



Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia



Commission of Architectural Review

10. COA-144129-2024	Final Review Meeting Date: 3/26/2024
Applicant/Petitioner	Will Gillette, Baker Development Resources
Project Description	Construct four single family dwellings in groups of two.
Project Location	
Address: 810-812 N. 22 nd Street	
Historic District: Union Hill	
<p>High-Level Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant proposes to construct 4 buildings as two pairs on vacant corner lots. The new construction will be located at the corner of Burton Street and 22nd Street. • The townhomes will be three stories tall, featuring a setback third floor and patio. • The new construction will be frame with full-width front porches. • The land is currently vacant. 	
Staff Recommendation	Deferral
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, alex.dandridge@rva.gov , (804) 646-6569
Previous Reviews	<p>The Commission conceptually reviewed this application at the November 2023 meeting. Comments from Commissioners included asking the applicant to consider the height of the proposed three-story buildings. Some Commissioners expressed that the height of the building would be less of a concern if there was more diversity in architectural style amongst the new construction. An English basement form was suggested to accomplish the desired space while limiting the overall height. The 2300 block of Venable was asked to be studied as a good example of uniform buildings that featured pedestrian scale elements while still appearing to be distinct from one another. The Commission asked that the buildings have porches and stoops. The massing was not discussed in length, but it was recommended that the individual units could be in groupings of two rather than two and three.</p>
Staff Recommendations	<p>Staff recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Against the use of setback third floors on the facades of the new buildings. • The height of the buildings be reduced to better resemble the typical height of residential buildings on the subject block. • Final material and color specification be submitted for administrative approval.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information on hardscaping for sidewalks, alleys, and any parking pads, including materiality and dimension be submitted for Administrative Review. Details on any proposed walls or fences be submitted for Administrative Review.
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Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
Standards For New Construction, page 46	<i>All new residential and commercial construction, whether in the form of additions or entire buildings should be compatible with the historic features that characterize the setting and context. To protect the context of the surrounding historic district, new construction should reference the materials, features, size, scale, proportions, and massing of the existing historic buildings in its setting.</i>	<p>The proposed buildings will be constructed on corner, vacant lots. There is an altered CMU, mid-century building, new construction, and two historic buildings adjacent to the site on 22nd Street.</p> <p>The applicant has revised the plans since the conceptual review to include architectural features that are compatible with the district such as full-width front porches, and two-over-two windows that are vertically aligned, and front doors with transom windows.</p> <p>The new buildings will be three stories tall, the first two stories being more traditional in design, and the third floor being set back with a roof terrace screened behind a faux mansard.</p> <p>The Commission has approved third floor roof decks with set back third floors or stair tower projections. It is staff's opinion that this form is not compatible within historic districts, specifically on highly visible corner lots and in more modestly scaled districts such as Union Hill.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends against the use of setback third floors on the facades of the new buildings.</u></p>
Standards For New Construction: Siting, page 46	<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>	<p>The setbacks of the new buildings will be approximately 11'9" from the facade of the building to the sidewalk. This setback is like the setback of other dwellings in the district and reinforces the street wall.</p>
Standards For New Construction: Form, page 46	<i>1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district. Building form refers to the specific combination of massing, size, symmetry, proportions, projections, and roof shapes that lend identity to a building.</i>	<p>Massing: The massing of the units appears to be narrower and taller than what is typically seen on the subject block. They will be approximately 14'8" wide, with the building directly adjacent to the corner of 22nd and Burton Street being 19'6" wide, stepping back to 14'8" wide toward the rear.</p> <p>Symmetry: The new construction is generally symmetrical; however, the pair of buildings directly adjacent to the corner of 22nd street and Burton Street will have roof features that wraps the corner.</p> <p>Proportions: The buildings will have third floor projections with front terraces. <u>Staff recommends that the third-floor projections and front facing roof decks be removed from the plans.</u></p> <p>Roof shapes: the buildings will have a small, steeply pitched standing seam metal roof which will also serve</p>

		as a railing/barrier to the roof terrace. The third-floor projections appear to have flat roofs.
Standards For New Construction: Form, page 46	<i>2. New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic, residential construction in the district.</i>	During the conceptual review, the proposed buildings did not feature any human scale elements. The plans have been revised to include full-width front porches that address the front sidewalk and street.
Standards for New Construction: Height, Width, Proportion & Massing, page 47	<p><i>1. New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.</i></p> <p><i>2. New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in surrounding historic districts. New designs that call for wide massing should look to the project's local district for precedent. For example, full-block-long row house compositions are rare in Richmond. New residential buildings that occupy more than one third of a block face should still employ bays as an organizational device, but the new building should read as a single piece of architecture.</i></p> <p><i>3. The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i></p>	While there are a couple larger, taller masonry buildings in the immediate area, they are institutional/religious buildings, most residential buildings in the immediate area are two stories. The proposed buildings will be three stories tall (36'8") with setback third floors. <u>Staff recommends that the applicant reduce the height of the units to better reference the typical height of residential buildings on the subject block.</u>
Standards for New Construction: Materials & Colors, page 47	<i>2. Materials used in new residential construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.</i>	<p>The new construction will be clad in horizontal siding, which generally resembles other types of horizontal siding found within the district.</p> <p>Roofs will be standing seam metal. Windows will be aluminum clad wood.</p> <p>The trim will be a composite material. Porches and decking will be wood. The foundation will be parged masonry.</p> <p>Staff finds that the selected materials are appropriate for the district.</p> <p><u>If they differ from what is presented in this application, Staff recommends that all final material and color specification be submitted for administrative approval.</u></p>
Standards For New Construction: Doors and Windows, page 56	<i>2. The size, proportion and spacing patterns of door and window openings on free-standing new construction should be compatible with patterns established in the district.</i>	The building will have single windows that are vertically aligned. There are smaller windows atypical of the district on the setback third floor; however, these are not in a highly visible location.

<p>Site improvements: Sidewalks & Curbs, page 76</p>	<p><i>4. Brick or granite pavers are the most appropriate choice in most Old and Historic Districts.</i></p> <p><i>5. Existing granite curbing should be retained whenever possible.</i></p> <p><i>6. Sidewalk design should allow for the installation of appropriate urban landscaping.</i></p>	<p><u>Staff recommends that information on hardscaping for sidewalks, alleys, and any parking pads, including materiality and dimension be submitted for Administrative Review.</u> Appropriate paving for the Union Hill City Old and Historic District includes brick pavers, granite pavers, and gravel.</p>
<p>Standards for New Construction, Residential, Fences & Walls, pg. 51</p>	<p><i>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.</i></p> <p><i>2. Fence, wall, or gate materials should relate to building materials commonly found in the neighborhood.</i></p> <p><i>3. Privacy fences along the side and rear of a property should be constructed of wood of an appropriate design. Privacy fences are not appropriate in front of a historic building.</i></p>	<p>No information was given on any walls or fences that will be installed in association with the new construction. <u>Staff recommends that details on any proposed walls or fences be submitted for Administrative Review.</u> Walls and curbing will require review by the Commission, whereas wooden fences may be administratively approved if in compliance with the Commission's adopted Administrative Approval guidelines.</p>

Figures

Figure 1. View looking northeast on Venable Street.



Figure 2. Religious building at the corner of N. 21st Street and Venable Street.



Figure 3. Looking north on Venable Street at the corner of N. 22nd Street.



Figure 4. Vacant lot between Venable Street and Burton Street.



Figure 5. Vacant lot at the intersection of N. 22nd Street and Burton Street.



Figure 6. View looking southeast from the intersection of N. 22nd Street and Burton Street.



Figure 7. 1905 Sanborn Map. 2111-2119 Venable Street features mostly frame, two story buildings with front porches. All were demolished between the 1970's-1990's. As of 1905, there were not any buildings on the corner of Burton Street and 22nd Street that fronted on Burton Street.

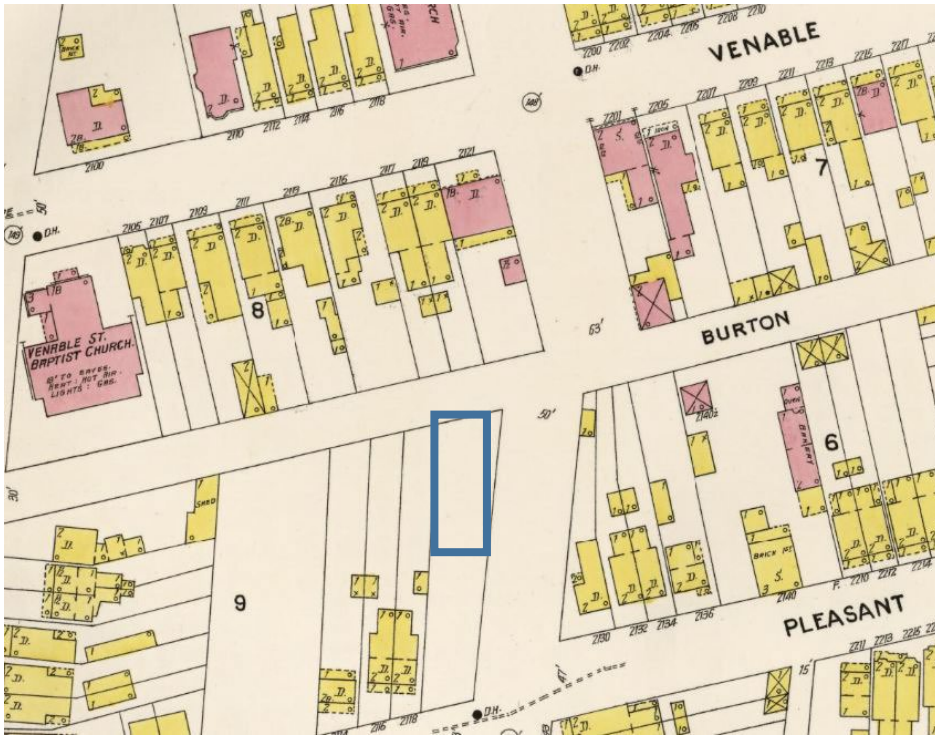


Figure 8. Subject block (2111-2119 Venable) in historic configuration, built-out. Photographs ~1955-1977. 2115 Venable picture below may not be the original building on that site.

