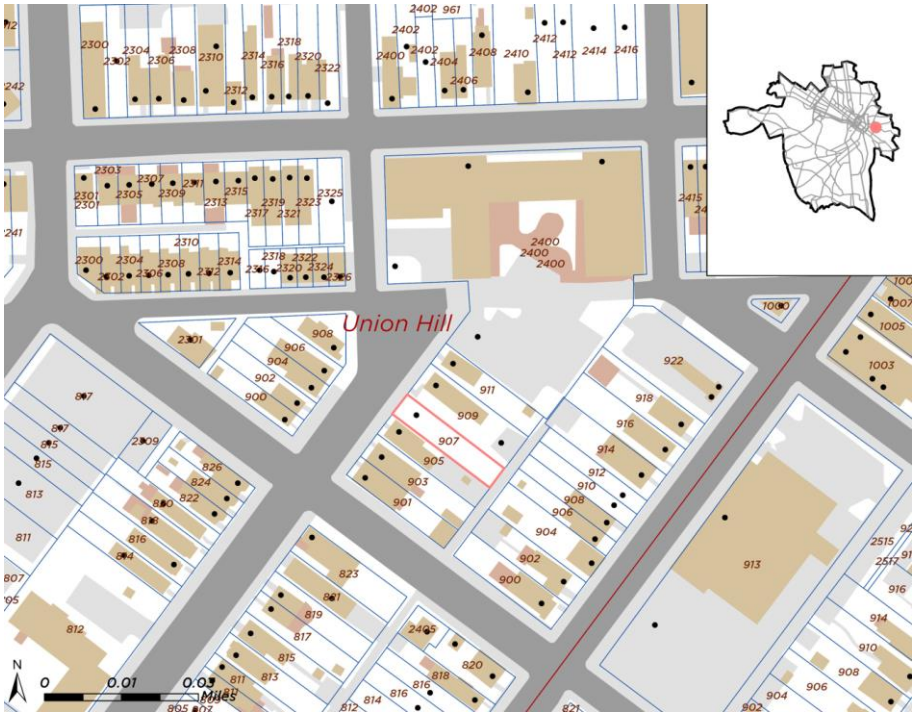
Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia

Commission of Architectural Review

12. COA-126434-2023	**Conceptual Review** **Meeting Date:** 3/28/2023
Applicant/Petitioner	Will Gillette / Baker Development Resources
Project Description	Construct a new two-story single-family detached dwelling.
Project Location **Address**: 907 N 24th Street **Historic District**: Union Hill **High-Level Details:** The applicant proposes to construct a new two-story single-family detached dwelling. The dwelling will be three stories in height with a steeply pitched roof and dormer windows on the third floor. There will be a covered, single-bay front porch.	
Staff Recommendation	**Conceptual Review**
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, 804-646-6569, alex.dandridge@rva.gov
Previous Reviews	None.
Staff Recommendations	• Proposed setbacks be submitted with the final application and be labeled on a site map; setbacks should align with that of the neighboring dwellings. • A building form more in-keeping with the subject block be implemented in this location. If the Commission finds the submitted form compatible, Staff recommends the front slope of the third floor roof be significantly less steep, giving more dimension to the proposed dormers and to better reference historic buildings of this form in the city. (See figure 7) • The building feature a larger front porch that generally aligns with the porches of the neighboring dwellings. • The proposed dwelling be reduced in height. • Window dimensions be submitted for final review and that the dimensions be compatible with the historic dimensions of windows found in the district. • Any new retaining wall, steps, or curbing on the site associated with the new construction be labeled on a final

	site plan and that the material be compatible with the district as listed in the *Guidelines.*

Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
Standards for New Construction, pg. 46	3. New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site	The building will face the most prominent street, N. 24th Street.
Siting, pg. 46, #2-3	*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.*	Based on the submitted information, proposed setback are not clearly identified. Staff recommends that proposed setbacks be submitted with the final application on a site map and that setbacks align with that of the neighboring dwellings. In the R-63 zoning districts, front yards are not required, however a front yard shall be no more than 15' deep. Side yards no less than 3' in width.
Form, pg. 46, #1-3	*1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district.* *2. New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic residential construction in the district* *3. New residential construction and additions should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps into their design.*	The building will be rectangular in form with a steeply pitched front façade roof with dormers. Steeply pitched visible roof forms and dormer windows are uncommon on the subject block. Staff recommends that a building form more in-keeping with the subject block be implemented in this location. If the Commission finds the proposed form compatible with the subject block, staff recommends that the front slope of the third floor roof be significantly less steep, giving more dimension to the proposed dormers and to better referencing the roof slopes of this form seen on historic buildings in the city. (See figure 7) A one-story, single bay, covered front porch will be provided. The dwellings on either side of the subject parcel have full width front porches. Staff recommends that the new building feature a larger front porch that generally aligns with the porches of the neighboring dwellings.
Height, Width, Proportion, &	*1. New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.*	While dimensioned context drawings were not provided, the building will be three stories and approximately 36' tall. Most dwellings on

Massing, pg. 47, #1-3	*2. New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in the surrounding historic districts.* *3. The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.*	the block are one and two stories, some featuring raised foundations. Staff finds that three stories is not compatible with the neighboring dwellings, and recommends that the proposed dwelling be reduced in height. In addition, staff recommends that a dimensioned context drawing be submitted for final review that labels the height of the proposed building and the neighboring buildings. Without this information, it isn't possible to fully understand the height relationship and impact of the proposed dwelling. The cornice height doesn't align with the neighboring dwellings.
New Construction, Doors and Windows, pg.49 #3	*3. The size, proportion, and spacing patterns of doors and window openings on free standing, new construction should be compatible with patterns established in the district.*	Staff recommends that window dimensions be submitted for final review and that the dimensions be compatible with the historic dimensions found in the district.
New Construction, Materials & Colors, pg. 53, #2, #5	*2. Materials used in new construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the surrounding neighborhood.* *5. Rooftop mechanical equipment should be located as discretely as possible to limit visibility. In addition, appropriate screening should be provided to conceal equipment from view. When rooftop railings are required for seating areas or for safe access to mechanical equipment, the railings should be as unobtrusive as possible, in order to minimize their appearance and visual impact on the surrounding district.*	The dwelling will be clad in horizontal siding, have a parged foundation, and a standing seam metal roof. These materials are compatible with the district. HVAC equipment is proposed to be located adjacent to the south side elevation of the building. Staff believes it will be minimally visible from the ROW.
Standards for Site Improvements, pg. 76	*4. Brick or granite pavers are the most appropriate choice in most Old and Historic Districts.* *5. Existing granite curbing should be retained whenever possible.* *6. Sidewalk design should allow for the installation of appropriate urban landscaping.* *7. Sidewalks and curbs should be built of common building materials found throughout the District. Generally,*	There is concrete curb and steps bordering the sidewalk on the property, both which are in poor condition. Staff recommends that any new retaining wall, steps, or curbing on the site associated with the new construction be labeled on a final site plan and that the material be compatible with the district as listed in the *Guidelines.* A rear gravel parking area is being proposed. Gravel is a compatible material for rear parking areas as noted in the *Administrative Approval Guidelines.*

	simple paving designs are more compatible with the diverse building styles and better unify the various elements found on streets throughout Old and Historic Districts. The use of more than two paving materials within an area is discouraged.	

Figures

Figure 1. Subject block looking south.

Figure 2. Across 24th Street from subject parcel.

Figure 3. New construction across 24th Street from 907 N. 24th Street.

Figure 4. 625 N. 27th Street. Similar design constructed in 2017. According to the submitted plans, the building is approximately 36' tall.

Figure 5. 907 N. 24th Street, vacant lot.
Front retaining wall in poor condition.

Figure 6. Original dwelling on-site. Demolished

Figure 7. Roof slope example on historic dwelling in Shockoe Valley