

12. COA-057054-2019

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

July 23, 2019

PROPERTY ADDRESS

2211 Jefferson Avenue

DISTRICT

Church Hill North

Commission of Architectural Review

STAFF REPORT



APPLICANT

Sterling Blinder, LLC

STAFF CONTACT

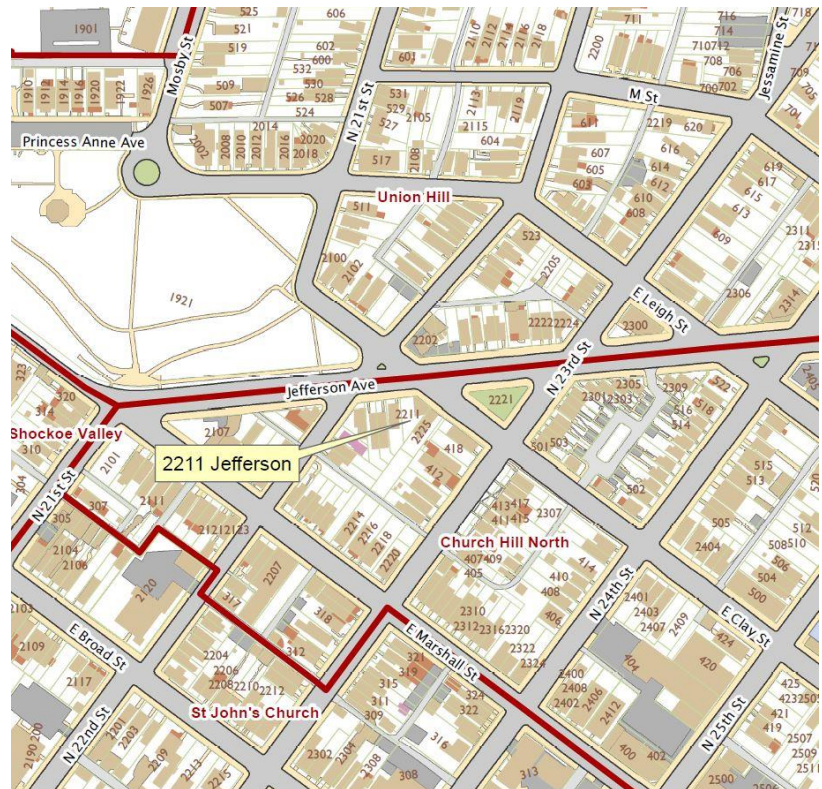
C. Jones

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Demolish an existing building and construct a new, three-story, mixed-use building.

PROJECT DETAILS

- The site is triangular shaped with a one-story frame building. The building is vacant and in a deteriorated condition as evidenced by the missing roof sections, boarded windows, and rusted panels.
- The application requests permission to demolish the building.
- The applicant proposes to construct a new mixed use building that will be three stories in height and designed in a contemporary manner. The new building will replicate the East Clay Street and Jefferson Avenue elevations, incorporating salvaged materials and decorative elements, including the original sections of the windows. The second and third stories will be set back from the reconstructed façades.



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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

The Commission has not previously reviewed this project. In 2008 the Commission reviewed and approved a plan to rehabilitate the building, submitted by a previous owner. In 2011 the Commission reviewed plans to address work performed without a certificate of appropriateness, also performed by a previous owner.

SURROUNDING CONTEXT

The area surrounding the project location is primarily residential in character on Jefferson Avenue and a mix of commercial and residential on East Clay Street. The surrounding residential buildings on Jefferson Avenue are primarily frame construction, two stories in height, with decorative porches and cornice lines. Across Jefferson

Avenue there are four 2-story frame residences with projecting bays and 1-bay porches. Commercial buildings include a 1-story masonry building immediately adjacent to the subject building and a 1-story eclectic style building that houses a restaurant across East Clay Street. Due to the irregular street grids there is also a triangular lot formed by the intersection of Jefferson Avenue, East Clay Street, and North 23rd Street. It is currently covered in grass and surrounded by a fence. Further southeast on East Clay Street is a 2-story residential building at the corner of East Clay Street and North 23rd Street. The side and rear elevations face onto East Clay Street.

STAFF RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

- The applicant increase the setback of the third story

STAFF REQUESTS THE APPLICANT PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING FOR FINAL REVIEW:

- Additional photographs of the existing conditions and the engineers report for the existing building
- Specifications for the proposed materials and windows
- Dimensioned elevations for all visible elevations
- Context site plan
- Dimensioned context elevation

STAFF ANALYSIS

Standards for Demolition, pg. 82,

According to Sec. 114- 930.7(d) and 114-930.9 of the Historic Preservation Ordinance: The Commission shall not issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition of any building or structure within an Old and Historic District unless the applicant can show that there are no feasible alternatives to demolition. The demolition of historic buildings and elements in Old and Historic Districts is strongly discouraged.

Under the provisions of Sec. 32-930.7., the Commission shall approve requests for demolition when:

- 1) *There are no feasible alternatives to the proposed demolition. "Feasible alternatives" include an appropriate new use and rehabilitation, relocation of the structure to a compatible site or re-sale of the property to an individual committed to suitable rehabilitation or relocation.*
- 2) *A building or structure is deemed not to be a contributing part of the historic character of an Old and Historic District.*
- 3) *The Commission deems that a building or structure has deteriorated beyond the point of feasible rehabilitation.*

In addition to the above criteria, the Commission has the authority to consider four other factors in arriving at decisions involving proposed demolitions:

- 1) *The historic and architectural value of a building.*
- 2) *The effect that demolition will have on the surrounding neighborhood.*
- 3) *The type and quality of the project that will replace the demolished building.*
- 4) *The historic preservation goals outlined in the Master Plan and Downtown Plan.*

The applicant has indicated that the existing building is severely deteriorated and beyond repair. The applicant has further indicated that a structural engineer's report that substantiates the condition will be submitted. Staff requests the applicant submit additional photographs of the existing conditions and the engineer's report for final review.

Siting, pg. 46, #s1-3

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.

On East Clay Street, the second story will be slightly recessed above the first story and the third story will have an additional recess. On Jefferson Avenue, the building will align with an adjacent building at 2207 Jefferson Avenue. Staff recommends the third story be further recessed.

3. New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site.

The ground floor office/commercial section will face East Clay Street and the residential section will face Jefferson Avenue.

Form, pg. 46, #s1-3	<p>1. <i>New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district.</i></p>	The majority of the buildings in the surrounding area do not utilize setbacks between the ground floor and the upper stories. However, staff notes the setbacks help to break up the massing between the second and third story.
	<p>2. <i>New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic residential construction in the district.</i></p>	Staff notes the majority of the residential buildings in the surrounding area are two stories in height and the majority of the commercial buildings are one story in height.
	<p>3. <i>New residential construction and additions should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps into their design.</i></p>	The residential section on Jefferson Avenue will include ground floor entrances. In keeping with the minimal and modern design of the building, there are not many exterior details such as a cornice line, porch, or exterior stairs.
Height, Width, Proportion, & Massing, pg. 47, #s1-3	<p>1. <i>New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.</i></p>	The total height of the proposed building will be three stories, 32 feet. The majority of the building mass will be two stories, approximately 21-22 feet.
	<p>2. <i>New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in surrounding historic districts.</i></p>	The fenestration on the East Clay Street elevation is horizontally and vertically aligned on the second and third stories; however they do not relate to the openings on the first story. The openings on Jefferson Avenue are vertically aligned.
	<p>3. <i>The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i></p>	Staff requests a context elevation to understand how the cornice lines will relate to the neighboring buildings.
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>	The openings on the surrounding residential buildings appear to be evenly spaced. The spacing of the openings on the proposed building varies.
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>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>	The applicant proposes a single door opening on the Jefferson Avenue elevation with simple portico. The openings on the Jefferson Avenue elevation vary in size and style while the East Clay Street elevation has a consistent window pattern.

FIGURES



Figure 1. 2211 Jefferson Street.



Figure 2. 2211 and 2203-2205, 2207, and 2211 Jefferson Street.



Figure 3. 2211 and 2225 Jefferson Street and side elevation of 420 North 23rd Street.