map, 1952.

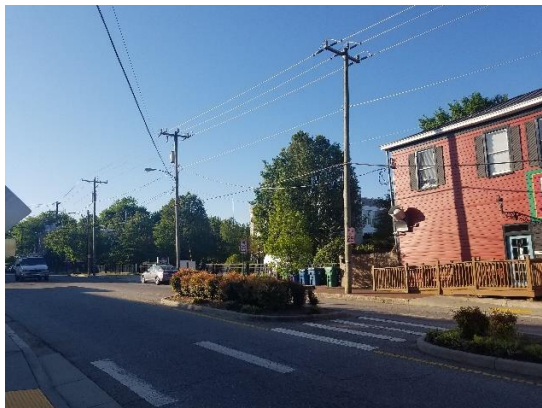


Figure 3. Project location, view east on M Street.



Figure 4. Project location, view north from N. 26th Street.

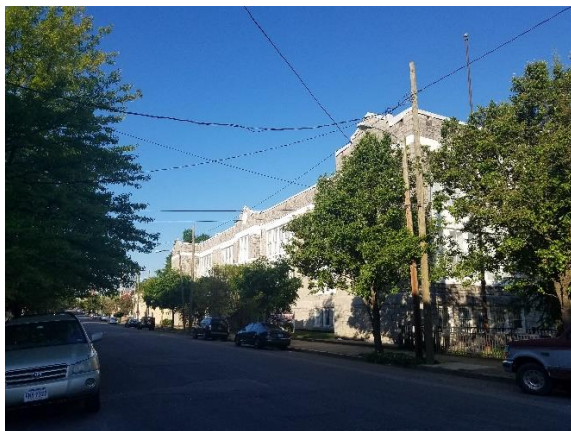


Figure 5. Former Bowler School.



Figure 6. 623 N. 25th Street, building adjacent to the project site.



Figure 7. 700 N. 26th Street, located across M. Street from project site.



Figure 8. 617-624 N. 26th Street, across N. 26th Street from the project site.