



To: Planning Commission
From: Urban Design Committee
Date: February 21, 2017
RE: **Conceptual Location, Character and Extent review of renovation and addition to Richmond Fire Station #21; UDC No. 2017-05**

I. APPLICANT

L. Dexter Goode, Project Manager, Special Capital Projects

II. LOCATION

900 East Broad Street, Room 602, Richmond, VA, 23219

Property Owner:

City of Richmond Public Works

III. PURPOSE

The application is for conceptual location, character, and extent review of a renovation and addition to Richmond Fire Station #21 to extend the usable life of the building and to meet the needs of a modern fire department.

IV. SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

This item passed as part of the consent agenda.

Therefore, the Urban Design Committee recommends approval of the project as submitted.

Staff Contacts:

Josh Son (804) 646-3741

V. FINDINGS OF FACT

a. Site Description and Surrounding Context

The subject property is located on the east side of Jefferson Davis Highway, south of its intersection with Atwell Drive and lies within the B-3 (General Business) zoning district. The property is improved with a fire station, which was constructed in 1900.

b. Scope of Review

The proposed project is subject to general location, character, and extent review under Section 17.07 of the City Charter as identification for a "public building".

c. UDC Review History

Staff was unable to find any existing records related to projects involving the station.

d. Project Description

The City intends to renovate, and add onto the existing station to extend the usable life of the building and to meet the needs of a modern fire department.

The community uses the adjacent alleyway as a pedestrian pass through to Jefferson Davis Highway, and as such this station is visited by walkers and joggers quite often. Therefore the plans will call for an exterior water fountain and a public toilet which will be available without disturbing the fire fighters in the station.

The renovation of the building exterior will include the replacement of the existing windows, patching, repairing, and painting of the existing stucco, and replacement of existing paving. Interior renovations will include new partitions, finishes, mechanical, plumbing, and electrical systems. The station will be fully accessible at the conclusion of the project.

The building program calls for individual sleeping quarters, station officer's office, a day room, kitchen, storage, decontamination facilities, laundry facilities, and exercise space.

The program functions could not be accommodated in the existing space so two building additions are proposed on the north and south sides of the existing station. The building additions will be constructed of masonry walls with a stucco finish to match the existing building. The roof line of the south addition will come in just below the existing roofline of the kitchen area to minimize the visual appearance of the addition, and to simplify construction of the roof. The larger addition to the north will have a roof line slightly higher, closer resembling the existing flat roof portion of the building.

Alongside the abandoned alley to the south of the building, grass will be planted and asphalt improvements will be made to accommodate a walking path, making the walkthrough area much more pedestrian friendly.

A motorized security gate will be added to the main entrance to the parking, granting access to authorized personnel.

The project budget is approximately \$1,350,000 for building and site construction only. The project is funded through the Fire Department's Capital Improvement Projects fund (8929).

e. Master Plan

The subject property is located within the Broad Rock planning district as defined by the citywide Master Plan. The Master Plan recommends Single Family (low density) uses for this property, and defines the primary uses in this land use category as single-family detached dwellings at densities up to seven units per acre (page 133). The Master Plan also recommends enhanced landscaping with a greater emphasis on pedestrian streetscape amenities to improve the image of the corridor and aid in the revitalization of adjacent residential neighborhoods (page 153).

f. Urban Design Guidelines

In terms of landscaping, the Environment section of the Urban Design Guidelines notes that site landscaping should complement and soften new construction and building architecture (page 10).

The Public Facilities section of the Urban Design Guidelines notes that screening should be used for parking areas (page 14). It also notes that synthetic reinforced stucco is not an appropriate exterior building material because of its lack of durability and maintenance requirements. Synthetic reinforced stucco should not be used on the first floor of buildings where it is subject to wear and tear and vandalism. Super-reinforced synthetic stucco, however, may be appropriate for the first eight feet of building above grade. The section further notes that new materials should be appropriate for the size and architectural style of the building. Many different materials on a single building lead to visual confusion and should be avoided (page 17).

VII. ATTACHMENTS

- a. Vicinity Map**
- b. Application**
- c. Plans**