

3. COA-047059-2019

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

January 22, 2019

PROPERTY ADDRESS

813 N 28th St

DISTRICT

Church Hill North

Commission of Architectural Review

STAFF REPORT



APPLICANT

City of Richmond – Capital Projects

STAFF CONTACT

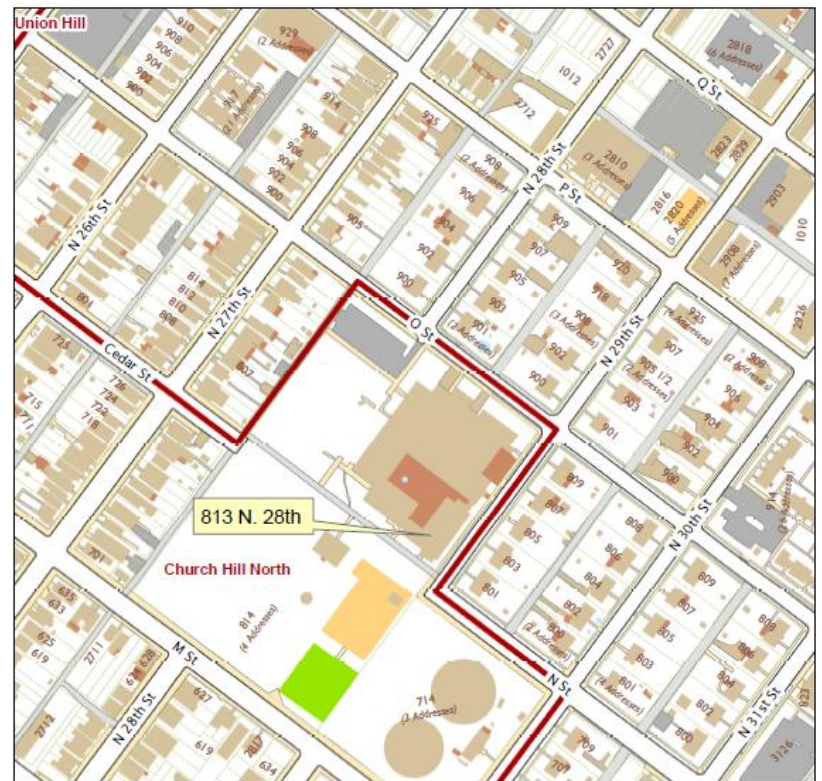
Carey L. Jones

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Construct new 750 student school, site improvements, and new playground facilities.

PROJECT DETAILS

- The applicant proposes construction of a 750 student school and playground facilities on a large parcel with an existing school building.
- The school will be located close to M Street with the main entrance from M Street at 28th Street.
- The majority of the school will be two-story in height, with the gym, upper cafeteria, and some classroom spaces on the second floor, and mechanical equipment in the third story/roof.
- The building will have a hipped roof, brick exterior, and concrete details.



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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS

PREVIOUS REVIEWS

The Commission of Architectural Review conceptually reviewed this application at the November 18, 2018 meeting. At the meeting Commission members recommended ways to reduce the size and scale of the roof, and also recommended that the applicants consider adding additional openings on the ground floor, reducing the decorative features to be more consistent with an institutional building, and installing a covered walkway. Since the November meeting the applicants have provided additional information and photographs of prototypes. In response to community concerns they have moved the bus drop-off area from the parking lot accessed by Cedar Street to have buses travel on O Street, along 29th and out onto M Street. The applicants have also provided updated landscape and lightening plans.

At the November Commission meeting staff mentioned that a separate application for the demolition of the existing school building will be necessary. Staff has not received an application for the demolition.

STAFF RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS:

- Decorative fence and other site improvements be submitted for review and approval
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STAFF ANALYSIS

Standards for New Construction: Commercial, Siting, pg. 52, #3, 5	<i>3. New commercial buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site.</i>	The main entrance to the school building will be on M Street which serves as a thoroughfare in the neighborhood. A secondary entrance will face North 29 th Street and provide access for the bus drop-off area. Another entrance will be located near the teacher parking lot.
	<i>5. For large-scale commercial parking, parking within the building is strongly encouraged. If a building includes parking within it, vehicle entry doors should be located on non-primary elevations.</i>	Parking for the new school will be located at corner of M Street and N. 29 th Street, near the existing water towers, from O Street near 28 th Street, and from N Street. The applicants have relocated bus loop to M and N Streets to address community concerns.
Standards for New Construction: Commercial, Form, pg. 52, #2, 3	<i>2. New commercial construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic commercial buildings in the district.</i>	Staff finds the proposed building maintains the human scale of the nearby properties. While it might be taller than some of the surrounding residential buildings it will be comparable in height to the existing school building. Further, due to the setback and distribution of massing on the lot, staff finds that it will not visually overwhelm the surrounding properties.
	<i>3. New commercial construction should incorporate human-scale elements at the pedestrian level.</i>	Staff finds the project incorporates human-scale elements, such as columns at the main entrance.
Standards for New Construction, Height, Width, Proportion & Massing, pg. 53, #s1 & 2	<i>1. New commercial construction should respect the typical height of surrounding buildings, both residential and commercial.</i>	The proposed school building will be two-and-one-half-stories in height, taller than the residential buildings in the area. However, due to the school's location on the property, the massing will not visually overwhelm the surrounding residential buildings.
	<i>2. New commercial construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of commercial buildings in Richmond's historic districts. New designs that call for wide massing should look to the project's local district for precedent. When designing new commercial buildings that occupy more than one third of a block face, the design should still employ bays as an organizational device, but the new building should read as a single piece of architecture</i>	The proposed school building uses features found in the district, such as a central entrance, vertically and horizontally aligned windows, and repeating bays.
Standards for New Construction, Height, Materials &	<i>2. Materials used in new construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the surrounding neighborhood.</i>	The primary exterior material for the school building will be brick with a standing seam metal roof, and concrete elements. These materials are similar to those found on the existing school and on the nearby Chimborazo

Colors, pg. 53,
#s2, 4

Elementary School. Staff finds the proposed materials are compatible with materials found in the district.

New Construction: Corner Properties – Commercial, pg. 54

1. *Secondary elevations of corner properties should reference massing similar to other corner locations in the historic district.*
2. *The material used in the primary elevation should be continued along the second, corner elevation.*
3. *Particular attention should be paid to the height of foundations to create an appropriately scaled appearance that relates to neighboring structures and is consistent with neighboring properties. Heights should be kept to a level that will enhance, not detract from, the pedestrian experience. Foundation materials should be selected that are compatible with historic materials and consistent with properties within the district.*
4. *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.*

Staff finds the proposed elevations use a consistent pattern of architectural details and materials. Consistent architectural details include vertically aligned bays and horizontal courses.

New Construction, Doors and Windows, pg. 56, #s2,5

2. *The size, proportion, and spacing patterns of door and window openings on free standing new construction should be compatible with patterns established within the district.*
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.*

Staff finds that the vertical and horizontal fenestration patterns from the primary elevation are continued on the secondary elevations and create an architecturally cohesive building.

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.

IMAGES

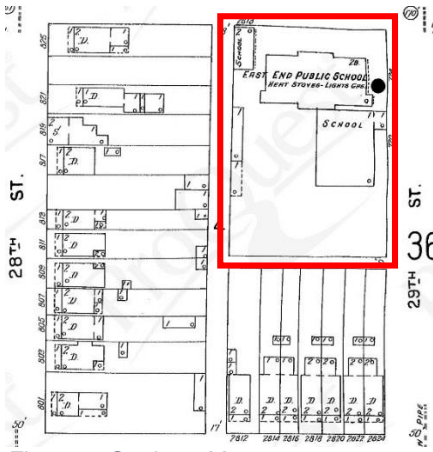


Figure 1. Sanborn Map 1905.

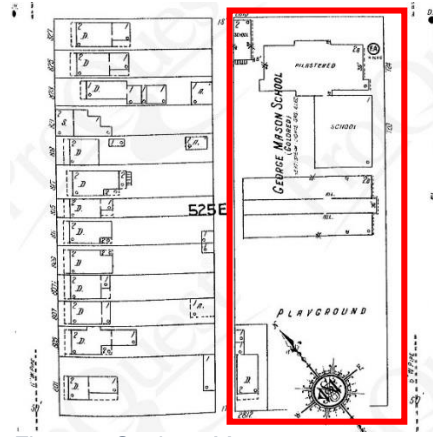


Figure 2. Sanborn Map 1925

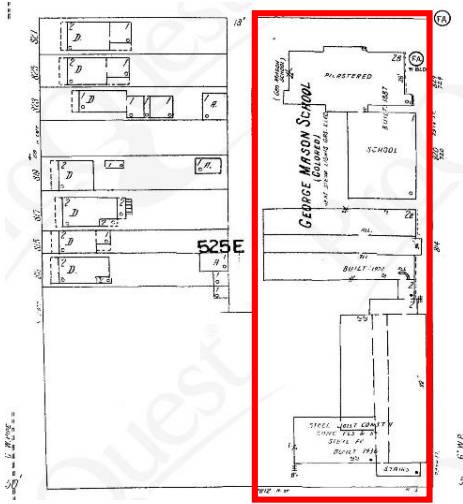


Figure 3. Sanborn Map 1950



Figure 4. George Mason Elementary, ca. 1991.



Figure 5. Existing Building, Addition.



Figure 6. Location of proposed school, view from 28th Street where the main entrance is proposed.



Figure 7. View north from N Street to proposed location of new school building.



Figure 8. View east from M Street to location of proposed school building.