

**13. COA-050433-2019**

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

March 26, 2019

PROPERTY ADDRESS

411 North 22<sup>nd</sup> Street

DISTRICT

Church Hill North

APPLICANT

R. & M. Ferguson

STAFF CONTACT

C. Jones

# Commission of Architectural Review

## STAFF REPORT



**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

**Construct a new, single-family residence.**

**PROJECT DETAILS**

- The applicant requests permission to construct a single-family house with off-street parking on a narrow, vacant lot. The proposed building is two stories in height, three bays wide and has a shed roof and a two-story porch on the façade.
- Due to site constraints the applicant proposes to incorporate a garage into the rear of the building with access from the existing alley.
- Exterior materials include smooth hardiplank in Evening Blue and hardiplank trim in Arctic White; wood aluminum-clad windows, wood four-panel doors with transoms, and a six-panel metal garage door in the alley-facing elevation. Richmond rail, roof-mounted HVAC units, and half-circle gutters are also proposed.
- Decorative details include window hoods with decorative corbels and keystones on the façade, and corbels along the cornice line.



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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 area surrounding the project location is primarily residential in character. North of the property there are a group of semi-attached frame residencies, two-stories in height with one-story, full-width porches. There is also a two-story mixed-use building with ground floor commercial and second story residential uses. Across the street are the side yards of the properties along East Marshall Street and Jefferson Avenue. To the south are the rear yards of the properties in the 2200 block of East Marshall Street. In general, the architectural character of the surrounding area is wood frame, residential buildings, two stories in height with simple Italianate details, primarily porch brackets and cornice brackets.

Commission and Zoning staff have researched the site history and identified an alley in common behind the rear yards of the houses on the 2200 block of East Marshall Street (see Figure 1). It appears this alley aligns with the

existing curb cut.

**STAFF COMMENTS**

The applicant has applied to the Board of Zoning Appeals to waive the three-foot setback requirement for both side yards. The Board of Zoning Appeals will hear the case at the May 1st, 1:00 PM meeting. If the Board of Zoning Appeals denies the applicant's request, the width of the house will need to be reduced to fourteen feet and the applicant will need to return to the Commission with revised plans.

Staff recommends against the internal garage. Staff acknowledges that zoning regulations require a parking space for new residential construction; however, the space is not required to be internal to the building. Staff recommends the applicant reduce the length of the house to be more in keeping with the general patterns in the neighborhood to allow for a parking space at the rear of the property.

Staff recommends the following design changes:

- Reconsider the interior spaces and incorporate a more aligned fenestration pattern on the visible bays of the side elevations.
- Narrow the front porch stairs and move the middle column closer to the door so that it is aligned with the space between the door and the middle window rather than blocking the middle window.
- Removal of the window keystone and corbels to simplify the decorative details to be in keeping with the surrounding architectural character.
- Removal of the 2<sup>nd</sup> story porch on the façade as it is not a common feature on single-family homes in the district.

Staff requests additional information for the following:

- The proposed window materials.
- The location of the HVAC equipment be shown on a roof plan, and elevations and proposed screening options if required.
- Staff has concerns with the existing topography on the site and requests a topographic survey and information on how the applicant will address the change of grade at the rear of the property.
- Staff notes that the elevations are mislabeled and requests the applicant update the labels for final review.

**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>	According to the proposed site plan provided by the applicant, the face of the proposed building will be aligned with the buildings at 413-415 and 417 North 22 <sup>nd</sup> Street. The same site plan indicates the porch and stairs will project in front of the neighboring buildings.
	<i>3. New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site.</i>	The proposed building will face North 22 <sup>nd</sup> Street, the prominent street bordering the site.
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 proposed building is mostly rectangular in form. Staff finds that this is in keeping with other residential properties in the historic district.
	<i>2. New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic residential construction in the district.</i>	The proposed building is two stories in height, which is consistent with the surrounding buildings in the district.

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

The proposed building has a cornice line with panels and brackets, a two-story, full-width porch, and a set of front steps. Staff finds that the two-bay porch is not balanced with the three-bay window configuration. Staff recommends narrowing the front porch stairs and moving the middle column closer to the door so that is aligned with the space between the door and the middle window instead of blocking the middle window.

The applicant proposes a two-story porch and has provided examples of other two-story porches in the district. Staff finds that some of the examples are not original to the district and that other examples are integrated into the design of the building and are recessed behind the face of the building, instead of projecting in front of it. Some of the examples provided also do not appear to be original to the dwellings or are associated with multi-family buildings. Staff recommends denial of the two-story porch.

Staff also finds the exterior details, including the keystones and corbels, are not in keeping with the generally plain architectural character of the area. Staff recommends simplifying the exterior decoration.

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

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

The proposed building is two stories, 26 feet and four inches, in height. Staff finds that this is in keeping with other buildings on North 22<sup>nd</sup> Street which the applicant has indicated are 26 feet in height.

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

The proposed building will have vertically aligned openings on the façade, similar to the neighboring residential buildings.

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

The streetscape provided by the applicant indicates that this building will be compatible with the height of the surrounding residential buildings.

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Materials and Colors, pg. 47, #s2-4

*2. Materials used in new residential construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.*

The proposed plans call for smooth fiber cement lap siding in Evening Blue. The foundation will be have a brick veneer, and the trim will be smooth fiber cement, in Arctic white. Staff finds these colors and materials are in keeping with those found in the district.

*3. Paint colors used should be similar to the historically appropriate colors already found in the district.*

*4. Vinyl, asphalt, and aluminum siding are not permitted for use in City Old and Historic Districts. Other synthetic siding materials*

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*with a smooth, untextured finish may be allowed in limited cases, but approval by the Commission is always required.*

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New Construction, Doors and Windows, pg. 49 #3, 4

*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.*

The east (alley) side elevation windows on the first story are different sizes and not horizontally aligned. On the second story they appear to be both vertically and horizontally aligned. On the west elevation the proposed design includes a mix of window sizes and styles which are not aligned. Staff recommends the applicant reconsider the interior spaces and incorporate a more aligned fenestration pattern on the visible bays of the side elevations.

The applicant proposes a side-loaded garage with access from the alley in order to provide the required parking space for a residential building. Staff finds that this is not a form typically found in urban districts and is concerned about the incorporation of a modern element (garage door) into a house with traditional features. Staff suggests the applicant reconsider the size of the house, perhaps reducing the length to be more in keeping with other houses in the district to allow for a parking space in the rear yard of the property.

Staff did additional research into free-standing residential buildings in City and Old Historic Districts with internal garages and found three examples. One example, 2901 East Broad Street, predates the designation of the district. Two examples, 2400 East Franklin and 9 North 30<sup>th</sup> Street are properties located at the end of a dead-end street or alley and are not in highly visible locations. Staff also notes that all three are designed in response to the existing sloped topography and are screened by a wall and or vegetation. Staff recommends that any internal garage door openings be screened by a wall and/or vegetation.

Staff further notes that there are two large, multi-unit buildings that utilize a street-size garage entrance in City and Old Historic Districts: 530 North Arthur Ashe Boulevard and 2901 Monument Avenue. The designs of both of these large, multi-unit buildings incorporate additional fenestration to balance the large garage door openings. Staff recommends that if the plans incorporate a large garage door from the alley, additional fenestration be added to

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		<u>the second story to provide visual balance and cohesion.</u>
	<i>4. Because the material cannot be manufactured to model effectively the appearance of historic windows, vinyl windows are not appropriate for buildings in historic districts.</i>	The applicant proposes to use the MW Jefferson 300 series window. Staff has determined that these do not meet the <u>Guidelines. Staff requests the applicant submit additional window specifications for final review.</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>	The applicant proposes to install the HVAC equipment on the roof of the building. <u>Staff requests the location of the HVAC equipment be shown on a roof plan and elevations for final review with details for how the equipment will be screened if it is determined to be visible from the street or alley.</u>
Building and Site Accessibility, pg. 79	<i>Regrading is any adjustment made to the slope or land leading up to any exterior entrance to a property.</i>	Staff notes that the property contains built-up land towards the rear of the property that is not reflected in the proposed elevations. <u>Staff has concerns with how the applicant is going to address the existing topography on the site and requests a topographic survey and information on how the applicant will address the change of grade at the rear of the property.</u>

FIGURES

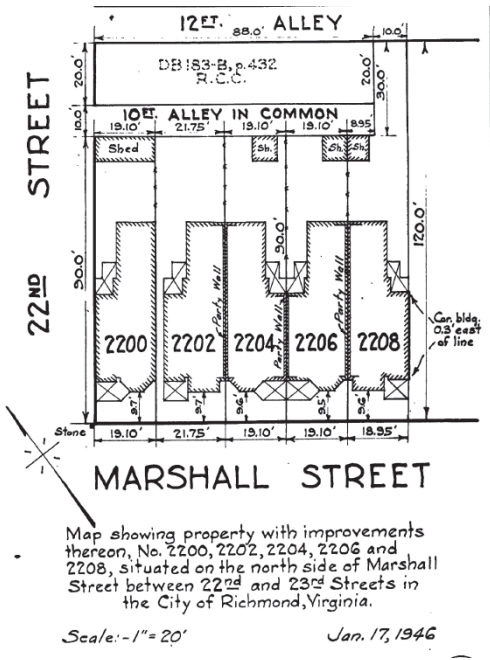


Figure 1. 1946 Survey indicating common alley at the rear of East Marshall Street properties.

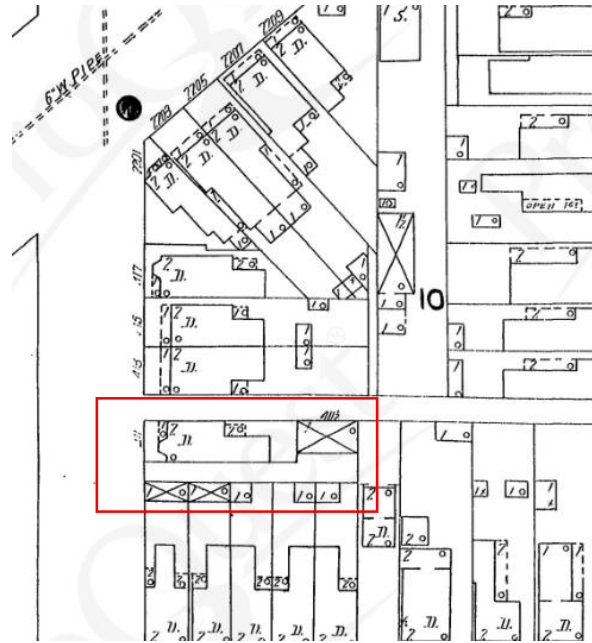


Figure 2. 1905 Sanborn Map.

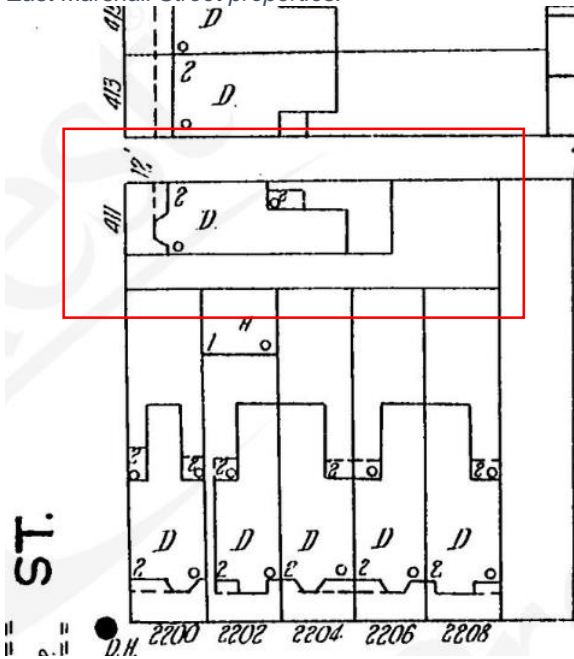


Figure 3. 1925 Sanborn Map.

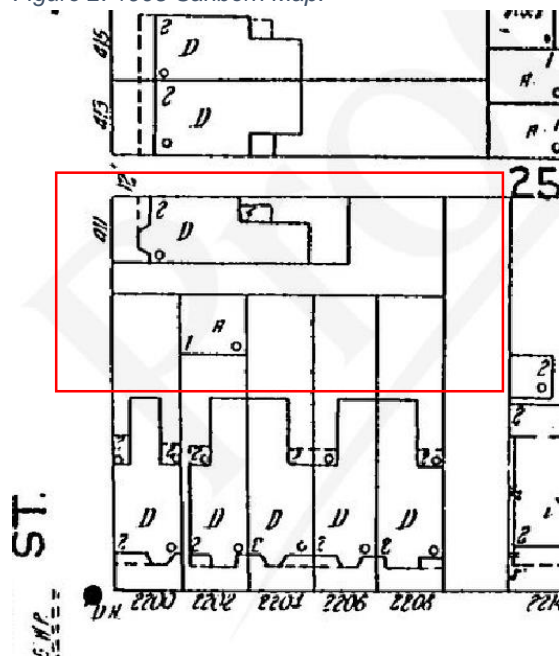


Figure 4. 1919-1952 Sanborn Map.



Figure 5. 411 North 22nd Street.



Figure 6. 411 North 22nd Street, view of rear of property from alley.



Figure 7. 413-415 North 22nd Street.



Figure 8. 417 North 22nd Street.



Figure 9. View south along North 22nd Street.



Figure 10. View north from North 22nd Street and East Marshall Street.



*Figure 11. 2200 block of East Marshall Street.*



*Figure 12. 2100 block of East Marshall Street.*