



**Staff Report**  
**City of Richmond, Virginia**



**Commission of Architectural Review**

6. COA-149481-2024	Conceptual Review	Meeting Date: 6/25/2024
Applicant/Petitioner	Firoz Khan	
Project Description	Construct a rear addition	
Project Location		
Address: 15 West Leigh Street		
Historic District: Jackson Ward		
High-Level Details:		
<p>The construction date of this dwelling is unknown, but it was likely built in the end of the nineteenth century.</p> <p>The applicant requests Conceptual review of either a rear, two-, or three-story addition.</p> <p>The building is a single family, brick, Italianate, two- story dwelling.</p> <p>The applicant proposes to clad the addition in hardy plank siding, and paint it the same as the dwelling.</p>		
Staff Recommendation	Conceptual Review	
Staff Contact	Annie Delaroderie, <a href="mailto:anne.delaroderie@rva.gov">anne.delaroderie@rva.gov</a> 804-646-6335.	
Previous Reviews	None.	
Staff Recommendations	<p>Staff Recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant construct a rear two-story addition.</li> <li>• Applicant submit final material specifications for the addition to staff for Administrative Review and Approval.</li> <li>• The applicant submit final paint color specifications to staff for Administrative Review and Approval.</li> <li>• The applicant submit detailed photographs of the windows' conditions and any changes to the windows for Administrative Review and Approval.</li> <li>• two double hung windows on each floor of the south elevation, like the façade.</li> <li>• that the applicant submit any new proposed front or rear fence design to Staff for Administrative Review and Approval.</li> </ul> <p>Staff <u>does not</u> recommend:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a third-story addition on this property.</li> <li>• the use of wide, picture windows.</li> </ul>	

## Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
Standards For New Construction: Siting, page 46.	<i>1. Additions should be subordinate in size to their main buildings and as inconspicuous as possible. Locating additions at the rear or on the least visible side of a building is preferred.</i>	While the applicant provided dimensioned drawings, the height of the house is unclear. The applicant proposes constructing either a two-story rear addition, a three-story rear addition or a new full third floor. A rear two-story addition would be the most compatible and subordinate. A three-story rear addition could be built but would not be compatible with the historic dwelling. Adding a new third floor would diminish the architectural character of the surrounding dwelling and would not be compatible. A new addition would be most appropriate, located at the rear of the building, and that does not detract from the façade.
Standards For New Construction: Height, Width & Massing, page 47	<p><i>1. New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.</i></p> <p><i>2. New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in surrounding historic districts.</i></p>	<p>When staff met with the applicant, he referenced a three-story building at the northeast corner of West Leigh Street as reference. 15 West Leigh Street is situated along the southwest section of a grouping of six connected two-story, historic, single-family homes. These houses are a significant, intact grouping. While some of the dwellings have rear additions, there are no three-story houses on this side of the block. 10 West Leigh Street, which the applicant mentioned has three stories, and is situated at the end of the opposite block. Two connected dwellings on the north side of the block have altered facades. Each of the dwellings on the north and south sides of the block, except number 10, are intact two-story dwellings with their original cornices. All but one of the dwellings on the south side of the block have decorative cornices.</p> <p><u>Staff does not recommend a third-story addition on this property. Staff recommends the applicant construct a rear two-story addition.</u></p>
Standards for New Construction: Materials and Colors, page 47	<p><i>1. Additions should not obscure or destroy original architectural elements.</i></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 for new additions should complement the historically appropriate colors used on the primary structure. Paint colors used should be similar to the historically appropriate colors already found in the district.</i></p>	<p>Numbers 15 and 13.5 have full-width front porches with cornice bands below the porch roof. While the porches are not the same size and have different sized pillars, they are significant historic features of these dwellings.</p> <p>Adding a full third story on top of 15 West Leigh Street would obscure the intact façade and the original features.</p> <p>The applicant proposes to construct the addition with hardy plank siding, and paint it red to match the house's brick exterior. All buildings on this block have brick exteriors. 19 West Leigh Street is a brick two-story building with a stone veneered first floor on the façade. Adding hardy plank siding will differentiate the addition from the historic building. <u>Staff recommends the applicant submit final material specifications for the addition to staff for Administrative Review and Approval. Staff recommends the applicant submit final</u></p>

		<u>paint color specifications to staff for Administrative Review and Approval.</u>
New Construction: Doors & Windows, page 49.	<p><i>1. The size, proportion, and spacing patterns of door and window openings on a new addition should follow patterns established by the original building. Windows on most commercial and residential properties throughout Old and Historic Districts have a vertical orientation. Wide, horizontal so-called "picture windows" on new additions are strongly discouraged.</i></p> <p><i>2. The architectural appearance of original windows should be used as models for new windows. Changes in the sash, depth or reveal, muntin configuration, frame or glazing is strongly discouraged. New glass should be clear without reflective coatings, to be compatible with original glass.</i></p>	<p>On the façade, the applicant plans to retain the original windows. The applicant stated that the current windows are wood frame and not in good condition. <u>Staff recommends the applicant submit detailed photographs of the windows' conditions and any changes to the windows for Administrative Review and Approval.</u> If the applicant were to construct a third floor, he plans to use windows with the same glazing design as are on the second floor.</p> <p>The rear of this dwelling currently has a door and two windows boarded up on each floor. The applicant proposes a new door and a wide, picture window for each floor. Although this elevation is not the primary façade, <u>staff does not recommend the use of wide, picture windows. Staff recommends two double hung windows on each floor of the south elevation, similar to the façade.</u></p>
New Construction: Fences & Walls, page 51.	<p><i>1. Fence, wall, and gate designs should reflect the scale of historic structures they surround, as well as the character of nearby fences, walls and gates.</i></p> <p><i>2. Fence, wall or gate materials should relate to the building materials commonly found in the neighborhood.</i></p> <p><i>3. Privacy fences in the side and rear of a property should be constructed of wood of an appropriate design.</i></p>	<u>Staff recommends that the applicant submit any new proposed front or rear fence design to Staff for Administrative Review and Approval.</u>

*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. Block context and front façade of 15 W. Leigh Street.



Figure 2. Side elevation of 15 W. Leigh and adjacent vacant lot.



Figure 3. Façade – 15 W. Leigh Street.

