

## 12. COA-050780-2019

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

March 26, 2019

PROPERTY ADDRESS

2901 M Street

DISTRICT

Church Hill North

APPLICANT

C. Harris

STAFF CONTACT

C. Jones

# Commission of Architectural Review

## STAFF REPORT

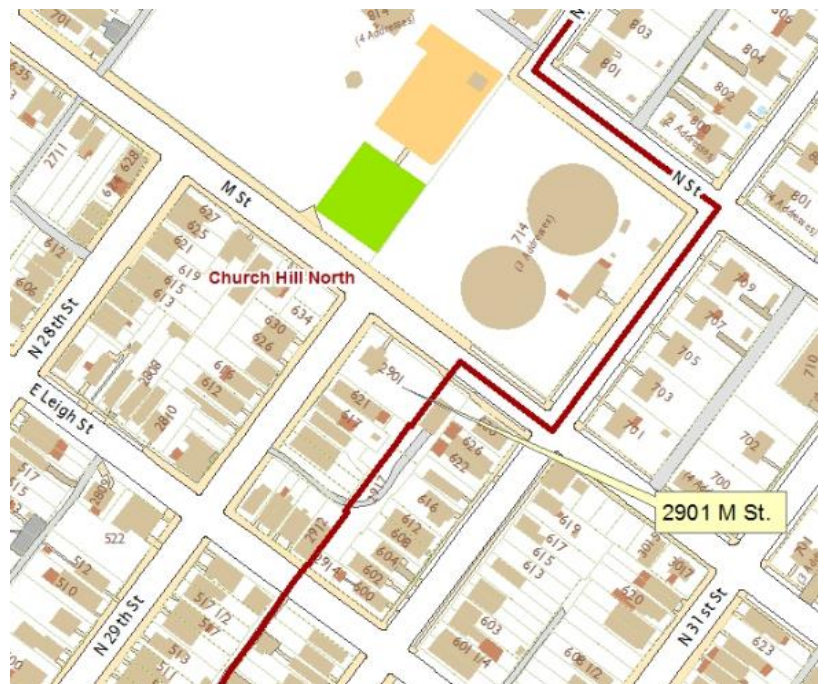


### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

**Construct two new, semi-attached, multi-family residences.**

### PROJECT DETAILS

- The applicant requests approval to construct two new, semi-attached, multi-family residences. Each of the two buildings will be a duplex with two three-story units.
- Each building will have a false mansard and shed roof, smooth exterior siding, and a brick foundation.
- The façade (north elevation) will be four bays wide with two shed-roof porches, four windows on the second story, and four front-gable dormers on the third story. The rear elevation will have a single door and window on the first story and two horizontally and vertically aligned windows on the second and third story.
- Proposed materials include asphalt shingles for the roof, composite trim, K-style gutters and downspouts. The applicant proposes double-hung, aluminum clad, composite windows. For the porch the applicant proposes composite columns, rails, balusters, and ceilings.
- The applicant also proposes a curb cut from 29<sup>th</sup> Street to allow for a rear driveway. This proposal has been reviewed with the Department of Public Works and they have indicated this is the preferred option instead of a curb cut on M Street.



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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

**DEFER**

### PREVIOUS REVIEWS

The Commission reviewed this application at the conceptual level during the February 26, 2019 meeting. During conceptual review, the Commission considered two scenarios: one included retaining the existing historic building on the property and constructing a set of three attached residential buildings. The other scenario included demolishing the existing building and constructing two sets of three buildings. The Commission was nearly unanimous that the existing historic building on the property should not be demolished. Some of the Commissioners recommended consideration of an addition onto the existing house or a building that helps to transition from the historic house to the new construction but does not overshadow the existing house. In terms of the design, the Commission suggested a lower roof slope so that the dormers could be recessed from

the front of the buildings and that the dormers be reduced in size or number so that they are secondary to other windows on the façade. Some of the Commissioners felt that the dormers were unnecessary while others pointed to more successful dormers on new construction in the area. The Commission also recommended increasing the size of the window openings.

In terms of the massing, the Commission suggested the applicant consider four evenly balanced units instead of three, with a break in the massing between the units. The Commission also expressed that the style was not distinct, neither historic nor contemporary, and suggested other successful examples of new construction. The Commissioners agreed that the driveway and rear internal garages are not a form found in the district.

The applicant has responded to Commission feedback and no longer plans to demolish the existing historic house on the property. The applicant has moved the buildings closer to M Street and has redesigned the massing to include two, semi-attached buildings on the property. The applicant has also removed the interior garages from the plans, though the driveways remain in order to accommodate the necessary parking spaces. The applicant has added a door at the rear of the buildings. The applicant has also submitted a site plan which indicates the HVAC equipment will be located at the rear of the buildings.

Staff from the Zoning Division have completed a preliminary review of the proposed project and have identified that the “lock-out” units in the proposed plans do not meet the zoning requirements for a lot this size. Should the applicant remove this from the plans, then zoning requirements will likely be met, otherwise a Special Use Permit may be required.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS**

- Staff recommends deferral of the application to allow the applicant the opportunity to provide additional design details and to resolve the zoning requirements.
- Staff recommends that the applicant either consider a design with traditional massing, proportions, and exterior details, or consider incorporating modern design elements that reference the architectural language of the surrounding area.
- Staff requests the applicant provide additional details including: dimensioned elevations for all sides of the buildings, a context elevation, a door and window schedule, and specifications about the proposed materials.

**STAFF ANALYSIS**

Standards for New Construction, pg. 46

*All new residential and commercial construction, whether in the form of additions or entire buildings, should be compatible with the historic features that characterize their 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 building or buildings in its setting. However, compatibility does not mean duplicating the existing buildings or environment. In order to avoid creating a false sense of history, new construction should also be discernible from the old.*

Staff acknowledges the applicant’s response to staff and Commission feedback provided during the conceptual review of the application. Staff appreciates the revisions to the design plans including removing the internal garages, and reconfiguring the bays and massing. Staff has concerns that overall form and massing, and lack of exterior details, do not reference the architectural language of the surrounding buildings. Staff recommends the applicant consider using a steeply pitched roof and traditional details, similar to the new construction at 2825 M Street, or utilize a modern design that is in keeping with the district, such as the building at 2900 East Leigh Street.

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

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

The majority of the surrounding buildings are two or two-and-one-half stories in height. Staff notes that new construction at 2825 M Street will be two-and-one-half stories in height with a

		steeply pitched side gable roof. The applicant has increased the size of the false mansard; however, staff finds that it is not deep enough to reference the surrounding buildings. <u>Staff recommends the applicant increase the pitch/deepen the roof slope to reference the historic house next door and the new construction at the corner.</u>
	<i>2. New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in surrounding historic districts.</i>	The applicant has realigned the windows on the façade and rear elevations. <u>However, some openings appear to be out of alignment and staff requests the applicant further align the windows.</u>
	<i>3. The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i>	The applicant did not provide a dimensioned elevation or a context elevation. <u>Staff requests the applicant provide detailed elevations and information about the height of the proposed buildings.</u> Staff notes the surrounding buildings on 29 <sup>th</sup> Street and M Street are generally two or two-and-one-half stories in height.
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 openings on the proposed façades appear to be smaller than what is typical for the district. <u>Staff requests the applicant increase the size of the window openings on all visible elevations to be more rectangular in form and to increase the size of the window panes, and provide a window schedule and dimensioned elevations.</u>  Staff also finds the dormer windows are not a size that is compatible with the district. <u>Staff recommends the applicant consider a shed roof dormer for each unit that references the proposed shed roof porches, or reduce the number of dormers.</u>  <u>Staff also recommends that applicant include window openings on the visible side elevation. Staff recommends these openings be appropriately sized and vertically and horizontally aligned.</u>
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>  <i>4. Vinyl, asphalt, and aluminum siding are not permitted for use in City Old and Historic Districts. Other synthetic siding materials with a smooth, untextured finish may be allowed in limited cases, but approval by the Commission is always required.</i>	The applicant proposes to use asphalt shingles for the roof, composite trim and porch details, K-style gutters and downspouts. The applicant further proposes double-hung, aluminum clad, composite windows. <u>Staff requests the applicant utilize materials appropriate for the district including a flat-lock metal or another appropriate material. Staff requests specifications for the proposed composite materials and windows be submitted for review.</u>



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**FIGURES**



*Figure 1. 2901 M Street*



*Figure 2. 2901 M Street, location of proposed driveway.*



*Figure 3. New construction at 2825 M Street.*



*Figure 4. New construction at 2900 East Leigh Street.*