

13. COA-091342-2021

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

May 25, 2021

PROPERTY ADDRESS

309 North 28<sup>th</sup> Street

DISTRICT

St. John's Church

APPLICANT

B. Laffoon

STAFF CONTACT

A. Dandridge

Commission of Architectural Review

STAFF REPORT

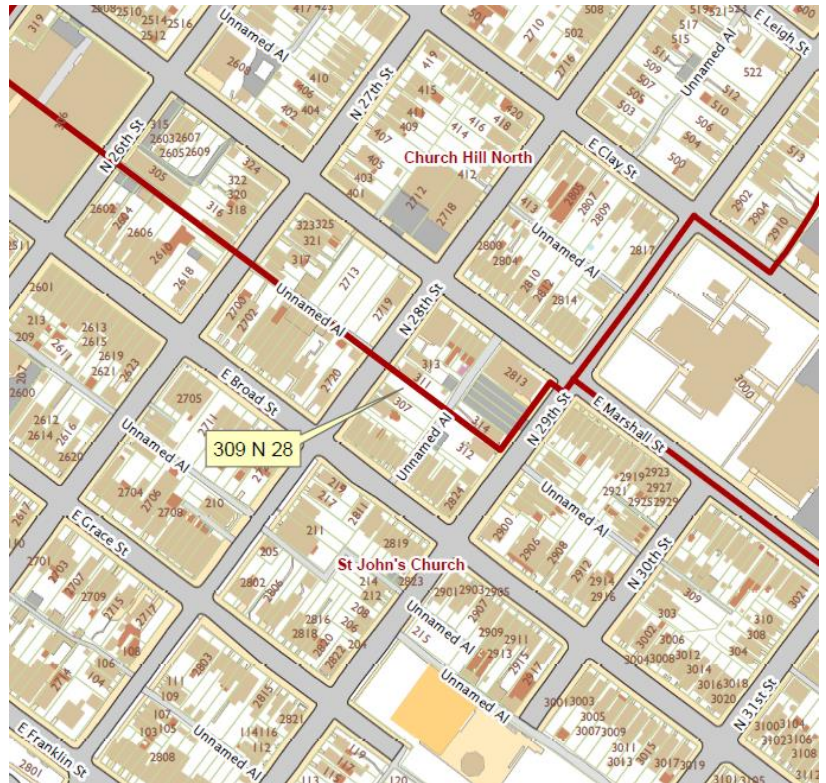


PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Construct a two and one half story residence on a vacant lot.

PROJECT DETAILS

- The applicant proposes to construct a new two-story single-family detached residence with a partial, set-back third story and a basement on a vacant lot.
- The proposed residence will be two stories in height, three bays wide and generally rectangular in form. The building will have a third-story section with a rooftop deck. The second story roof will have a low pitch while the third story section will have a front-facing gable roof form.
- On the façade the applicant proposes vertically aligned windows and a single-bay, one-story, covered porch
- On the alley side elevation, the applicant proposes single, vertically aligned one-over-one windows and an open rear deck off of the main floor.



The City of Richmond assumes no liability either for any errors, omissions, or inaccuracies in the information provided regardless of the cause of such or for any decision made, action taken, or action not taken by the user in reliance upon any maps or information provided herein.

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

None.

SURROUNDING CONTEXT

The area surrounding the project location is primarily residential in character on N. 28<sup>th</sup> Street, with a corner commercial building at the intersection of N. 28<sup>th</sup> Street and E. Broad Street. The surrounding residential construction on N. 28<sup>th</sup> Street are two-story frame buildings, in the Italianate and Greek Revival styles, with full-width, one-story, covered porches, some having English basements. The vacant subject parcel is steep, sloping away from the main sidewalk. The surrounding residences have low-pitch shed roofs, as well as low-pitched

hipped roofs that are minimally visible from the street. The surrounding residences utilize a variety of architectural elements such as decorative cornices, brackets, turned and square posts, and balustrades.

**STAFF COMMENTS**

- The applicant revise the plans to have a front setback that matches that of the main faces of the neighboring existing residences, including the depth and setback of the front porch
- The partial third story be recessed further, or its height reduced or roof form changed from a gable form to a shed form so that it is not visible from the main street
- The new construction utilize a one-story, full-width, covered front porch to be in keeping with the surrounding block
- The applicant submit a fully dimensioned drawing
- The applicant select an exterior cladding material that is in keeping with the surrounding residences, and submit specifications on exterior cladding materials for final review.
- The applicant select a cladding material for the partial third floor section that is similar to the final cladding chosen for the exterior of the main portion of the residence.
- The applicant provide a labeled drawing specifying the location of all exterior doors.
- The applicant submit specifications on the location of all mechanical equipment with the 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>	The proposed new construction will have a front setback that does not match that of the existing residences located at 307 and 311 N. 28 <sup>th</sup> Street. Staff recommends that the applicant revise the plans to have a front setback that matches that of the main face of the neighboring existing buildings, including the depth and setback of the front porch.
	<i>3. New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site.</i>	The new construction will face the most prominent street, N. 28 <sup>th</sup> Street.
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 building's main massing is compatible with other residential construction found within the district.
	<i>2. New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic residential construction in the district.</i>	The applicant proposes a three-bay house with a partial third story that is generally in keeping with the residential scale of the district. A line-of-sight drawing indicates that the partial third floor will be visible from the center of the street. Staff recommends that the partial third story be recessed further, its height reduced, or form changed from a gable form to a shed form to minimize the overall massing.
	<i>3. New residential construction and additions should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps into their design.</i>	The proposed new construction will have a one-bay, one-story, covered front porch, while the surrounding residences have full-width one-story covered porches. Staff recommends that the new construction utilize a one-story, full-width, covered front porch to be in keeping with the surrounding block.
Height, Width, Proportion, &	<i>1. New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding</i>	The new residential construction will have a third-story area that is not typical for the district

<p>Massing, pg. 47, #s1-3</p>	<p><i>residential buildings.</i></p>	<p>and will be taller than the surrounding residences. Staff recommends that the applicant submit a line-of-sight drawing that confirms the third-floor section will be minimally visible from N. 28<sup>th</sup> Street.</p>
	<p><i>2. New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in surrounding historic districts.</i></p>	<p>The applicant proposes a three-bay building with vertically aligned openings on the façade and rear elevation, which is common for the subject block and district.</p>
	<p><i>3. The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i></p>	<p>The proposed new construction is contemporary in style, utilizing a simplified cornice line that is similar in height to the existing residence on either side of the subject property. Staff recommends that the applicant submit a dimensioned drawing confirming the height of the cornice line compared to that of the existing residences.</p>
<p>Materials and Colors, pg. 47, #s2-4</p>	<p><i>2. Materials used in new residential construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.</i></p> <p><i>3. Paint colors used should be similar to the historically appropriate colors already found in the district.</i></p> <p><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></p>	<p>The applicant has not specified an exterior cladding material. While there are a few masonry examples, the surrounding residences are primarily clad in smooth, horizontal wood siding. Staff would recommend that the applicant select an exterior cladding material that is in keeping with the surrounding residences, and submit specifications on exterior cladding materials for final review.</p> <p>The applicant is proposing to install metal shingle cladding on the roof and exterior walls of the partial third-floor. Staff recommends that the applicant select a cladding for the partial third floor section that is similar to the final cladding chosen for the exterior of the main portion of the residence.</p>
<p>New Construction, Doors and Windows, pg. 49 #3</p>	<p><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></p>	<p>All doors and windows will be vertically aligned one-over-one, which is in keeping with the established fenestration pattern of the neighborhood.</p>
<p>New Construction, Doors and Windows, pg. 56, #5</p>	<p><i>5. With larger buildings, applicants are encouraged to develop multiple entry points (doors), in keeping with historic precedent for the building type in question. Single entry points - such as a single garage entrance accompanied by single pedestrian entrances are not in keeping with historic precedent, which demonstrates that most large buildings had multiple pedestrian entry points.</i></p>	<p>The proposed new construction has one front entry point, which is in keeping with the surrounding block and district. The drawings provided to staff indicate openings on the partial third floor and the rear of the building that resemble exterior doors; however, these are not labeled. Staff recommends that the applicant provide a labeled drawing specifying the location of all exterior doors.</p>

*The visual impact of new mechanical  
equipment should be minimized to protect  
the historic character of the district.*

The applicant did not submit any information on the locations of any mechanical equipment. Staff recommends that the applicant submit specifications on the location of all mechanical equipment with the final review.

## FIGURES



Figure 1. 309 N. 28th Street, subject vacant lot



Figure 2. East side of N. 28th Street.



Figure 3. West side of N. 28th Street.



Figure 4. N. 28th Street



Figure 5. East side N. 28th Street.