



**Staff Report**  
**City of Richmond, Virginia**  
 Commission of Architectural Review



5. COA-144129-2024	Final Review <span style="float: right;">Meeting Date: 6/25/2024</span>
Applicant/Petitioner	Will Gillette, Baker Development Resources
Project Description	Construct four single family dwellings in groups of two.
Project Location	
Address: 810-812 N. 22 <sup>nd</sup> Street	
Historic District: Union Hill	
High-Level Details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The applicant proposes to construct 4 buildings as two pairs on vacant corner lots. The new construction will be located at the corner of Burton Street and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street.</li> <li>• The townhomes will be three stories tall,</li> <li>• The new construction will be frame with full-width front porches.</li> <li>• The land is currently vacant.</li> <li>• The pair of dwellings at 810 N. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street will be three story buildings with two story front porches. The first floors will be clad in stucco.</li> <li>• The pair of dwellings will be 812 N. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, will be three stories tall with a one-story full width front porch and will be completely clad in horizontal siding.</li> </ul>	
Staff Recommendation	Approval, with Conditions
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, <a href="mailto:alex.dandridge@rva.gov">alex.dandridge@rva.gov</a> , (804) 646-6569
Previous Reviews	<p>The Commission reviewed this application as a final review at the May 28, 2024 meeting. The Commission voted to defer the application, as there were still revisions to the design being requested. Specifically, the Commission still had concern over the height of the units and the lack of variation. It was asked that the applicant consider placing some units on slab, and some units on a foundation to create subtle differences in height. Implementation of an English basement, or a design that better references historic three-story residential buildings continued to be recommended by the Commission.</p> <p>This application was reviewed at the April 2024 meeting of the Commission. The Commission was supportive of the first two stories of the proposed buildings but was not in support of the third-floor setbacks. Commissioners believed that the applicant should embrace a full three stories in this location. They recommended that the</p>

	<p>applicant look at existing three-story residential buildings nearby to inform the design. While this question was raised, the appropriateness of having three story buildings along Burton Street was raised and two-stories recommended; however, there was not a clear conclusion to the conversation as it related to the buildings fronting 22<sup>nd</sup> Street. At conceptual this grouping of buildings was oriented towards Burton Street and not 22<sup>nd</sup>.</p> <p>The Commission conceptually reviewed this application at the November 2023 meeting. Comments from Commissioners included asking the applicant to consider the height of the proposed three-story buildings. Some Commissioners expressed that the height of the building would be less of a concern if there was more diversity in architectural style of the new construction. An English basement form was suggested to accomplish the desired space while limiting the overall height. They asked that the 2300 block of Venable be studied as a good example of uniform buildings that featured pedestrian scale elements while still appearing to be distinct from one another. The Commission asked that the buildings have porches and stoops. The massing was not discussed in length, but it was recommended that the individual units could be in groupings of two rather than two and three.</p>
Conditions for Approval	<p>Staff recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The small square windows on the left unit located at 810 N. 22<sup>ND</sup> Street be removed or redesigned to be a size more in-keeping with other windows on the proposed building.</li> <li>• Final window schedule to be submitted for staff review and approval.</li> <li>• Information on hardscaping for sidewalks, alleys, and any parking pads, including materiality and dimension be submitted for Administrative Review.</li> <li>• Details on any proposed walls or fences be submitted for Administrative Review.</li> </ul>

Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
<p><b>Standards For New Construction, page 46</b></p>	<p><i>All new residential and commercial construction, whether in the form of additions or entire buildings should be compatible with the historic features that characterize the setting and context. To protect the context of the surrounding historic district, new construction should reference the materials, features, size, scale, proportions, and massing of the existing historic buildings in its setting.</i></p>	<p>The proposed buildings will be constructed on vacant corner lots. There is an altered CMU, mid-century building, new construction, and a historic building adjacent to the site on 22<sup>nd</sup> Street. These three buildings are two-stories in height.</p> <p>The new construction will feature architectural elements that are like other Italianate Style buildings in the district, including: a decorative cornice and brackets, vertically aligned windows, and full width, covered front porches.</p> <p>Since the last review, the applicant has revised the elevations to eliminate the third-floor setbacks from the facades. The revised elevations are three-stories on the façade and two-stories on the rear with a walk out. While most residential Italianate style buildings are two story in the district, there are examples of Greek Revival and Vernacular Style buildings in the immediate area that are three stories tall and have raised foundations.</p>

<p><b>Standards For New Construction: Siting, page 46</b></p>	<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>The setbacks of the new buildings will be approximately 11'9" from the facade of the building to the sidewalk. This setback is like the setback of other dwellings in the district and reinforces the street wall.</p>
<p><b>Standards For New Construction: Form, page 46</b></p>	<p><i>1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district. Building form refers to the specific combination of massing, size, symmetry, proportions, projections, and roof shapes that lend identity to a building.</i></p>	<p>The new construction will have a form compatible with the district. The attached units at 810 N. 22<sup>nd</sup> will be two bays wide with vertically aligned windows. The units located at 812 N. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street will be three bays wide with vertically aligned windows and a decorative cornice that wraps the corner to address Burton Stret.</p>
<p><b>Standards For New Construction: Form, page 46</b></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 plans have been revised to include full-width front porches that address the front sidewalk and street.</p>
<p><b>Standards for New Construction: Height, Width, Proportion &amp; Massing, page 47</b></p>	<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. New designs that call for wide massing should look to the project's local district for precedent. For example, full-block-long row house compositions are rare in Richmond. New residential buildings that occupy more than one third of a block face should still employ bays as an organizational device, but the new building should read as a single piece of architecture.</i></p> <p><i>3. The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i></p>	<p>While there are a few larger, taller masonry buildings in the immediate area, they are institutional/religious buildings, most residential buildings in the immediate area are two-stories in height. The proposed buildings will be three stories tall.</p>
<p><b>Standards for New Construction: Materials &amp; Colors, page 47</b></p>	<p><i>2. Materials used in new residential construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.</i></p>	<p>The new construction will be clad in horizontal siding, which generally resembles other types of horizontal siding found within the district.</p> <p>Porch roofs will be standing seam metal. Windows will be aluminum clad wood.</p> <p>The trim will be a composite material. Porches and decking will be wood. The foundation will be parged masonry.</p> <p>The attached units at 810 N. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street will feature stucco first floors, which resemble the parged, raised foundations within the Union Hill District.</p>

		Staff finds that the selected materials are appropriate for the district.
<b>Standards For New Construction: Doors and Windows, page 56</b>	<i>2. The size, proportion and spacing patterns of door and window openings on free-standing new construction should be compatible with patterns established in the district.</i>	<p>The building will have single windows that are vertically aligned.</p> <p>The units located at 810 N. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street will have smaller square windows on the third floor. The smaller windows will likely be minimally visible on the right-side unit, as it is adjacent to the proposed three-story building on 812 N 22<sup>nd</sup> Street. However, the three-square window on the left side unit will be visible, as the neighboring building is two story CMU construction. These windows are small, an atypical of the district and will be visible. <u>Staff recommends that the small, square windows on the left unit located at 810 N. 22<sup>ND</sup> Street be removed, or redesign to be a size more in-keeping with other windows on the proposed building to reflect the more traditional design.</u> The three closely spaced, small windows on the third story of the right and left elevations are atypical for the district and will be highly visible from the public right of way.</p> <p><u>Final window schedule to be submitted for staff review and approval.</u></p>
<b>Site improvements: Sidewalks &amp; Curbs, page 76</b>	<p><i>4. Brick or granite pavers are the most appropriate choice in most Old and Historic Districts.</i></p> <p><i>5. Existing granite curbing should be retained whenever possible.</i></p> <p><i>6. Sidewalk design should allow for the installation of appropriate urban landscaping.</i></p>	<p><u>Staff recommends that information on hardscaping for sidewalks, alleys, and any parking pads, including materiality and dimension be submitted for Administrative Review.</u> Appropriate paving for the Union Hill City Old and Historic District includes brick pavers, granite pavers, and gravel.</p>
<b>Standards for New Construction, Residential, Fences &amp; Walls, pg. 51</b>	<p><i>1. Fence, wall, and gate designs should reflect the scale of the 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 building materials commonly found in the neighborhood.</i></p> <p><i>3. Privacy fences along the side and rear of a property should be constructed of wood of an appropriate design. Privacy fences are not appropriate in front of a historic building.</i></p>	<p>No information was given on any walls or fences that will be installed in association with the new construction. <u>Staff recommends that details on any proposed walls or fences be submitted for Administrative Review.</u> Walls and curbing will require review by the Commission, whereas wooden fences may be administratively approved if in compliance with the Commission's adopted Administrative Approval guidelines.</p>

<p><b>Standards for New Construction: Corner Properties - Residential</b></p>	<p>1. <i>Secondary elevations of corner properties should reference massing like 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 principles of the primary elevation: windows should be proportioned appropriately, aligned vertically, and arranged as though designing a primary elevation.</i></p> <p>5. <i>For residential corner properties, we strongly encourage the use of architectural elements that are typical of residential corner properties in Richmond's historic districts: porches that turn from primary to secondary elevations, corner towers, projecting bay windows, side entrances (including porticos, and shed roofs, where appropriate), side porches, lighting related to that on the primary elevation, and other similar treatments that treat the secondary corner elevation as an architecturally important elevation.</i></p>	<p>During the last review, it was noted that to address the corner, the building referenced as Plan Type "D" located on lot 17 will have a projecting bay on the Burton Street elevation. The decorative cornice turns the corner and is present on the projecting bay where it terminates into the Burton Street elevation. Staff finds that this is an appropriate way for this building to address the corner.</p>
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Figures

Figure 1. View looking northeast on Venable Street.



Figure 2. Religious building at the corner of N. 21<sup>st</sup> Street and Venable Street.

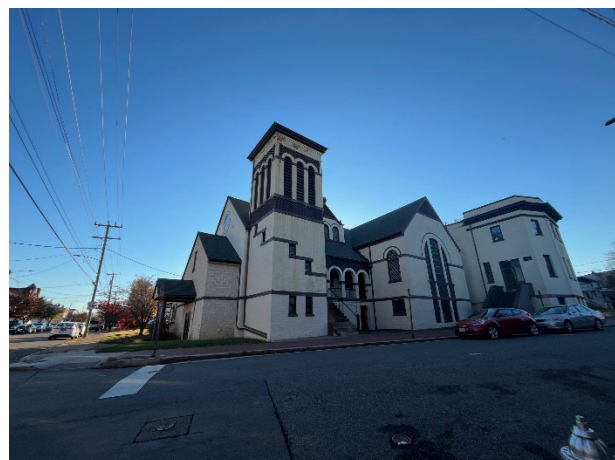


Figure 3. Looking north on Venable Street at the corner of N. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street.



Figure 4. Vacant lot between Venable Street and Burton Street.



Figure 5. Vacant lot at the intersection of N. 22<sup>nd</sup>. Street and Burton Street.



Figure 6. View looking southeast from the intersection of N. 22<sup>ND</sup> Street and Burton Street.



Figure 7. 1905 Sanborn Map. 2111-2119 Venable Street features mostly frame, two story buildings with front porches. All were demolished between the 1970's-1990's. As of 1905, there were not any buildings on the corner of Burton Street and 22<sup>nd</sup> Street that fronted on Burton Street.

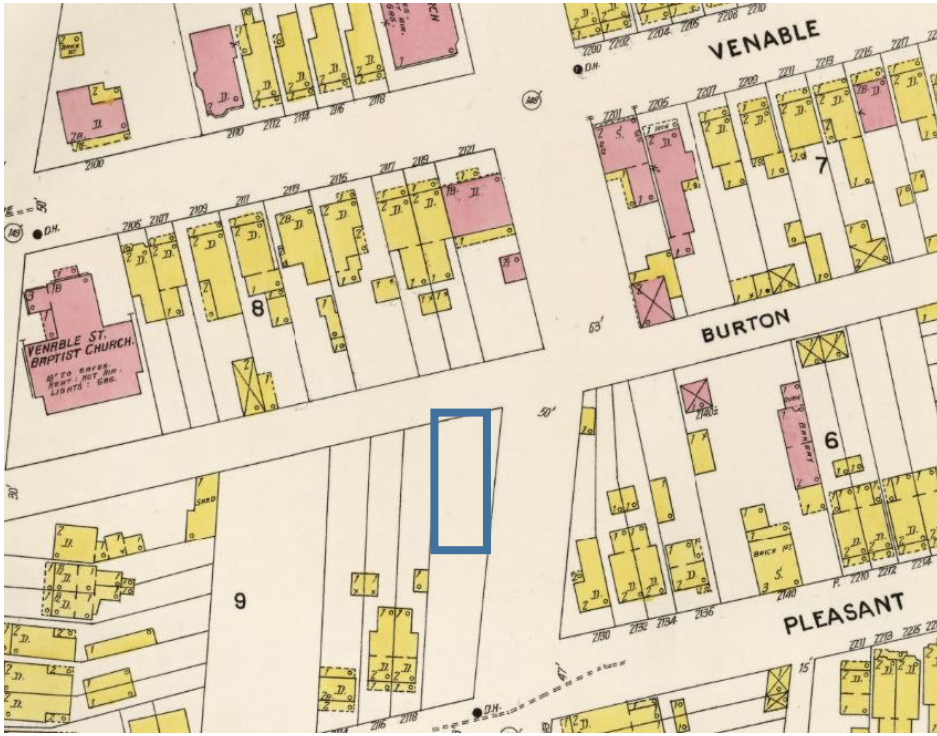


Figure 8. Subject block (2111-2119 Venable) in historic configuration, built-out. Photographs ~1955-1977. 2115 Venable picture below may not be the original building on that site.

