

# 10. COA-084613-2021

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

January 26, 2021

PROPERTY ADDRESS

618-620 North 21<sup>st</sup> Street

DISTRICT

Union Hill

APPLICANT

P. Benavides

STAFF CONTACT

C. Jones

# Commission of Architectural Review

## STAFF REPORT

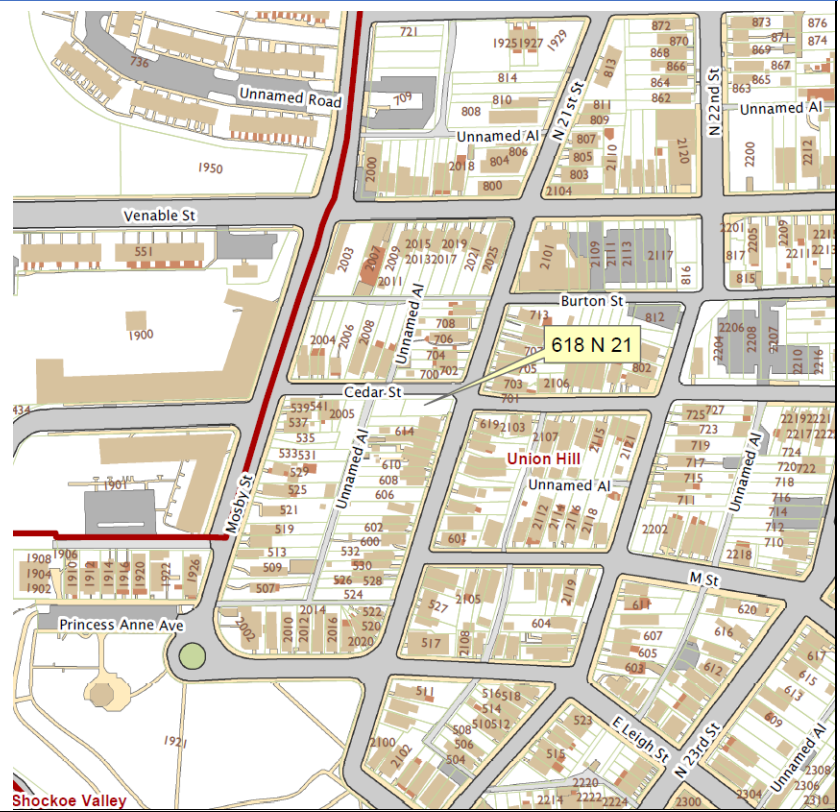


### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

**Construct a new two-story, single-family detached residence on a vacant lot.**

### PROJECT DETAILS

- The applicant proposes to construct a new, two-story, detached residence on a vacant corner lot.
- The new residence will be two stories in height, three bays wide with a low-pitched, shed roof.
- Exterior details include a side entry door with a single-bay wrap porch at the corner, a second-story corner balcony, aligned windows on the façade and north side elevation, and a rear deck.
- Proposed materials include fiber cement panels or vinyl siding, metal coping and flashing and window trim, and wood decking.



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### STAFF RECOMMENDATION

**APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS**

### PREVIOUS REVIEWS

The Commission reviewed this project at the conceptual level during the November 24, 2020 meeting. During the meeting the Commission commented on the overall form of the building with suggestions to alter the front porch to be more of a cantilever design. The Commission suggested that this could be accomplished by eliminating one of the columns on the left side of the porch to create a cantilever.

The Commission also discussed some of the specific design details and encouraged the applicant to consider a more modern design aesthetic to reflect that this is new construction. Another suggestion was made to taper the north and south elevations and to treat the north elevation as a primary elevation since this is a corner property. Concerns for the north elevation included the asymmetrical window pattern and door locations, and suggestions were made to create a more cohesive and interesting design for the Cedar Street elevation including continuing the porch roof line around the corner.

In terms of the materials, the Commission discussed the use of a consistent material; expressing the window headers and sills more to provide visual interest; and ways to utilize masonry, if that is the chosen primary material.

**STAFF RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS**

- the applicant remove the vertical trim from the design
- the applicant use fiber cement siding that is smooth and without a decorative bead or pattern. Staff also recommends all final material specifications, including windows, trim, and decking, be submitted to staff for review and approval
- the applicant install a fence or other screening to minimize the visual impact of the HVAC equipment.

**STAFF ANALYSIS**

Siting, pg. 46, #s2-3	<p><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></p>	<p>North 21<sup>st</sup> Street has a mix of setback patterns. Staff notes that the applicant proposes an almost 5-foot setback, similar to other properties in the area. Staff notes the previous building on this site was not aligned with the neighboring buildings.</p>
	<p><i>3. New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site.</i></p>	<p>The building faces North 21<sup>st</sup> Street, in keeping with the neighboring buildings.</p>
Form, pg. 46 #s1-3	<p><i>1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district.</i></p>	<p>The applicant proposes a two-story, three-bay building with a recessed corner entrance bay. Staff notes this is not a common design feature found on historic buildings in the district. However, this is a new construction building and staff notes that this also helps to address the corner guidelines.</p>
	<p><i>2. New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic residential construction in the district.</i></p>	<p>The applicant proposes a two-story building which is a compatible building height with nearby buildings.</p>
	<p><i>3. New residential construction and additions should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps into their design.</i></p>	<p>The applicant proposes human-scale elements including front stairs and a wrap porch. The applicant has responded to Commission feedback and removed one of the porch posts to create a cantilever.</p>
Height, Width, Proportion, & Massing, pg. 47, #s1-3	<p><i>1. New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.</i></p>	<p>The highest point of the proposed house is 25'-9" in height. Staff finds this is generally consistent with the surrounding properties. Staff requests the applicant submit a dimensioned context elevation.</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 vertically and horizontally aligned windows on the façade and south elevation. On the north, Cedar Street-facing elevation, the applicant has responded to Commission feedback and has vertically aligned the windows.</p>
	<p><i>3. The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i></p>	<p>Based on the information provided by the applicant the new building will be a compatible height with the surrounding properties.</p>

Materials and Colors, pg. 47, #s2, 4	<p>2. <i>Materials used in new residential construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.</i></p> <p>4. <i>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 responded to Commission feedback and now proposes a consistent material on all four elevations. The applicant has also removed the heavy headers and sills to be in keeping with the modern aesthetic of the design. The applicant has also added vertical lap siding to emphasize the window bays. <u>Staff finds the vertical trim is not a design feature found in the district and recommends the applicant remove it from the design.</u> Staff also notes that the applicant proposes either fiber cement lap siding or vinyl siding. As vinyl siding is not permitted in City and Old Historic Districts, <u>staff recommends the applicant use fiber cement siding that is smooth and without a decorative bead or pattern. Staff also recommends all final material specifications, including windows, trim, and decking, be submitted to staff for review and approval.</u></p>
New Construction, Doors and Windows, pg. 49 #3	<p>3. <i>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>As mentioned above, the applicant has realigned the windows to create a more vertically cohesive fenestration pattern.</p>
New Construction, Standards for New Construction: Corner Properties – Residential, pg. 48	<p>1. <i>Secondary elevations of corner properties should reference massing similar to other corner locations in the historic district.</i></p> <p>2. <i>The material used in the primary elevation should be continued along the second, corner elevation.</i></p> <p>4. <i>Windows and doors on the secondary, corner elevation should be organized following the principals of the primary elevation: windows should be proportioned appropriately, aligned vertically, and arranged as though designing a primary elevation.</i></p>	<p>The applicant has responded to staff feedback and has addressed the corner guidelines by continuing the balcony level as a trim piece around the north and rear elevation. The applicant has also simplified and aligned the windows pattern on the north elevation, in keeping with the Commission suggestions.</p>
Mechanical Equipment, pg. 68	<p><i>The visual impact of new mechanical equipment should be minimized to protect the historic character of the district.</i></p>	<p>The applicant has updated the application to indicate that the HVAC units will be located in the rear side yard. <u>Staff recommends the applicant install a fence or other screening to minimize the visual impact of the HVAC equipment.</u></p>

It is the assessment of staff that, with the conditions above, the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation and New Construction outlined in Section 30-930.7 (b) and (c) of the City Code, as well as with the Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines, specifically the pages cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.



FIGURES

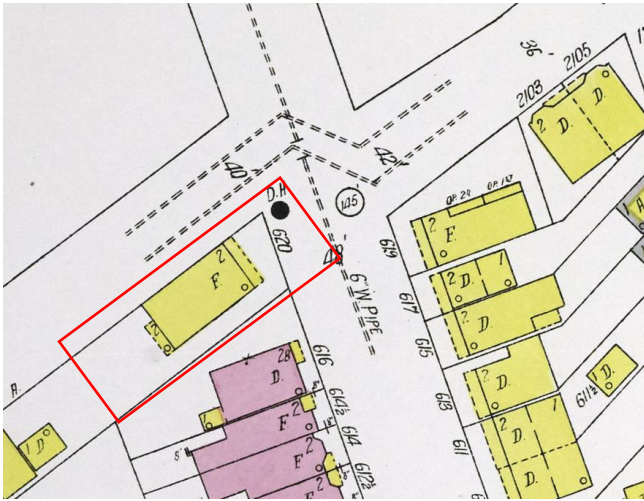


Figure 1. 1925 Sanborn Map.



Figure 2. 618-620 North 21st Street.



Figure 3. 608-615 North 21st Street.



Figure 4. 611-619 North 21st Street.



Figure 5. 619 North 21st Street, side elevation.



Figure 6. 424 North 25th Street with staggered bays, wrap porch, and front and side entry bays.