



# City of Richmond

City Hall  
900 East Broad Street

## Meeting Minutes Commission of Architectural Review

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Tuesday, April 28, 2020

3:30 PM

5th Floor Conference Room (Virtual Meeting)

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**This meeting will be held through electronic participation means.**

City Hall is closed to the public and this meeting will be held through electronic communication means pursuant to and in compliance with Ordinance No. 2020-093, adopted April 9, 2020. This meeting will be open to participation through electronic communication means by the public and closed to in-person participation by the public.

Less than a quorum of Richmond City Commission of Architectural Review members will assemble for this meeting in the 5th Floor Conference Room of City Hall at 900 East Broad Street in Richmond, Virginia 23219, and most Commission members and other staff will participate by teleconference/videoconference via Microsoft Teams.

Special Guidelines for Public Access and Citizen Participation:

Audio of the meeting will be streamed live online at the following web address:  
<https://richmondva.legistar.com/Calendar.aspx>.

To listen to the meeting's live stream at the web address provided, find and click the link that reads, "In Progress" in the farthest right hand column entitled, "Video".

Interested citizens who wish to speak will be given an opportunity to do so by following the instructions below.

[PDRPRES  
2020.004](#) Public Access and Participation Instructions - Commission of  
Architectural Review

**Attachments:** [Public Access and Participation Instructions -COMMISSION OF  
ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW](#)

Citizens are encouraged to provide their comments in writing to [carey.jones@richmondgov.com](mailto:carey.jones@richmondgov.com) in lieu of speaking through audio or video means during the meeting.

When submitting your comments by email, be sure to include in your email (i) your full legal name, (ii) any organizations you represent, and (iii) any economic or professional relationships that would be affected by the approval of the application on which you are commenting.

The person responsible for receiving written comments is Carey L. Jones, Secretary to the Commission of Architectural Review.

All written comments received via email prior to 12:00 p.m. (noon) on Tuesday, April 28, 2020, will be provided to all members of the Commission of Architectural Review prior to the beginning of the meeting and will be included in the record of the meeting.

### Call to Order

Chairman James Klaus called the business portion of the April 28 meeting of the Commission of Architectural Review to order at 3:30 pm.

Secretary to the Commission, Carey L. Jones, read the announcement for virtual public meetings. This meeting of the Commission of Architectural Review was held as an electronic meeting pursuant to and in compliance with Ordinance 2020-093 due to the disaster represented by the spread of COVID-19. The public has been notified of this meeting and how to participate by a notice in the Richmond Times Dispatch, and an instruction sheet posted with the agenda on the Legistar website. Public comment will be heard for each item on the agenda after the applicant has responded to staff recommendations.

Commission members are electronically present using Microsoft Teams, none were physically present in City Hall.

### Roll Call

**Present --** 8 - \* Commissioner Sanford Bond, \* Commissioner James W. Klaus, \* Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., \* Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, \* Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, \* Commissioner Sean Wheeler, \* Commissioner Lawrence Pearson and \* Commissioner Mitch Danese

**Absent --** 1 - \* Gerald Jason Hendricks

### Approval of Minutes

February 25, 2020

**A motion was made by Commissioner Bond seconded by Commissioner Wheeler, that the February 25, 2020 Meeting minutes be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye --** 6 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Mitch Danese

**Excused --** 1 - Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

**Abstain --** 1 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr.

**OTHER BUSINESS**

## Secretary's Report

The Secretary's Report was provided by Ms. Jones.

City Hall is closed to the public until Sunday May 3rd. The mayor has extended the closure before so it's possible he'll extend this one. The next CAR meeting is scheduled for May 26th so it's likely it will be conducted as a virtual meeting.

The governor has rescheduled the primary election voting day to June 23rd, which coincides with the CAR meeting for that month. The Central Virginia Absentee Voter District has priority, so they will be using the 5th floor conference room. The June CAR meeting has been moved to City Council chambers, or it could again be conducted it as an electronic meeting. The ordinance that allows for virtual meetings allows them through September.

Staff changes: Kimberly Chen, formerly Manager and Planner III for the Preservation and Planning Department, has moved to a position in Economic Development, where she is focusing on Shockoe Bottom; her contact information has not changed. Joshua Son, formerly Secretary to the Urban Design Committee, has taken a Neighborhood Planner position for the City of Chicago. Both positions are currently unfilled. Ms. Jones is assisting with the Department Manager position, and Alex Dandridge is currently fulfilling the role of Secretary to UDC.

Planning staff who are working on the Richmond 300 Master Plan update are due to have a draft document available for viewing and comment in late spring. They are exploring ways to conduct virtual town hall and civic association meetings in order to get feedback from interested parties. Contact them if you would like more information or would like to get involved – richmond300@richmondgov.com is their email address. Richmond300.com is their website URL.

New Fee Schedule for Applications – Ordinance 2020-79 was recently introduced to establish fees for Certificate of Appropriateness applications. COA applications are currently the only applications within the Department of Planning and Development Review for which there is not a fee. The fee structure was developed by staff based on a review of fees charged by other urban localities, and fee amounts vary by application type. The ordinance was continued to the May 4, 2020 City Council meeting, but it is anticipated that it will be adopted. If so, July 1, 2020 is the target date to start charging the fees. Ms. Jones briefly reviewed the different types of fees, and explained that fees will not be charged for applications administratively approved by staff.

Budget cuts are being made this year in response to the economic impacts of COVID-19. Specifics are not yet known, but staff have been looking at ways to reduce costs, including printing and supplies. Due to the City Hall closure of the past month, hard copy applications were not taken, and staff reports were not printed this month. The cost in employee time and resources to prepare meeting materials has long been a subject of potential cost-cutting. Ms. Jones stated that she would appreciate some initial feedback from Commissioners, either in person or via email, about the current plan, which is to reduce paper output – not requiring multiple hard copies from applicants, and also not distributing hard copies of applications and staff reports to Commissioners.

Commissioner Klaus stated that the change should be okay, and that if people had

issues getting information and documents prior to the current meeting, they could email himself or Ms. Jones afterward so as to not use up meeting time.

#### Enforcement Report

Ms. Jones reported that in the past 6 weeks, there has been a significant increase in enforcement-related issues. Many enforcement notices have been issued, and it has been possible to address many of them with administrative approvals. So far they have been minor items such as painting and new fences.

#### Administrative Approval Report

Due to the March meeting being cancelled, the Administrative Approval and Building Permit Report is for the past two months. Ms. Jones stated that there were no significant approvals to mention, but that she would be happy to answer questions about any of them.

#### Updates

City Council has taken up the appeal for George Mason Elementary School and, due to other business that they have on hand, the appeal has been continued to the May 26, 2020 meeting.

The City Clerk's office determined that the applicant did not file a proper appeal within the specified time period and has not forwarded the appeal to Council. Ms. Jones has been in touch with the City Attorney's office regarding next steps for the department, as this is both a Zoning violation and a City and Old Historic District violation.

#### Other Committee Reports

UDC will hold a meeting next Thursday to review one application: a location, character, and extent review for updates to the Fonticello-Carter Jones Park Master Plan. The park is on the South Side and it is located within the boundaries of the Woodland Heights State and National Historic District. Ms. Jones stated she forwarded the application information to everyone this afternoon, and asked that Commissioners please forward any questions or comments to Alex Dandridge.

Chairman Klaus mentioned that he'd noticed a recurrence of graffiti at a house in Church Hill with which the Commission has had issues with in the past. Ms. Jones stated that staff had been made aware of this on Friday, April 25. Ms. Jones stated that she has spoken with the owner, who is related to the current tenant, on April 29th, and the owner stated that he would address some of the issues, and that he had been to the property already to clean up some of the items in the front and side yard. The owner stated that he plans to address issues with the occupant, and then deal with the exterior. Ms. Jones will meet again with the owner next week to see what progress has been made.

Chairman Klaus announced that item 11, the application for 614 North Arthur Ashe Boulevard, had been withdrawn from the agenda. Ms. Jones stated that this was due to the applicants having made necessary repairs and therefore withdrew the application.

Chairman Klaus stated that the meeting would resume at 4:00 PM and explained how the consent agenda works for public listeners, asking if there were any questions. There were none.

BUSINESS PORTION OF MEETING ADJOURNED: 3:51.

**\*\*\*Please Note\*\*\***

**Public comment on cases brought before the CAR will be heard after the applicant's explanatory remarks of the case and before CAR deliberation. Applicants and individuals wishing to comment on specific aspects of a given case are asked to briefly address issues related to the application.**

**CONSENT AGENDA**

Chairman Klaus stated that there are 8 items on the consent agenda, and asked if the Commissioners had any suggestions to add or remove items. No changes were suggested.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Bond, that the consent agenda be approved.

Chairman Klaus asked if there was any public comment regarding the consent agenda. Regarding item 2, 1831 Monument Avenue, property owner Stephanie Jefferson asked for clarification about getting brick approved. Chairman Klaus stated that she would not have to go back to the Commission, and that staff could work with her and approve a brick selection.

Regarding item 5, 2219 West Grace Street, the applicant representative, La'Veesha Allen Rollins, asked if more detailed information could be provided about the built-in gutters mentioned in the staff report. Chairman Klaus stated that the applicant could speak with Ms. Jones for that information and have that work administratively approved, and that there would be no need to come back to the Commission for it.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Bond, that the consent agenda be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye --** 7 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Mitch Danese

**Excused --** 1 - Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

1. [COA-070163-2020](#) 2306 E. Leigh Street - Revise previously approved plans for recently rehabilitated storefront.

**Attachments:** [Site Map](#)  
[Application and Plans](#)  
[Staff Report](#)

**A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Bond, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: the headers and sills be painted a neutral grey color for masonry lintels and sills found on the paint palette.**

**The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye --** 7 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Mitch Danese

**Excused --** 1 - Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

2. [COA-070158-2020](#) 1831 Monument Avenue - Construct a new masonry wall in a side yard.

**Attachments:** [Site Map](#)  
[Application and Plans](#)  
[Staff Report](#)

**A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Bond, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: the wall be constructed of a contemporary brick that is complementary to but does not match the existing home and the final brick specifications be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye --** 7 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Mitch Danese

**Excused --** 1 - Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

3. [COA-068521-2020](#) 2017-2019 Monument Avenue - Construct a 3-story rear addition and porch; alter fenestration.

**Attachments:** [Application and Plans \(2/25/2020\)](#)  
[Site Map](#)  
[Staff Report \(2/25/2020\)](#)  
[Application and Plans\(4/28/2020\)](#)  
[Staff Report \(4/28/2020\)](#)

**A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Bond, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: specifications for all proposed materials be submitted to staff for administrative approval prior to the issuance of a building permit. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye --** 7 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Mitch Danese

**Excused --** 1 - Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

4. [COA-071518-2020](#) 2234 W. Grace Street - Construct a 1-story frame addition on a 2-story brick residence.

**Attachments:** [Site Map](#)  
[Application and Plans](#)  
[Staff Report](#)

**A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Bond, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report**

provided the following conditions are met: a material more compatible with the historic district be used and revised roof specifications be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval; the new windows be wood or aluminum clad wood, and materials specifications be submitted for administrative review and approval prior to the issuance of a building permit; the new windows be 1/1 with no divided lights. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye --** 7 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Mitch Danese

**Excused --** 1 - Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

5. [COA-071517-2020](#) 2219 W. Grace Street - Reconstruct the front porch of a brick residence.

**Attachments:** [Site Map](#)  
[Application and Plans](#)  
[Staff Report](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Bond, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: the existing ghost lines and any other physical evidence, such as indications on the porch deck of where the columns were historically installed, be used to determine the final dimensions of the reconstructed porch; the columns for the porch match the existing columns surrounding the doorway and the specifications be submitted to staff for review and approval; paint colors be submitted for administrative approval; the applicant align the balcony piers and columns; the porch roof membrane be a dark color; the balcony piers and railing be no taller than the ghost lines of the porch posts visible on the façade and simple backer bar be utilized if necessary; the applicant install built-in gutters, of an appropriate profile, and not the suspended gutters. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye --** 7 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Mitch Danese

**Excused --** 1 - Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

6. [COA-071515-2020](#) 2017 Venable Street - Construct a 2-story rear addition on a single family home.

**Attachments:** [Site Map](#)  
[Application and Plans](#)  
[Staff Report](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Bond, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: the new windows be aligned with the window below and be wood or aluminum clad wood, and materials specifications be submitted for administrative review and approval prior to the issuance of a building permit; fiber cement or wood siding be installed on the addition, and specifications for the siding and trim be submitted to staff for administrative

approval; horizontal trim be used to differentiate the addition from the existing building; the chimneys be rebuilt to match the historic chimneys, and plans be submitted to staff for administrative approval; any other planned exterior work be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval and approval and any existing historic fabric be retained. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye --** 7 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Mitch Danese

**Excused --** 1 - Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

7. [COA-071512-2020](#) 1302 E. Cary Street - Rehabilitate a 3-story brick commercial building, including creating an accessible entrance.

**Attachments:** [Site Map](#)  
[Application and Plans](#)  
[Staff Report](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Bond, to the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: the new window fit within the original opening, be a clear glass, and the specifications be submitted to staff for review and approval; the new door be a simple, modern design with clear glass panels; any replacement materials match the existing in terms of materials, design, and profile; the awning mounting hardware be installed directly into the mortar joints to avoid damage to the existing masonry; the applicant submit a color found on the palette for masonry/red brick to staff for review and approval. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye --** 7 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Mitch Danese

**Excused --** 1 - Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

8. [COA-071835-2020](#) 704 N. 24th Street - Construct a shed in the rear yard.

**Attachments:** [Site Map](#)  
[Application and Plans](#)  
[Staff Report](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Bond, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: the shed be screened from the alley by a privacy fence, to be administratively approved by staff; the cornices and front door be repainted a consistent color. The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye --** 7 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Mitch Danese

**Excused --** 1 - Commissioner Lawrence Pearson



**REGULAR AGENDA**

10. [COA-071516-2020](#) 2100 E. Broad Street - Install fiber cement siding on a street-facing elevation.

**Attachments:** [Site Map](#)  
[Application and Plans](#)  
[Staff Report](#)

Ms. Chelsea Jeffries presented the application.

Chairman Klaus asked if the Commissioners had any questions. There were none.

Chairman Klaus asked the applicant, Ms. Jessica Jordan, if she would like to speak about the application.

Ms. Jordan stated that she had sent in email remarks to the Commission. Chairman Klaus affirmed that the Commission had received them. Ms. Jordan stated that she does want to keep the place looking good, and recognizes that the building is at the entrance to Church Hill, although the 3-story building next door with hardi siding is very ugly, and opined that the fiber cement siding she had selected couldn't look worse than that.

Chairman Klaus stated that possibly some of the Commissioners with construction expertise could provide advice and suggestions, either at this meeting or at a later time.

Chairman Klaus asked for public comment. Mr. Charlie Field stated that that side of the building has had paint coming off it since shortly after Mr. David Cooley painted it in the early 90s. He said that he didn't know what combination of materials and circumstances caused this, but paint would not stay on the siding, and came off in sheets. Mr. Field theorized that it might be due to the location of that elevation, and stated that it may be the wrong place for wood siding.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Wheeler, to deny the application for the reasons cited in the staff report, and recommend that the siding be replaced in-kind with new wood.

Chairman Klaus stated that he had sympathy for the applicant regarding the challenges with the siding, but that the building was built a long time ago with this siding, and difficulties notwithstanding it's a historic part of the fabric of the neighborhood. Due to its location, the house is highly visible, like a billboard for the Church Hill neighborhood. Chairman Klaus stated that it is a shame that it's difficult to keep it looking nice, but it is important.

Commissioner Wheeler recommend a wood product that is thermally modified that he stated might be a good substitution for wood siding. He explained that it is called Cambia and is a baked wood that can be left exposed and unpainted, though in this case painting would be desirable. Mr. Wheeler stated that he believed the product to be available at a retailer near Lake Monticello, in Troy, VA.

Commissioner Danese stated that he was not certain if staff would agree to approving it, but that he is unable to tell the difference between wood and Boral siding, and that this is a coal ash-based product and lasts longer than Hardi siding.

Chairman Klaus stated that it seems like maybe it's not just the paint that's the problem,

and suggested that the applicant, in coordination with Commission staff, look at some alternatives mentioned, which are wood products that the applicant could test and possibly use to replace some of the more damaged boards.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Wheeler, to deny the application for the reasons cited in the staff report, and recommend that the siding be replaced in-kind with new wood. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye --** 8 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson and Commissioner Mitch Danese

11. [COA-071509-2020](#) 614 N. Arthur Ashe Boulevard - Demolish and rebuild a 3-story rear porch on a multifamily building.

This application was withdrawn by the applicant.

12. [COA-070151-2020](#) 2304 Venable Street - Construct a 2-story side addition on a semi-attached brick residence.

**Attachments:** [Site Map](#)  
[Application and Plans](#)  
[Staff Report](#)

The application was presented by Ms. Jeffries.

The applicant, Mr. Sam Tuttle, stated that the black cornice brackets were a mistake made by the painter, and that the timing of the site visit unfortunately coincided with when the painter had done this. However, the brackets have already been repainted.

Mr. Tuttle stated that he would want the brick to continue around the rear but to only cover the block foundation. Mr. Tuttle stated that it does continue around the corner but it does not maintain the same height. Mr. Tuttle stated that a break in the brick is required but asked that it only be required where there is an existing parged block foundation, and not be extended across the entire story.

Commissioner Wheeler asked staff if they knew the zoning setback for the site. Ms. Jeffries stated that she did not, and was not sure if the applicant had checked with Zoning. Mr. Tuttle stated that the house is a 3-family attached building, 2304 being attached to 2306 Venable, and that a 3-foot setback would apply.

Chairman Klaus asked if there was any public comment. Hearing none, the Chairman closed public comment and opened the floor for Commission motion and discussion.

A motion was made by Commissioner Bond, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: the foundation be brick and continue around the rear of the building to cover the rear wall; the cornice brackets be painted white.

Chairman Klaus stated that this is an unusual application, in that the Commission had not had a precedent for a side addition like this in Church Hill, as additions are usually located in the rear, though he noted they do exist in the area. Chairman Klaus observed

that the applicant is proposing something innocuous, designed to disappear, though it could potentially be moved up to be in line with the building.

Commissioner Wheeler stated that he was unsure of the setback from the street, pointing out that there used to be a building there. The proposed structure would be a replacement for a missing tooth, and that as proposed it does not quite address the street. Commissioner Wheeler stated that he was not certain about the resulting gap, and suggested that the addition of a fence might mitigate the connectivity to the street.

Ms. Jeffries stated that she believes the plans show some plantings in front of the addition.

Chairman Klaus stated that he understood Commissioner Wheeler's meaning, and that there is a question of whether it would be better if the addition were in front. Chairman Klaus agreed with Commissioner Wheeler, stating that he'd rather have landscaping or a wall. Chairman Klaus stated that he was okay with the proposed design because it disappears, and does not attempt to be a second house or to recreate what was there previously.

The motion carried by the following vote:

**A motion was made by Commissioner Bond, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: the foundation be brick and continue around the rear of the building to cover the rear wall; the cornice brackets be painted white. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye --** 7 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Mitch Danese

**Recused --** 1 - Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

9. [COA-066753-2020](#) 2412-2416 Venable Street - Construct 9 new, single-family townhomes.

**Attachments:** [Site Map](#)

[Application and Plans \(1/28/2020\)](#)

[Staff Report \(1/28/2020\)](#)

[Application and Plans \(4/28/2020\)](#)

[Staff Report \(4/28/2020\)](#)

The application was presented by Ms. Jones.

The applicant representative, Ms. Sarah McInerney of Walter Parks Architects, stated that she did not have any issues with the staff recommendations, and would work through them all with staff. Ms. McInerney stated that there are vertical separators between the units in lieu of flattening the building, and that she believed flattening the building would have a negative effect on the massing.

Chairman Klaus stated that when rowhouses are built together, typically they are either differentiated by color or other ways to visually separate the buildings. The recesses of the submitted design are out of keeping with this, as they fall in between the units. Ms. McInerney stated that she had seen examples of this kind of recessed design in other

Richmond neighborhoods, in Parkwood and on Grayland Avenue, for example; such buildings also typically have a corbeling detail that is defined at the parapet – a defining feature that separates the buildings, either inset or outset.

Chairman Klaus stated that he did not disagree about the corbelling but that he did not know if an example from the Museum District is relevant for this district. Chairman Klaus stated that he appreciates the applicant creating side street access, but one suggestion brought up before is to step the last townhouse to the west down, so that it does not have a 3rd story.

Ms. McInerney stated that a unit had already been subtracted from the initial plan, and that in the previous review she had heard from the Commission that the height was not an issue, so she is hearing two contradictory messages. Ms. McInerney asked that the Commission consider not removing more square footage. Commissioner Bond asked for the dimension of the recess between the units. Ms. McInerney stated that it would be very small, recessed just 3 or 4 inches with a differentiated brick color to help break up the façade. Commissioner Bond asked how wide the recessed area would be. Ms. McInerney stated that it would be 12 inches.

Chairman Klaus asked if there was any public comment.

Ms. Jones stated that the Commission did receive some public comment letters on this project.

Ms. Nancy Lampert stated that her concern was the height being incompatible with Union Hill. Ms. Lampert stated that the trend is that the Commission is approving 3-story structures, and she is concerned that four stories will be next. Ms. Lampert stated that the proposed step-down [of the westernmost unit] would be a nod to the neighborhood, which she stated has diverged already from how it was when it was designated.

Chairman Klaus asked if there was any further comment. Hearing none, Chairman Klaus closed public comment and opened the floor for a Commission motion and discussion.

A motion was made by Commissioner Klaus, seconded by Commissioner Bond, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: the westernmost unit be reduced to two stories the depth and width of the recessed sections between the units be reduced and the brick color not contrast with the exterior brick, and both be submitted to staff for review and approval; the brick be a modern finish with a consistent color and texture, the siding be smooth and without a bead and a body color found on the Commission palette, and all materials and colors, including trim details, columns, any exterior lighting, and porch canopies, be submitted to staff for review and approval; the applicant remove the projecting brick sills; the applicant submit a detailed window and door schedule to staff for review and approval; the applicant use wood or aluminum clad wood windows and that specifications be submitted to staff for review and approval; the applicant work with staff to redesign the front porch railing to be more in keeping with the materials and designs appropriate to the District, such as brick piers with railings between them; the applicant submit the proposed fence design and materials to staff for review and approval; the proposed fence for the western edge of the site be continued along the northern edge of the property to screen the storage and dumpster area; a modern light grey metal railing or mesh screen be used for the terrace and rooftop railings; the applicant submit a line of sight drawing, and update the massing studies to indicate the visibility of the rooftop HVAC equipment.

Chairman Klaus stated that the one controversial item seemed to be the divider between

the units, which he suggested is too deep and too wide, and that an adjustment to this could be administratively approved. Chairman Klaus stated that the project architect could attempt to think of an alternative solution rather than the trim piece suggested by staff.

Commissioner Bond stated that he thought the recess was fine, that he liked it and found it to be pretty minimal, and that it will not be noticeable in reality, though it looks funny in the drawings. Commissioner Bond stated that the recess sets up a subtle rhythm, and breaks up a large building into smaller house-sized units, which is essential. Commissioner Bond stated that as a resident of a large connected row house, he found that the recess adds to the design and looks better than just a flat expanse would.

Chairman Klaus stated that Commission was leaving it open for staff and architects to come up with something less intrusive than the recess as submitted, with the contrasting brick, but not just the trim idea as suggested by staff.

Commissioner Bond stated that the recess as proposed is really not that big.

Commissioner Morgan suggested that the brick in the recess could be the color of the body of the building, as opposed to contrasting brick. Commissioner Morgan stated that she found the height to fine, as the building is located near a 2-story house and a 4-story warehouse building.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Klaus, seconded by Commissioner Bond, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: the westernmost unit be reduced to two stories the depth and width of the recessed sections between the units be reduced and the brick color not contrast with the exterior brick, and both be submitted to staff for review and approval; the brick be a modern finish with a consistent color and texture, the siding be smooth and without a bead and a body color found on the Commission palette, and all materials and colors, including trim details, columns, any exterior lighting, and porch canopies, be submitted to staff for review and approval; the applicant remove the projecting brick sills; the applicant submit a detailed window and door schedule to staff for review and approval; the applicant use wood or aluminum clad wood windows and that specifications be submitted to staff for review and approval; the applicant work with staff to redesign the front porch railing to be more in keeping with the materials and designs appropriate to the District, such as brick piers with railings between them; the applicant submit the proposed fence design and materials to staff for review and approval; the proposed fence for the western edge of the site be continued along the northern edge of the property to screen the storage and dumpster area; a modern light grey metal railing or mesh screen be used for the terrace and rooftop railings; the applicant submit a line of sight drawing, and update the massing studies to indicate the visibility of the rooftop HVAC equipment. The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye --** 3 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner James W. Klaus and Commissioner Mitch Danese

**No --** 2 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr. and Commissioner Kathleen Morgan

**Abstain --** 3 - Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

## **CONCEPTUAL REVIEW**

13. [COA-071870-2020](#) 2400 Venable Street - Rehabilitate an existing mixed-use building including partial demolition and construction of a front and rear addition.

**Attachments:** [Site Map](#)  
[Application and Plans](#)  
[Staff Report](#)

The application was presented by Ms. Jeffries.

Chairman Klaus asked if the Commission members had any questions for Ms. Jeffries. Commissioner Bond suggested that it appears on the Sanborn maps from 1905 and 1925 that there was a porch on the property, though it is hard to tell if it goes around. Ms. Jeffries stated that she did not believe the porch had gone around. Ms. Jeffries further explained that there was no indication of number of stories or of roof materials, which would indicate that it was open space and that the hard line in the Sanborn map indicates a property line, not a structure. She also noted that the assessor's records support this and show the same footprint.

Commissioner Morgan inquired about the proposed use of building and Ms. Jeffries stated that she had not ascertained this, it being beyond the Commission's purview. Ms. Morgan stated that this would inform how the front is designed and, if it is for residential use, it should look different. Chairman Klaus stated that the Commission could ask the applicant.

The applicant representative, Mr. Charlie Field, stated that the building's use would be commercial on the first floor with two [residential] units upstairs, entered from the side and the front. Mr. Field stated that the addition on the front is not the addition on the Sanborn map, and that what is existing is of modern construction. Mr. Field stated that there is a photo showing the porch with a railing, and it is quite different. Mr. Field reiterated that the current front section is not original, and was not built to code.

Mr. Field stated that the back of the building would be collapsed in about a year, and that there is nothing structurally salvageable about the two brick walls; the intent of the project is to take them down and put them back up as they are, but with mortar.

Mr. Field stated that a house within a hundred feet of the project address, from 1865, has board and batten siding, so he had doubts as to how foreign to the district that is. Mr. Field stated that he would like it to not create a false historical impression, as an addition.

Commissioner Morgan asked Ms. Jeffries if she had said the storefront was historic, or if she was merely saying it never went the full front of the elevation. Ms. Jeffries stated that her main point was that the front of the building never extended across all three bays. Commissioner Morgan stated that, if it had, there would probably be ghosting above the door as evidence. Chairman Klaus stated that he agreed with Ms. Jeffries' conclusion, and that whether or not what is existing is original, it has the original footprint, which is the most important part.

Chairman Klaus asked if there was any public comment. Hearing none, he closed public comment and opened the floor for Commission comments.

Commissioner Morgan stated that she was in agreement with staff comments, and had nothing to add.

Chairman Klaus stated that a lot of work had gone into the analysis for this property, but that a house from 1856 requires extra care and needs to be done right. Despite the building's horrendous condition, you can still see a lot of the historic character, which should be preserved. Chairman Klaus stated that from a conceptual standpoint his recommendation is that, because the house is going to get a lot of scrutiny due to its age, the additions should be done in a sensitive way. Chairman Klaus expressed agreement with the applicant that the addition should be differentiated, but that he board and batten is not something generally seen in the area – this is the issue, not that the addition is modern.

Commissioner Bond stated that he was torn between the idea of putting the 2-bay extension on the front or making it a 3-bay extension, because originally it was a house and it had a porch that went all the way across the front. Commissioner Bond stated that he has seen houses all around Richmond that had a storefront put in front and typically it is all the way across the front. That makes more sense than the 2-bay design. In either case, the windows should come down in front, creating a vertical appearance like the old storefronts had. Chairman Bond stated that he had no concerns to speak of about the back, other than that the porch is perhaps a little too large.

Commissioner Danese expressed agreement with Commissioner Bond, favoring 3 bays in front since what is being saved is not original anyway.

Commissioner Wheeler also expressed agreement with Commissioner Bond, as well as with staff comments, and suggested, if opting for the 3-bay design, the masonry piece be retained and maybe add something lightweight that would become the door – maybe an all-glass addition to that piece.

Commissioner Wheeler suggested that, in the back, as much masonry as possible be retained, and stated that the applicant should not knock down historic parts in order to make additions. Commissioner Wheeler suggested that a privacy fence would be helpful, possibly continuing the line of a former garage.

Commissioner Brewer expressed agreement with staff and other Commissioners, and had nothing to add.

Commissioner Johnson expressed agreement with Commissioners Bond and Wheeler, and stated that he understands the frustration of having the Sanborn map showing something going all the way across in front, but recommended retaining the evidence of historic change to the property over time, while adding to it. Commissioner Johnson expressed agreement with staff comments.

Commissioner Pearson agreed with staff comments, and agreed with Commissioners Wheeler and Johnson about the importance of maintaining historic fabric while adding to it in a sensitive way.

Chairman Klaus gave a brief summary of the building's historical development, stating that from 1850-1920 it was residential had a 3-bay front porch, and that from 1925 to the present it had a projecting commercial 2-bay storefront, with the existing front doors. Chairman Klaus expressed agreement with Commissioner Wheeler, stating that one sees 3- and 4-bay structures frequently in the Fan, but that that's not what this property was historically, and one sees those less in this region than in the Fan. Chairman Klaus recommended that if the applicant opts for the 3-bay design, that it be made more transparent so the history is discernible.

Commissioner Wheeler stated that rebuilding the historic front porch would also be a viable option, if the applicant chose to go that way.

Chairman Klaus stated that he imagined the whole Commission would agree that if the applicant wanted to go back to the original design of the property that would be fine, but as a commercial space the question is whether it should be 2-bay as it was in 1925, or whether it should be 3-bay. Chairman Klaus stated that he perceived a split in the Commissioners' thinking on this, and stated that it might be difficult for the applicant to translate this.

Mr. Field stated that a goal of the design is to get people into the shop and leave usable space up front for seating, and that the third bay would basically serve as a hallway. Mr. Field stated that the owners can get what they want with either a 2-bay or 3-bay design, so the front is not a pressing concern, but that the rear would have to be clearly modern in order to placate neighbors. Observing that the Commission does not like board and batten, Mr. Field stated that the other options would be either hardi plank or wood, and asked if that was what the Commission would want.

Chairman Klaus stated that there are many options for modern additions, cementitious siding being one example, and recommended that before final review the applicant should run through proposed changes to the rear with staff.

Mr. Field stated that on the rear, transom windows and glass doors are proposed, and asked if these should look clearly modern, in the same way that staff had asked that the front balcony door be a more clearly modern design. Chairman Klaus stated that if it is a modern addition, he would recommend abiding by staff recommendations about making the door look modern. He stated that staff had had issues with the 3 proposed transom windows, but that these could be clarified by meeting separately with staff.

The owner, Mike Thomas, asked if a Zoom type of meeting could be set up to discuss the revised proposal. Ms. Jones stated that, though Zoom is not an option, Microsoft Teams can be used to set up an electronic meeting with the owner and applicant.

**This item was conceptually reviewed.**

14. [COA-070155-2020](#) 3629 E. Broad Street - Construct 2 new, single-family detached residences.

**Attachments:** [Site Map](#)  
[Application and Plans](#)  
[Staff Report](#)

Commissioner Pearson recused himself from review of this application, and left the meeting at this point.

The application was presented by Ms. Jones.

Chairman Klaus asked if the Commission members had any questions for staff. Chairman Klaus referring to a part of the application where "new paving" is indicated, asked if the location is city property. Ms. Jones stated that this would be new paving behind the existing guardrail, and thus it is not part of the lot, and that this is a question that had come up and would warrant bringing up with the applicant. Chairman Klaus asked if the city would have to agree to extend the lot. Ms. Jones stated that she did not have a consistent answer yet to this question, because so far only Commission staff has



reviewed this application.

The applicant, Mr. Greg Shron of Center Creek Homes, introduced himself and stated that improvements in the public right of way are contingent on coming to agreement with staff in Transportation and Right of Way Management. Mr. Shron stated that those discussions are underway, and there seems to be a general willingness to work with the applicant to enable them to extend the improvements in the right of way to access the new lots under development. Mr. Shron stated that the right of way exists on paper, and that it is just a matter of extending the sidewalk and improvements to the end of that right of way.

Chairman Klaus asked if the project is therefore contingent on coming to that agreement. Mr. Shron confirmed that it is, adding that it will be affected through the subdivision process – the City's Right of Way staff won't sign off on the subdivision until the right of way questions are resolved, so there are parallel processes. Mr. Shron stated that CAR approval is the first step, then subdivision approval from the various City entities concerned.

Mr. Shron asked, in regard to staff's recommendation to relocate the door opening at 3633 East Broad Street, if that essentially meant flipping the façade. Ms. Jones confirmed this, stating that the idea was to see if the interior could be flipped so that the door could be relocated and the entryway come out and thus be more consistent with other buildings on the block. This would also be more effective in relation to the proposed entrance location for 3631 East Broad Street.

Mr. Shron stated that the applicants are very comfortable with working with staff on the final submission of the application.

Commissioner Wheeler asked for information about the status of the public alley shown in the plans.

Mr. Shron stated that he did not have information it, and that another property owner has been consolidating property in the area.

Chairman Klaus asked Ms. Jones if she had spoken with the woman who sent the Commission a letter about this project. Ms. Jones replied that, since this application was originally scheduled for last month, Ms. Jones had spoken to the member of the public who wrote the letter at that time. The member of the public had had questions about how the public notice letters from the City are addressed and Ms. Jones explain to her that the property under review was adjacent to hers. She also had questions about parking in the plans, and about meetings and access to them. Ms. Jones explained to her that the plans included parking, and about how to access the current meeting and had not heard from her since.

Chairman Klaus asked if there was any other public comment. Hearing none, Chairman Klaus closed public comment and opened the floor for Commission discussion.

Commissioner Wheeler stated that he had been asking about the alley because of the parking orientation pictured, stating that it was a more typically suburban orientation that is not often seen in historic districts. Commissioner Wheeler stated that the suggestion to flip the building on the far right is reasonable. Commissioner Wheeler stated that he was generally in favor of the project, and suggested that a canopy over the deck door in the back would be worth considering.

Commissioner Morgan stated that along that section of Broad Street, there are some

little curb cut parking areas for the neighboring houses. Commissioner Morgan stated that the siting could be worked out better so that there is not so much space in between the houses – possibly a double house orientation with parking on either side.

Commissioner Brewer expressed agreement with staff recommendations, and stated that she was excited to see a more modern house on this odd lot.

Commissioner Johnson had no comments to add, and stated that he applauded the applicant's efforts.

Commissioners Danese and Bond had nothing to add.

Chairman Klaus stated that of the two houses he thought the design of the white house was more successful and more interesting, but felt that the more modern one could go further in that direction, and that the windows on the side could be bigger. Chairman Klaus stated that he was not sure if parking on the side instead of between the houses, as Commissioner Morgan suggested, is feasible, but a lot of the houses in the area are paired.

Mr. Shron stated that there are challenges with the geometry and topography as regards configuration and parking, but that he would like to look at all the Commission suggestions more closely with the staff.

**This item was conceptually reviewed.**

## **Adjournment**

Ms. Jones expressed thanks to Commissioners and applicants for attending the first virtual meeting.

Meeting adjourned at 6:01 pm.