

INTRODUCED: February 24, 2020

A RESOLUTION No. 2020-R015

To modify the decision of the Commission of Architectural Review, which approved a certificate of appropriateness for the demolition of a certain portion of George Mason Elementary School located at 813 North 28th Street by adding to such certificate the approval to demolish a certain portion of such school constructed in 1922, upon certain terms and conditions.

Patron – President Newbille

Approved as to form and legality
by the City Attorney

PUBLIC HEARING: MAR 23 2020 AT 6 P.M.

WHEREAS, on November 26, 2019, the Commission of Architectural Review approved an application of the School Board of the City of Richmond (hereinafter, the “School Board”) identified as Certificate of Appropriateness Application No. COA-060187-2019 for the demolition of certain portions of George Mason Elementary School located at 813 North 28th Street in the Church Hill North Old and Historic District and constructed between 1936 and 1979; and

WHEREAS, on December 9, 2019, pursuant to section 30-930.8 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2015), as amended, the School Board filed an appeal with the City Clerk concerning the Commission of Architectural Review’s disapproval of a certificate of

AYES: 6 NOES: 3 ABSTAIN: _____

ADOPTED: MAY 26 2020 REJECTED: _____ STRICKEN: _____

appropriateness for the demolition, in whole or in part, of the portion of George Mason Elementary School constructed in 1922; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to section 30-930.8 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2015), as amended, the Council may reverse or modify the decision appealed, in whole or in part, by resolution when it is satisfied that the decision of the Commission of Architectural Review is in error, or, by taking no action, the Council may affirm the decision of the Commission; and

WHEREAS, the Council believes that the School Board has presented sufficient evidence to show that no feasible alternatives to demolition of George Mason Elementary School exist that allow cost-effective compliance with the Virginia Department of Education's recommendations for play space in an elementary school of the proposed size; and

WHEREAS, the Council believes that the School Board has proposed a plan to sufficiently memorialize the architectural features and history of George Mason Elementary School by salvaging bricks from the portion of George Mason Elementary School constructed in 1922 to build a brick arch and brick columns for the new school; and

WHEREAS, the Council is satisfied that the Commission's decision is in error under Chapter 30, Article IX, Division 4 of the Code of the City of Richmond (2015), as amended, because the Council believes that the plan proposed by the School Board properly memorializes the portion of George Mason Elementary School constructed in 1922;

NOW, THEREFORE,

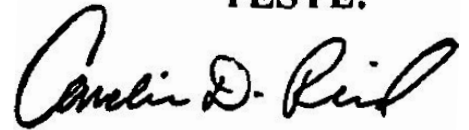
BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF RICHMOND:

That, the Council hereby modifies the decision of the Commission of Architectural Review to approve a certificate of appropriateness for the demolition of certain portions of George Mason Elementary School located at 813 North 28th Street in the Church Hill North Old

and Historic District and constructed between 1936 and 1979 by adding to such certificate the approval to demolish that portion of George Mason Elementary School constructed in 1922, provided that the School Board implements its proposal to memorialize the architectural features and history of George Mason Elementary School by salvaging bricks from the portion of George Mason Elementary School constructed in 1922 to build a brick arch incorporating the cornerstone from the portion of George Mason Elementary School constructed in 1922 and two brick columns incorporating each cornerstone from the portions of George Mason Elementary School constructed in 1936 and in 1952, as well as installing two commemorative plaques, at 813 North 28th Street near the original location of George Mason Elementary School.

A TRUE COPY:

TESTE:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Carlin D. Reed". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "C".

City Clerk



Richmond City Council

The Voice of the People

Richmond, Virginia

Office of the Council Chief of Staff

Council Ordinance/Resolution Request

TO Haskell Brown, Interim City Attorney

THROUGH Lawrence Anderson, Council Chief of Staff *LD*

FROM Meghan Brown, Deputy Council Chief of Staff *MB*

COPY Cynthia I. Newbille, 7th District Council Member
Tabrica Rentz, Interim Deputy City Attorney
Sam Patterson, 7th District Liaison

RECEIVED

FEB 11 2020

OFFICE OF THE CITY ATTORNEY

DATE February 10, 2020

PAGE/s 1 of 2

TITLE Reversing the Decision of the Commission of Architectural Review – Demolition of the George Mason Elementary School

This is a request for the drafting of an Ordinance Resolution

REQUESTING COUNCILMEMBER/PATRON

President Newbille

SUGGESTED STANDING COMMITTEE

Land Use, Housing & Transportation

ORDINANCE/RESOLUTION SUMMARY

Reversing the decision by the Commission of Architectural Review (CAR) to partially approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the George Mason Elementary School located at 813 N. 28th Street.

Additionally, the patron requests that Richmond Public Schools be required to implement the plan they developed to memorialize the architectural features and history of the school.

BACKGROUND

On September 24, 2019 the application for the demolition of the George Mason Elementary School was reviewed by the Commission. During this meeting the Commission decided to defer the application to allow for the applicant time to consider all other feasible alternatives to the demolition of the 1922 section and/or provide sufficient information and documentation to demonstrate that the building has deteriorated beyond the point of being feasibly rehabilitated as per required by City Code.

Richmond Public Schools (RPS) and the City's Planning Department met on November 25, 2019 to get clarification on what information or documentation would need to be submitted to CAR to demonstrate that all feasible alternatives to demolition had been examined. On November 26, 2019 the case was reviewed again by CAR. During this meeting, a representative of RPS indicated that they would not provide an alternative analysis to the Commission. Several motions were made at the meeting but the final motion to provide a

partial approval to approve the demolition of the 1936-1979 additions, express a strong preference for the retention of the entire 1922 building and deny the demolition of the façade of the 1922 building which such motion was approved by the Commission.

On December 9, 2019 RPS appealed the partial approval stating that they did not agree with CAR's decision. RPS is appealing CAR's decision to deny the approval of the demolition of the 1922 section of building in whole or in part.

Per RPS, "As requested by CAR, RPS has examined all feasible alternatives to the demolition of the 1922 building and believes that maintaining the building is cost prohibitive, is not technically feasible, and will not allow the new George Mason Elementary School to meet the Virginia Department of Education's recommendations for play space in a new elementary school of this size. The attached letter from RPS to the Department of Planning and Development Review discusses the limitations in detail and outlines an alternative proposal to use bricks from the 1922 building in the construction of decorative fencing, which was denied."

The patron believes it is critical that demolition of the old George Mason Elementary School approved to provide the necessary space needed to comply with the Virginia Department of Education's recommendations for play space in the new elementary school. Therefore, the patron requests Council approval to reverse the decision by CAR to deny the approval of the demolition of the 1922 section of the building whole or in part.

In addition to reversing CAR's decision to deny the approval of the demolition of the 1922 section of the building, whole or in part, the patron is requesting the RPS be required to implement the plan they developed to memorialize the architectural features and history of the school. The proposed memorialization plan, attached, includes: construction of an arch, with the cornerstone from the original 1922 building, near the location of the historic school using brick salvaged from the school, and the installation of two brick piers, one each for the 1936 and 1952 corner stones. They will also retain two plaques for installation on the site. Funding for this memorialization plan have been identified and are available.

FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

Fiscal Impact Yes No

Budget Amendment Required Yes No

Estimated Cost or Revenue Impact:

Funding for the memorialization plan have been identified and are available.

Attachment/s Yes No

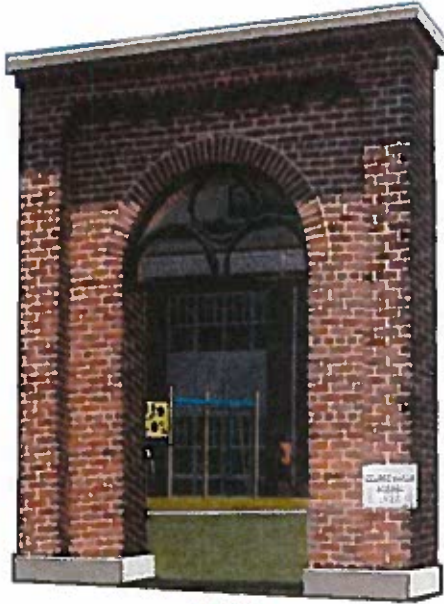
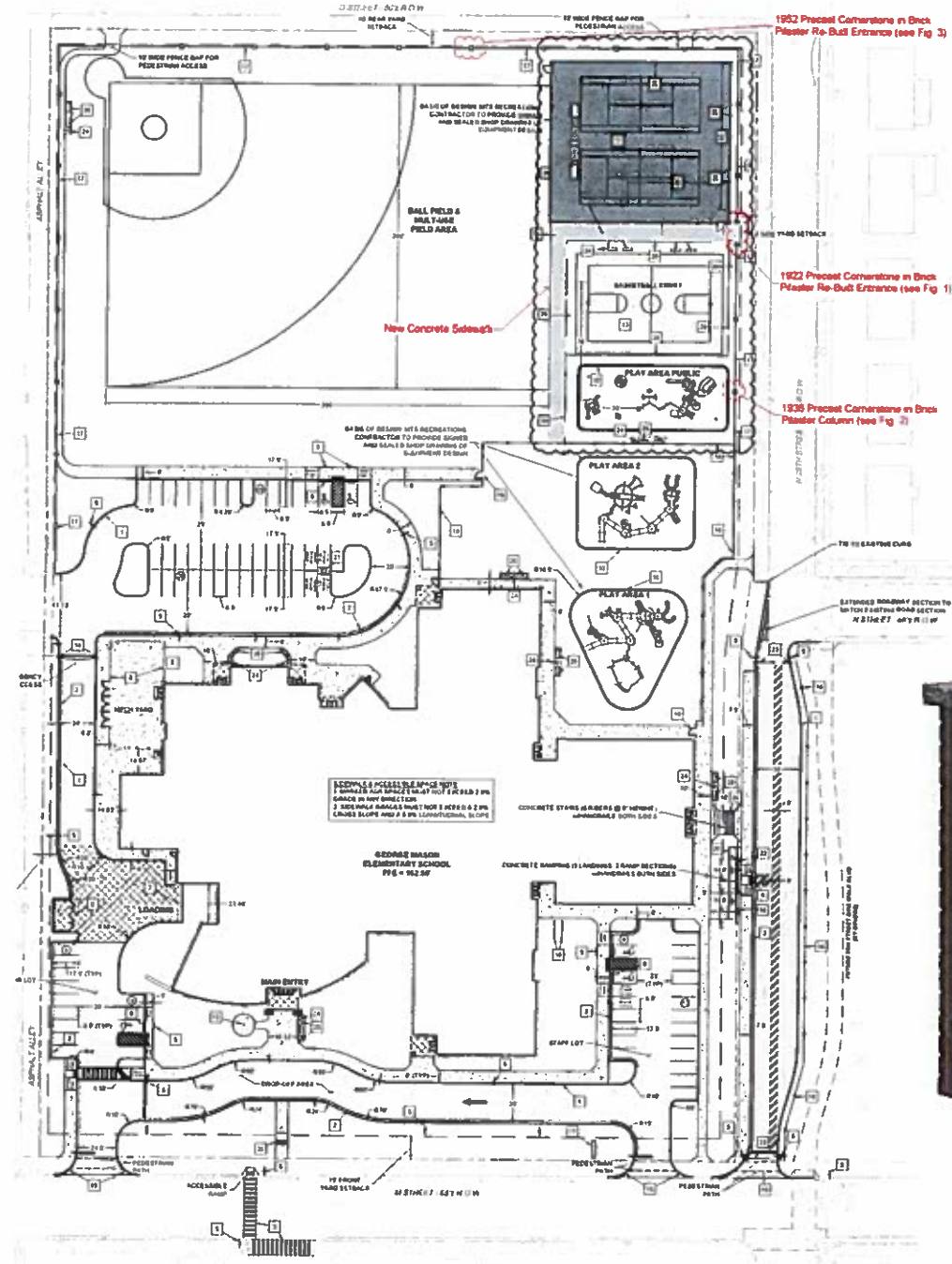


Figure 1



Figure 2



SITE LAYOUT REVISIONS

1	REVISION STANDARD 000 - CURB
2	REVISION STANDARD 000 - CURB & BUTTE
3	REVISION STANDARD 000 - 12 TYPE W BR
4	REVISION STANDARD 000 - 12 TYPE W BR
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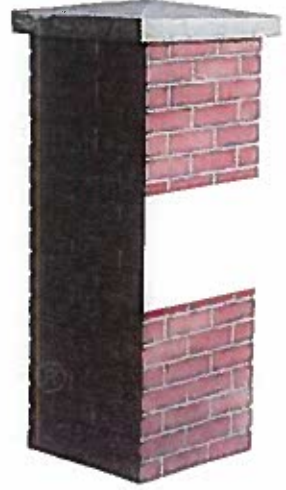


Figure 3

RRMM ARCHITECTS, PC
 1517 Riverside Blvd, Suite 200
 Chesapeake, Virginia 22091
 (757) 533-1100

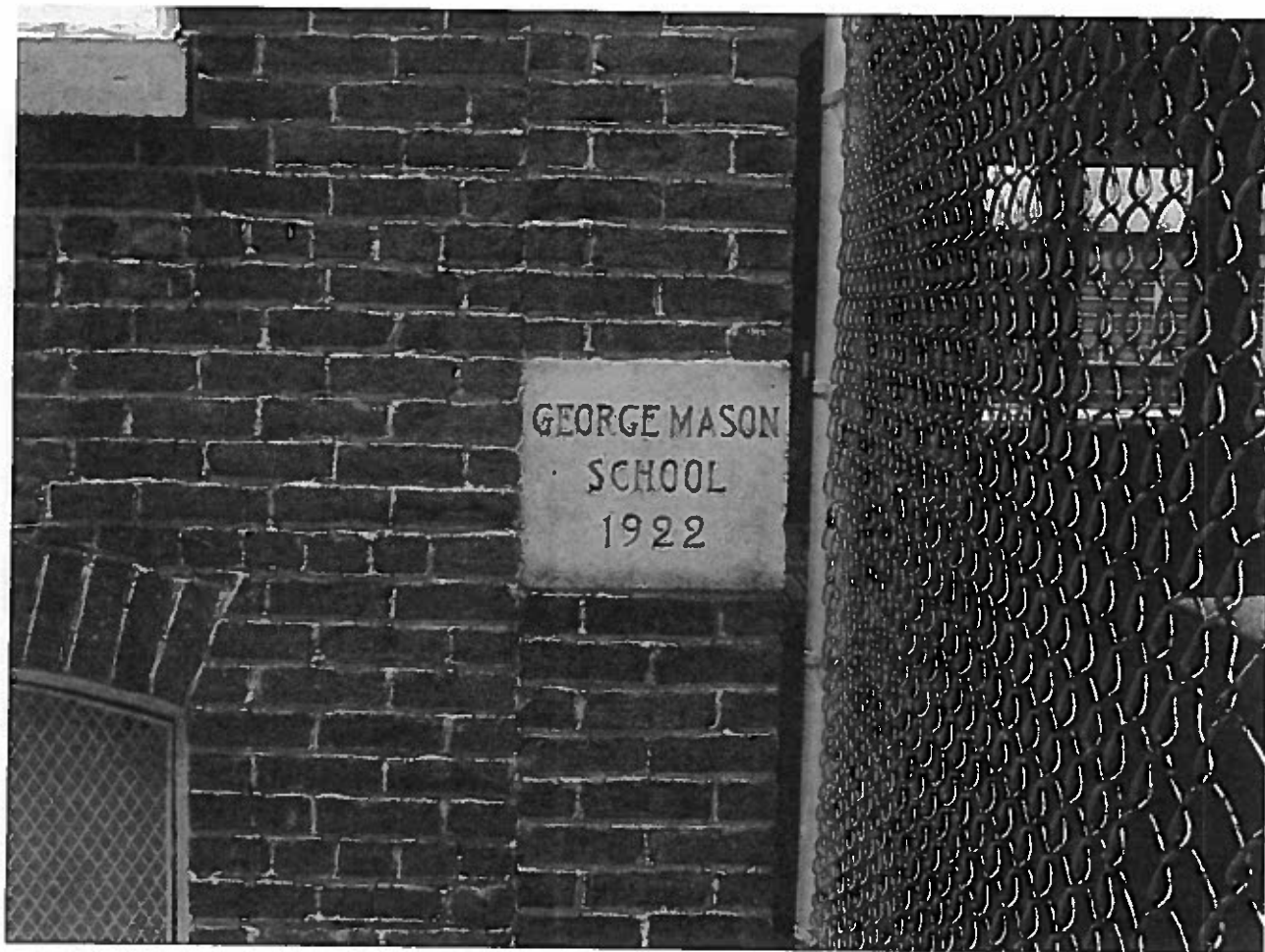
PROJECT NEW GEORGE MASON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
RICHMOND PUBLIC SCHOOLS
 RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23220

DATE 10/20/19
PROJECT 10/20/19
DESIGNED 10/20/19
CHECKED 10/20/19
DATE 10/20/19
PROJECT 10/20/19
DESIGNED 10/20/19
CHECKED 10/20/19

SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

SHEET C4.00









GEORGE MASON SCHOOL
BUILT 1922

W. FLOYD REAMS, CHAIRMAN
ROSHIER W. MILLER, M. D., VICE - CHAIRMAN

W. B. PARKER, M. D.
W. FLOYD REAMS
C. M. MILLER, M. D.
ERNEST M. LONG

W. H. OWENS
ROSHIER W. MILLER, M. D.
MRS. M. C. B. MUNFORD
HENRY E. LITCHFORD

R. L. PETERS

OFFICERS

ALBERT H. HILL, SUPERINTENDENT
JESSE H. BINFORD, ASST. SUPERINTENDENT
CHARLES P. WALFORD, CLERK & SUPERVISOR

SCHOOL ARCHITECT

CHARLES M. ROBINSON

BUILDER

SCHOOL BOARD - MECHANICS DEPARTMENT

08/01/2019

GEORGE MASON SCHOOL

HENRY L. MARSH, III WING

1979

SCHOOL BOARD

MILES J. JONES

CHARLES L. PUGH

MRS. THERESA T. CALDWELL

WILLIAM O. EDWARDS

DWIGHT C. JONES

MRS. LEONTINE T. KELLY

JACOB M. ORNDORFF, JR.

JAMES W. TYLER

RICHARD C. HUNTER

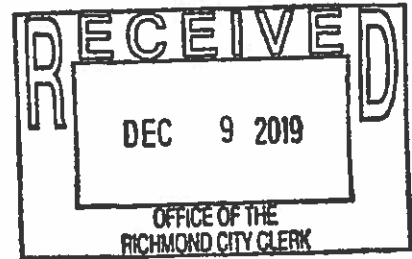
CHAIRMAN
VICE CHAIRMAN

CLERK
SUPERINTENDENT

ARCHITECTS CONSORTIUM
ANDREWS AND FARRISH CO.

ARCHITECTS
CONTRACTOR

08/22/2019



Richmond Public Schools
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
Darin D. Simmons, Jr.
EMAIL: dsimmons2@rvaschools.net

December 9, 2019

900 E. Broad St., Suite 200
Richmond, VA
23219 USA

RE: **Commission of Architectural Review Partial Approval of the a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of 813 N 28th Street**
Application No. COA-060187-2019


Ms. Reid:

Richmond Public Schools (RPS) does not agree with the Commission of Architectural Review's (CAR) decision to partially approve a Certificate for Appropriateness for the demolition of George Mason Elementary School. RPS would like to appeal CAR's decision to deny the approval of the demolition of the 1922 section of building in whole or in part.

As requested by CAR, RPS has examined all feasible alternatives to the demolition of the 1922 building and believes that maintaining the building is cost prohibitive, is not technically feasible, and will not allow the new George Mason Elementary School to meet the Virginia Department of Education's recommendations for play space in a new elementary school of this size. The attached letter from RPS to the Department of Planning and Development Review discusses the limitations in detail and outlines an alternative proposal to use bricks from the 1922 building in the construction of decorative fencing, which was denied.

Thank you for your review of our concerns and we look forward to having our appeal heard by City Council.

Sincerely,



Darin Simmons, Jr.
Chief Operating Officer
Richmond Public Schools

Resilience. Pride. Success



Richmond Public Schools

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Darin D. Simmons, Jr.

EMAIL: dsimmons2@rvaschools.net

October 11, 2019

Re: 813 N 28th Street
Application No. COA-060187-2019

Ms. Jones:

Richmond Public Schools (RPS) does not agree with the Commission of Architectural Review's deferment for the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the George Mason Elementary building. In fact, we believe that any continued deferment of action may jeopardize the City and RPS' ability to provide the necessary green space when the school opens in August 2020. This would cause RPS to absorb significant operational costs for the school as we provide supplemental activities and programming to meet physical education requirements at the school, while this issue is resolved.

In response to the request to examine all feasible options to the demolition of the 1922 section of the building, RPS believes that many of the proposed considerations are not feasible due to a lack of available funding. The three new schools that the City and RPS are building are being funded through the meals tax, which was projected to provide \$150 million dollars. Current project budgets estimate the cost of the three schools to be approximately \$145 million dollars, and RPS plans to use remaining funds for the design of a new George Wythe high school. With each of the new school constructions projects, funding is a key constraint that has been publicly noted and discussed. Each of the suggested considerations is discussed below.

- **Find an appropriate New Use and rehabilitate the building**
Neither RPS nor the City has a programmed use nor sufficient funding for the rehabilitation of the 1922 section of the George Mason building. Moreover, integrating the current building into the design of the new building would not have been possible. Doing so would have required students to vacate the 1922 section of the building, which would have led to a major disruption in school operations and caused overcrowding on the site.
- **Relocation of the structure to a compatible site**
In addition to considerable costs estimated to move the structure to a different site, the design, structure, and condition of the 1922 section makes the relocation of the

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building unfeasible. Further, RPS does also not own a suitable site for a relocation or a programmed use for the building on a new site.

- **Resale of the property to an individual committed to suitable rehabilitation or relocation**

While RPS does not have a need for the building, RPS does need the property to come close to meeting minimum space guidelines for new school construction. Given the school's capacity of 750 students and Virginia Department of Education guidelines related to space requirements for a school of this size, RPS requires the property to provide play areas for the school and the community. Because of this, RPS does not believe the resale of the property to an organization committed to the rehabilitation of the building is a feasible option and that doing so would deprive the school and community of the necessary greenspace.

- **Preservation of important architectural elements of the building**

To preserve elements of the building, RPS would propose using brick from the 1922 structure in the creation of the fence columns for the new school. Though there would be an unforeseen project cost associated with this, we believe the cost would be manageable given the reuse of current materials in the plans.

Thank you for your review of our concerns and our discussion of the feasibility of the recommendations presented at the September 25, 2019 CAR meeting.

Sincerely,



Darin Simmons, Jr.
Chief Operating Officer
Richmond Public Schools



CITY OF RICHMOND

DEPARTMENT OF

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

November 27, 2019

Richmond Public Schools
900 E. Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

RE: 813 N 28TH ST
Application No. COA-060187-2019

Dear Applicant:

At the November 26, 2019 meeting of the Commission of Architectural Review, the review of your application for a Certificate of Appropriateness resulted in the following action: **partial approval**. Specifically, the Commission partially approved the application for demolition as submitted. The Commission approved the demolition of the 1936-1979 additions. The Commission denied the approval of the 1922 building in whole or in part.

You, or any aggrieved party, have the right to appeal a decision of the Commission of Architectural Review to City Council as specified in Section 30.930 of the Richmond City Code. A petition stating reasons for the appeal must be filed with the City Clerk within 15 days of this meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (804) 646-7550 or by e-mail at Carey.Jones@richmondgov.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carey Jones".

Carey L. Jones, Secretary
Commission of Architectural Review

City Of Richmond, Virginia
Office of the City Clerk

Candice D. Reid
City Clerk

CERTIFIED MAIL & EMAIL

December 11, 2019

Darin D. Simmons, Jr.
Richmond Public Schools
Office of the Chief Operating Officer
301 N. 9th Street
Richmond, VA 23219-1927

Re: Commission of Architectural Review Appeal
(813 N 28th Street – Application # COA-060187-2019)

Mr. Simmons:

This letter is to acknowledge receipt of your petition on behalf of Richmond Public Schools, appealing a decision made by the Commission of Architectural Review (CAR) on November 26, 2019, concerning an application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the property located at 813 N 28th Street. This letter also acknowledges receipt of your check #335820, dated December 9, 2019, for five hundred dollars (\$500.00) to process the appeal, as required by Section 30-930.8 of the *Code of the City of Richmond, Virginia, 2015*.

Pursuant to Section 30-930.8 of the City Code, a copy of your appeal petition has been forwarded to members of City Council and Carey Jones, CAR Secretary. The Code requires CAR to file certified or sworn copies of the record of its action and documents considered by CAR in making the decision being appealed to this office within fifteen (15) days. This information, along with any affidavit providing supplemental information, will be forwarded to all members of Council.

Upon receipt of this communication, you are encouraged to contact your Council representative or any City Council member directly to discuss your appeal or share information related to the appeal process. Contact information for all members of the City Council is enclosed with this letter.

Either the mayor or a member of Council may introduce a resolution to modify or reverse CAR's decision in light of your appeal. If the Council has not adopted such a resolution within 75 days, excluding city holidays and days on which the city government is closed due to a local emergency properly declared, from the date on which you filed your petition with my office, CAR's decision will be deemed to have been affirmed, unless both you and CAR agree in writing by February 27, 2020, tentatively, to extend this 75-day period.

If you need additional information, I may be reached at 646-7955.

Sincerely,


Candice D. Reid
City Clerk

Encl.

c: The Honorable Richmond City Council
Carey L. Jones, Secretary, Commission of Architectural Review



City Of Richmond, Virginia

City Council

District 7

Cynthia I. Newbille, Vice President
646-5429 (City Hall Office)
646-5468 (Fax)
cynthia.newbille@richmondgov.com (E-mail)

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kimberly.gray@richmondgov.com (E-mail)

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stephanie.lynch@richmondgov.com (E-mail)

District 8

Reva M. Trammell
646-6592 (City Hall Office)
646-5468 (Fax)
reva.trammell@richmondgov.com (E-mail)

Addressing mail to City Council

The Honorable (Councilmember's Name)
Representative, District (Councilmember's
District)
900 East Broad Street, Suite 305
Richmond, Virginia 23219



CITY OF RICHMOND

DEPARTMENT OF
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW
COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

December 20, 2019

To the Honorable Council of the
City of Richmond, Virginia:

Ladies and Gentlemen:

Attached please find a summary of the appeal, the statement of the Commission of Architectural Review, and all pertinent records regarding the appeal of Richmond Public Schools for CAR Application No. COA-060187-2019.

The application was for the review and approval of the demolition of George Mason Elementary School at 813 North 28th Street within the Church Hill North Old and Historic District. The Commission of Architectural Review partially approved the application on an 8-0-0 vote at the November 26, 2019, meeting of the Commission.

Please note that City Code Section 114-930.8. (c) states: "The failure of the city council to modify or reverse the decision of the commission within 75 days from the date the petition is filed shall be deemed to constitute affirmation of the commission's decision, unless all parties to the appeal agree in writing to extend such period of time."

Please call me at 646-7550 or e-mail me at Carey.Jones@richmondgov.com if you have any questions regarding this appeal.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carey Jones".

Carey L. Jones
Secretary to the Commission of Architectural Review

Enclosures

COMMISSION APPEAL SUMMARY
Application No. COA-060187-2019 for 813 North 28th Street

The subject action of this appeal is the partial approval by the Commission of Architectural Review for the demolition of the George Mason Elementary School at 813 North 28th Street. The appeal was received by the City Clerk December 10, 2019.

Appellant

Richmond Public Schools, Darin D. Simmons, Jr.
301 North Ninth Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219


Commission Action

The Commission voted to **partially approve Certificate of Appropriateness Application No. COA-060187-2019 on November 26, 2019, by a vote of 8-0-0.**

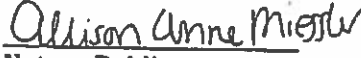
Aggrieved Party

Richmond Public Schools
301 North Ninth Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Sworn and attested that this is a copy of the record of the Commission of Architectural Review's action and documents considered by it in making the decision being appealed.


James Klaus,
Chair, Commission of Architectural Review
Date: December 17, 2019

City of Richmond, Commonwealth of Virginia Sworn to and subscribed before me this 17th day of December. Witness my hand and official seal.


Allison Anne Miessler
Notary Public
My commission expires on NOV 30, 2020




Carey L. Jones,
Secretary to the Commission of Architectural Review
Date: December 17, 2019

COMMISSION APPEAL STATEMENT
813 N. 28th Street
APPLICATION No. COA-060187-2019 (Richmond Public Schools)
December 20, 2019

Introduction

Richmond Public Schools (RPS), the applicant, filed an appeal to the decision of the Commission of Architectural Review (CAR) for the partial approval of the demolition of the George Mason Elementary School, 813 N. 28th Street, located in the Church Hill North Old and Historic District. In the petition, (see attached) RPS disagrees with the CAR's decision made at the November 26th, 2019 meeting. After two failed motions and much discussion, the CAR reached a compromise solution to allow the demolition of the majority of the complex and deny the approval of the demolition of the façade of the 1922 section of the building (Application for Certificate of Appropriateness COA-060187-2019 - Richmond Public Schools). The Commission Appeal Statement addresses the issues considered by the Commission of Architectural Review (CAR). It discusses why the CAR found the decision to be an appropriate application of its ordinance, and responds to the statements made by the appellant.

Response to the Specific Items of the Appeal

In its petition, the appellant states that it "does not agree" with the Commission's decision. However, the appellant does not "set forth in writing the alleged errors or illegality of the Commission's action and the grounds thereof, specifically including any and all procedures, standards or guidelines alleged to have been violated or misapplied by the Commission" as required in Sec. 30-930.8 (a).

The Commission's Responsibility

The Commission of Architectural Review, under Chapter 32, Article IX, Division No. 4 of the City Code is charged with the responsibility of recognizing and protecting the historic, architectural, cultural and artistic heritage of the City of Richmond. The Commission is composed of nine volunteer members appointed by City Council. The Commission accomplishes these responsibilities through a design review process of exterior modifications including construction, alteration, reconstruction, repair, restoration, or demolition within any of the City-Council-created City Old and Historic Districts. By this process, the Commission either issues (approves or approves with specific conditions) or denies a Certificate of Appropriateness. The Commission may also defer an application, if it finds the documentation submitted by the applicant is insufficient for making an informed decision. In this review process, the Commission must determine whether the proposed changes or actions meet the standards and guidelines as set forth in Sec. 30-930.7 of the City Code.

In making its decision, the Commission was governed by Sec. 30-930.7 (d) *Standards for demolition* of the City code, which states:

The Commission of Architectural Review 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. The demolition of any building deemed by the Commission to be not a part of the historic character of an old and historic district shall be permitted. The demolition of any building that has deteriorated beyond the point of being feasibly rehabilitated is permissible, where the applicant can satisfy the Commission as to the infeasibility of rehabilitation. The Commission may adopt additional demolition standards for the review of certificates of appropriateness applications to supplement these standards.

The Commission cannot issue a certificate of appropriateness for a project that does not meet these standards. The burden of proof that there are no feasible alternatives to demolition lies with the applicant. The Commission is responsible for determining if the evidence provided by the applicant clearly

demonstrates that there are no feasible alternatives to demolition. The Commission repeatedly requested this documentation; however, it was not provided by the applicant.

The Commission has adopted *The Richmond Old and Historic Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* in accordance with City Code Section 30-930.7 (g) *Adoption of architectural guidelines*, which states: "The commission of architectural review may adopt architectural guidelines for any old and historic district to assist the public and the Commission in planning for and reviewing exterior modifications..."

Application History

- 11/27/2018 The application for the construction of a new school, site improvements, and new playground facilities was conceptually reviewed by the Commission. Commission of Architectural Review staff stated that the current school on the site would remain in use during construction, to be demolished after the adjacent new school is completed, and that an application for demolition had not yet been submitted. A brief history of the existing building was included in the staff report. Following public comment, the Commission discussed the project and made recommendations to the applicant. No vote is taken at conceptual review.
- 1/22/2019 The application for the construction of a new school, site improvements, and new playground facilities was reviewed by the Commission. Staff again stated that a separate application for demolition would be required. A Commissioner voiced concern that the existing school buildings, especially the 1922 historic building, were removed from all drawings prior to a separate review of the demolition or preservation of the buildings. Following public comment, a motion was made to approve the application as submitted for the reasons cited in the staff report provided that the following condition is met: the decorative fence be submitted for administrative review and approval. The Commission approved the building location and offered suggestions to alter the decorative details to simplify the window keystones and splayed brick headers, to add brick detailing or recesses to unarticulated areas of the elevations, including the main entry on the east elevation and the north and south elevations at the end of the classroom wing. The Commission did not approve the overall site plan and recommended preservation of the historic school. The motion carried by the following vote: 8 in favor, 1 opposed, 0 abstaining. The decision letter issued by the Commission on January 23, 2019 restated the conditions of approval including the recommendation to preserve the historic school.
- 2/26/2019 The application with revised exterior details was reviewed by the Commission. Staff again stated that a separate application for demolition would be required. A motion was made to approve the application as submitted for the reasons cited in the staff report provided that the following condition is met: the decorative fence and other site improvements be submitted for review and approval. The motion carried by the following vote: 8-0-0. One Commissioner was absent.
- 9/24/2019 The application for the demolition of the 1922-1979 George Mason Elementary School was reviewed by the Commission. The ordinance states -- *The commission of architectural review 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. The ordinance offers exceptions to this prohibition when the applicant can demonstrate that the building has deteriorated beyond the point of being feasibly rehabilitated or is deemed by the Commission to be not a part of the historic character of an old and historic district.*

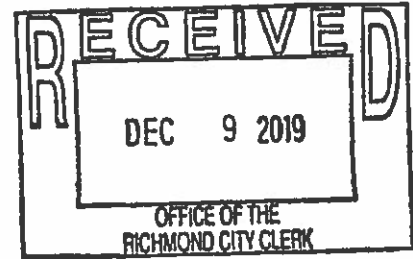
Following public comment, a motion was made to defer the application for the reasons cited in the staff report and to allow the applicant the opportunity to consider all feasible alternatives to the demolition of the 1922 section, including an appropriate new use and rehabilitation, relocation of the structure to a compatible site, re-sale of the property to an individual committed to suitable rehabilitation or relocation; and consider preservation of important architectural elements of the building. The motion carried by the following vote: 9-0-0.

- 10/11/2019 Mr. Darin D. Simmons, Jr., Chief Operating Officer, submitted a letter to Ms. Carey L. Jones, Secretary of the Commission of Architectural Review, in response to the Commission's request to consider all feasible alternatives to the demolition.
- 11/25/2019 Mr. Darin D. Simmons, Jr., Chief Operating Officer, met with Ms. Carey L. Jones, Secretary to the Commission of Architectural Review, and Ms. Kimberly Chen, Principal Planner for the Division of Planning and Preservation, to get clarity on what information would need to be submitted to demonstrate that all feasible alternatives to demolition had been examined and considered.
- 11/26/2019 The letter submitted by Richmond Public Schools on October 11, 2019, served as the revised application for review by the Commission at its regularly scheduled monthly meeting. Staff scheduled this case for review, though the letter did not contain additional analysis to demonstrate that there were no feasible alternatives to demolition. During the Commission meeting, a representative of Richmond Public Schools indicated that they would not provide an alternatives analysis to the Commission. One Commission member was absent from the meeting. After a period of public comment, a motion was made to deny the application for demolition. The motion failed on a vote of 3-5-0. A second motion was made to defer the application; after Commission discussion, this motion was withdrawn. After the motion for a deferral failed, and recognizing that the requested additional information would not be provided, the Commission discussed the potential of a partial approval as a compromise solution that would meet the needs of Richmond Public Schools and still be consistent with the Ordinance and Commission *Guidelines*. A final motion was made for partial approval of the application that would approve the demolition of the 1936-1979 additions, express a strong preference for the retention of the entire 1922 building and deny the demolition of the façade of the 1922 building. The Commission voted 8-0-0 to approve the motion.

Conclusion

In summary, the Commission believes that it acted in the best interests of the City and the Church Hill North Old and Historic District, and in a manner consistent with its City Code responsibilities as set forth in Chapter 30, Section IX, Division 4, and more specifically the Commission's decision to partially approve the application was in keeping with the *Standards for demolition* as contained in Sec. 30-930.7 (d). Finding that Richmond Public Schools was not forthcoming with information to demonstrate that all feasible alternatives had been sufficiently addressed, the Commission sought a compromise that meet the letter of the ordinance and did not impede Richmond Public School's ability to provide the required open space and play area.

Carey L. Jones
Secretary, Commission of Architectural Review
Department of Planning and Development Review
December 20, 2019



Richmond Public Schools
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
Darin D. Simmons, Jr.
EMAIL: dsimmons2@rvaschools.net

December 9, 2019

900 E. Broad St, Suite 200
Richmond, VA
23219 USA

RE: Commission of Architectural Review Partial Approval of the a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of 813 N 28th Street
Application No. COA-060187-2019

Ms. Reid:

Richmond Public Schools (RPS) does not agree with the Commission of Architectural Review's (CAR) decision to partially approve a Certificate for Appropriateness for the demolition of George Mason Elementary School. RPS would like to appeal CAR's decision to deny the approval of the demolition of the 1922 section of building in whole or in part.

As requested by CAR, RPS has examined all feasible alternatives to the demolition of the 1922 building and believes that maintaining the building is cost prohibitive, is not technically feasible, and will not allow the new George Mason Elementary School to meet the Virginia Department of Education's recommendations for play space in a new elementary school of this size. The attached letter from RPS to the Department of Planning and Development Review discusses the limitations in detail and outlines an alternative proposal to use bricks from the 1922 building in the construction of decorative fencing, which was denied.

Thank you for your review of our concerns and we look forward to having our appeal heard by City Council.

Sincerely,

Darin Simmons, Jr.
Chief Operating Officer
Richmond Public Schools

Resilience. Pride. Success



Richmond Public Schools
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
Darin D. Simmons, Jr.
EMAIL: dsimmons2@rvaschools.net

October 11, 2019

Re: 813 N 28th Street
Application No. COA-060187-2019

Ms. Jones:

Richmond Public Schools (RPS) does not agree with the Commission of Architectural Review's deferment for the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the George Mason Elementary building. In fact, we believe that any continued deferment of action may jeopardize the City and RPS' ability to provide the necessary green space when the school opens in August 2020. This would cause RPS to absorb significant operational costs for the school as we provide supplemental activities and programming to meet physical education requirements at the school, while this issue is resolved.

In response to the request to examine all feasible options to the demolition of the 1922 section of the building, RPS believes that many of the proposed considerations are not feasible due to a lack of available funding. The three new schools that the City and RPS are building are being funded through the meals tax, which was projected to provide \$150 million dollars. Current project budgets estimate the cost of the three schools to be approximately \$145 million dollars, and RPS plans to use remaining funds for the design of a new George Wythe high school. With each of the new school constructions projects, funding is a key constraint that has been publicly noted and discussed. Each of the suggested considerations is discussed below.

- **Find an appropriate New Use and rehabilitate the building**
Neither RPS nor the City has a programmed use nor sufficient funding for the rehabilitation of the 1922 section of the George Mason building. Moreover, integrating the current building into the design of the new building would not have been possible. Doing so would have required students to vacate the 1922 section of the building, which would have led to a major disruption in school operations and caused overcrowding on the site.
- **Relocation of the structure to a compatible site**
In addition to considerable costs estimated to move the structure to a different site, the design, structure, and condition of the 1922 section makes the relocation of the

building unfeasible. Further, RPS does also not own a suitable site for a relocation or a programmed use for the building on a new site.

- **Resale of the property to an individual committed to suitable rehabilitation or relocation**

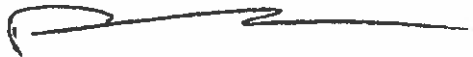
While RPS does not have a need for the building, RPS does need the property to come close to meeting minimum space guidelines for new school construction. Given the school's capacity of 750 students and Virginia Department of Education guidelines related to space requirements for a school of this size, RPS requires the property to provide play areas for the school and the community. Because of this, RPS does not believe the resale of the property to an organization committed to the rehabilitation of the building is a feasible option and that doing so would deprive the school and community of the necessary greenspace.

- **Preservation of important architectural elements of the building**

To preserve elements of the building, RPS would propose using brick from the 1922 structure in the creation of the fence columns for the new school. Though there would be an unforeseen project cost associated with this, we believe the cost would be manageable given the reuse of current materials in the plans.

Thank you for your review of our concerns and our discussion of the feasibility of the recommendations presented at the September 25, 2019 CAR meeting.

Sincerely,



Darin Simmons, Jr.
Chief Operating Officer
Richmond Public Schools



CITY OF RICHMOND

**DEPARTMENT OF
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW
COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW**

November 27, 2019

**Richmond Public Schools
900 E. Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219**

**RE: 813 N 28TH ST
Application No. COA-060187-2019**

Dear Applicant:

At the November 26, 2019 meeting of the Commission of Architectural Review, the review of your application for a Certificate of Appropriateness resulted in the following action: partial approval. Specifically, the Commission partially approved the application for demolition as submitted. The Commission approved the demolition of the 1936-1979 additions. The Commission denied the approval of the 1922 building in whole or in part.

You, or any aggrieved party, have the right to appeal a decision of the Commission of Architectural Review to City Council as specified in Section 30.930 of the Richmond City Code. A petition stating reasons for the appeal must be filed with the City Clerk within 15 days of this meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (804) 646-7550 or by e-mail at Carey.Jones@richmondgov.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carey Jones".

**Carey L. Jones, Secretary
Commission of Architectural Review**

13. COA-044099-2018

**Commission of
Architectural Review
STAFF REPORT**



PUBLIC HEARING DATE

November 27, 2018

PROPERTY ADDRESS

813 N 28th St

DISTRICT

Church Hill North

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 parcel is within the boundaries of the Church Hill North City and Old Historic District, but outside the National Register of Historic Places historic district boundary.
- 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 one-story in height, with the gym, upper cafeteria, and some classroom spaces on the second floor.
- The building will have a hipped roof, brick exterior, and concrete details.



The City of Richmond assumes no liability either for any errors, omissions, or inaccuracies in the information provided regardless of the cause of such or for any decision made, action taken, or action not taken by the user in reliance upon any maps or information provided herein.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

PREVIOUS REVIEWS

None.

Surrounding Context: The school will be constructed on a lot that is currently developed with an existing school building and related facilities. The existing George Mason School was constructed over a number of building campaigns. The original section of the building dates to 1887, with additions in 1922, 1936, and 1951. Also on the lot is the Ethel Bailey Furman Memorial Park. Immediately to south is a large water tower. The majority of the surrounding area is a mix of one and two-story residences.

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. The Guidelines do not specifically provide direction for construction of new institutional buildings. However, Commission staff found that the guidance presented in "Standards for New Construction: Commercial" on pages 52-54, 56 of the Richmond

Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines provides direction for the construction of new, larger scale buildings. The specific Guidelines are presented below.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Standards for New Construction: Commercial, Siting, pg. 52, #3, 5	3. <i>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.
	5. <i>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 and near the backyards of the houses facing N. 27 th Street. The bus turn-around will be at the terminus of Cedar Street. Staff finds that these are appropriate locations for parking and turn around locations.
Standards for New Construction: Commercial, Form, pg. 52, #3, 5	2. <i>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.
	3. <i>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	1. <i>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 existing school and residential houses in the area. However, the majority of the building is one story in height, and the taller sections of the building will be near 29 th Street and the existing water towers.
	2. <i>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,	2. <i>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

Materials &
Colors, pg. 53,
#s2, 4

existing school and on nearby Chimborazo 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.

IMAGES

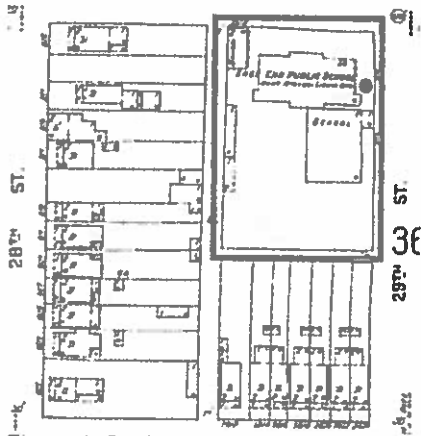


Figure 1. Sanborn Map 1905

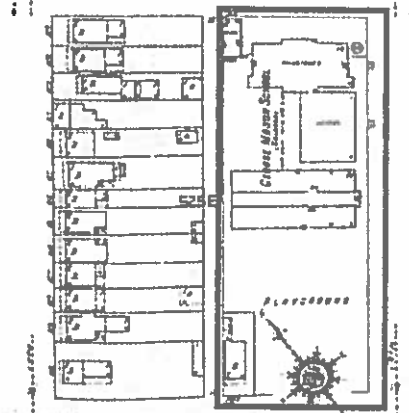


Figure 2. Sanborn Map 1925

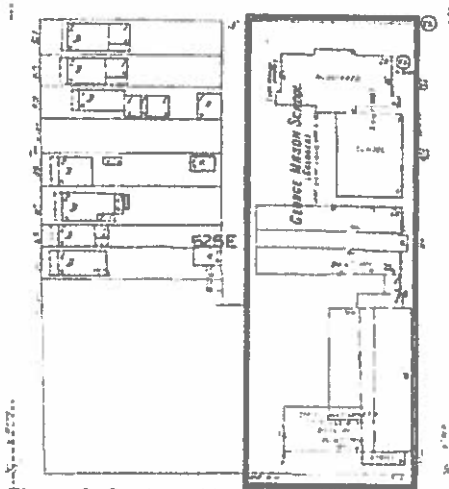


Figure 3. Sanborn Map 1950



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.

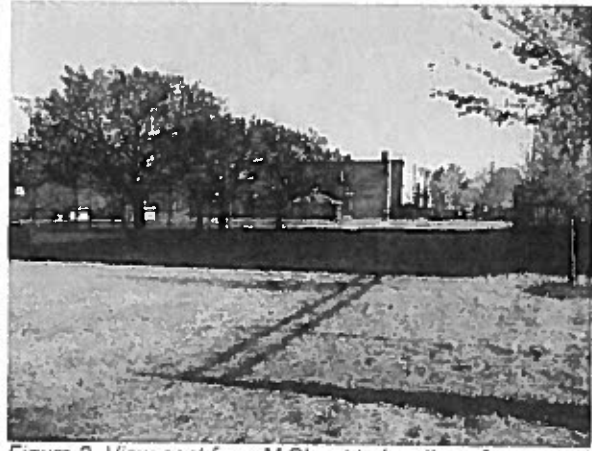


Figure 8. View east from M Street to location of proposed school building.



City of Richmond

City Hall
900 East Broad Street

Meeting Minutes - Draft Commission of Architectural Review

Tuesday, November 27, 2018

3:30 PM

5th Floor Conference Room of City Hall

Call to Order

James Klaus, the Chairman, called the November 27 meeting of the Commission of Architectural Review to order at 3:32 pm.

Roll Call

Present -- 9 - * Commissioner David C. Cooley, * Commissioner Sanford Bond, * Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, * Commissioner James W. Klaus, * Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., * Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, * Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, * Commissioner Sean Wheeler and * Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

Approval of Minutes

October 9, 2018 (Quarterly Meeting)

A motion was made by Commissioner Neville C. Johnson, Jr., seconded by Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, that the October 9th 2018 Quarterly Meeting minutes be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 7 - Commissioner David C. Cooley, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

Excused -- 1 - Commissioner Sanford Bond

Abstain -- 1 - Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks

October 23, 2018

A motion was made by Commissioner Neville C. Johnson, Jr., seconded by Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, that the October 23, 2018 Meeting Minutes be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - Commissioner David C. Cooley, Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

Excused -- 1 - Commissioner Sanford Bond

Review of National Register Nominations

NR 2018 2 Millburne

asked if there was any further public comment. There being none, he commenced Commission discussion.

Commissioner Pearson expressed concern about the historic windows and whether some of them would be lost. Chairman Klaus expressed concern that planned addition would obscure two historic windows from view. Commissioner Morgan agreed with Commissioner Pearson that preserving at least some of the historic fabric of the building would be worthwhile, and agreed with staff that the proposed design should be altered so as not to mimic historic forms in a misleading fashion.

Chairman Klaus suggested re-using the historic windows in the addition. Mr. Johannes responded that this would be difficult due to space constraints.

This Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness was conceptually reviewed.

13 COA-044099- 813 North 28th Street - Construct new 750 student school, site
2018 improvements, and new playground facilities.

Attachments: Application and Plans

Site Map

Staff Report

Ms. Jones presented this application.

Staff found that in general the proposed school meets the guidelines for new construction of large buildings. Staff found that the proposed building maintains the human scale elements found within the district, and that it will be comparable in height to the existing school building. Staff found that due to the planned setbacks and massing distribution on the lot, the school will not visually overwhelm surrounding properties. Staff found that the proposed school uses features found in the district such as a central entrance, vertically and horizontally aligned windows, and a repeating bay pattern and that the principal materials of the school will be brick and standing seam metal with concrete elements, materials which are compatible with those found in the district.

Ms. Jones stated that the current school on the site will remain in use during construction, to be demolished after the adjacent new school is completed and that an application for the demolition has not yet been submitted.

Steve Raugh of Timmons Group stated that the school under discussion is one of three in a fast-track process for construction. The conceptual review is to confirm permission to break ground on the construction site. The fast pace of the project precludes changes to the location of the proposed school.

Chairman Klaus asked if there had been public input into the planning of the proposed school construction. Steve Raugh and David Weigand, both of Timmons Group, confirmed that community meetings had been held, at which time the community gave input on colors and type of prototype used. Chairman Klaus suggested that any future meetings include a member of the Commission.

Commissioner Morgan suggested that some way be found to minimize the massive roof structure, perhaps with a parapet. Mr. Weigand explained that the roof size is partly accounted for by the mechanical mezzanine which houses all the HVAC equipment.

Chairman Klaus stated that, in the case of two schools under review at the November

Urban Design Committee, the designers stated that there was some ability to customize the prototype designs; so there ought to be some adaptability also with the school under discussion by the Commission.

Vice-Chairman Hendricks questioned the curved shape in the school, and whether it fits in with local architectural forms.

Commissioner Morgan suggested that some of the expanses of blank brick wall be broken up, maybe with some blind openings. She added that all openings on the first floor should be real openings, but recessed brick could be used in places on the second floor. Vice-Chairman Hendricks added that this is true on each side, that due to its siting the school will be a "360-degree" building.

Commissioner Pearson expressed concern at the expanse of asphalt at the bus drop-off area, and asked if the student drop-off could be moved to a side-street, and the school structure in the proposed area be brought closer to the street. Mr. Raugh explained that the intent has been to separate the place where parents drop off students from the area where buses drop off students, to reduce congestion. He further explained that parents would use the front of the school and buses would use Cedar Street, which would be blocked off.

David Weigand stated that their usual goal with a school design is to get bus and car traffic off the street so that regular vehicular traffic is not held up.

Commissioner Wheeler suggested discarding some of the embellishments which refer to residential building styles, since the building is institutional.

Commissioner Bond asked if the prototype was modified significantly for this design. Mr. Weigand replied that it has not been significantly modified.

Commissioner Wheeler suggested a covered walkway to the main entranceway, to help articulate a more purposefully sited building.

Chairman Klaus asked that photographs of other schools built using this prototype be brought for the final review.

Vice-Chairman Hendricks asked that consideration be given to preserving a historic structure that is part of the current school, perhaps to reuse as a clubhouse.

Chairman Klaus asked if there was any public comment.

Shane Flansburg, resident of 801 North 27th Street, stated that he and most of his neighbors had not been made aware of the opportunities for community input in the school planning process, and that community meetings were not announced. Mr. Flansburg stated his main concern is with the proposed bus loop and its impact on traffic on 27th Street, which is already tight and busy. An earlier plan had shown a bus drop-off point on 29th Street near the water towers. Mr. Flansburg stated that this location makes much more sense to him.

The applicant representatives explained that the 29th St. bus drop-off area was considered and rejected due to a planned bike path in that area. Chairman Klaus suggested that the bike path's route might be negotiable, and that serious consideration should be given to moving the bus drop-off area, as this was the main issue brought up in the public comments.

Mr. Flansburg also expressed concerned about the 27th Street mechanical area and potential noise pollution, and about general light pollution potential from the school. Mr. Flansburg asked what the remaining approval steps would be, given the urgency given to school projects and that groundbreaking is scheduled for December. Chairman Klaus responded that he did not know.

Richard Rumrill, a Church Hill resident, expressed concern about the speed of traffic on the Chimborazo Elementary School "megablock" and how parents and children will navigate the traffic. He also stated that the large footprint of the school does not fit well into the scale of the neighborhood, and also that he was not informed about the community planning meetings for the school project.

Cyane Crump of Historic Richmond Foundation pointed out that the existing school at the site in question includes a structure from the 1880s, which appears to be in good condition and have good architectural integrity. She stated that public school buildings from this era are rare and that this appears to be the first school for black students in the East End. She further stated that Historic Richmond hopes careful consideration will be given to preserving this building, perhaps repurposed as a community center.

There being no further comment, Chairman Klaus asked for further comments from the Commission, or questions from the applicant.

Commissioner Morgan stated she is interested to see how the site plans relates to the historic school building and that the lighting and materials of the proposed new building will all be important factors considered in the final review.

This Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness was conceptually reviewed.

- 14 COA-044105-2018 305 North 30th Street - Construct first floor rear deck and single car garage, replace vinyl siding with fiber cement siding on enclosed rear porch.

Attachments: [Application and Plans](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Staff Report](#)

Ms. Jones presented this application.

Staff found that the proposed application generally is in keeping with the Guidelines. Staff requested that, for final review, there should be a dimensioned site plans with the location of the proposed garage and the new deck, dimensioned elevation with the height of the new garage, context site plan and colors for the garage and the porch.

No public comment letters have been received about this application.

Enoch Pou, applicant representative, stated that he is in full agreement with staff recommendations.

Chairman Klaus stated that he found the application reasonable and saw no problems with it.

Commissioner Wheeler asked if there would be any adjustment to the existing windows on the second floor of the house. Mr. Pou stated that the windows in question would stay in place.

3. COA-047059-2019

**Commission of
Architectural Review
STAFF REPORT**



PUBLIC HEARING DATE

January 22, 2019

PROPERTY ADDRESS

813 N 28th St

DISTRICT

Church Hill North

APPLICANT

City of Richmond – Capital Projects

STAFF CONTACT

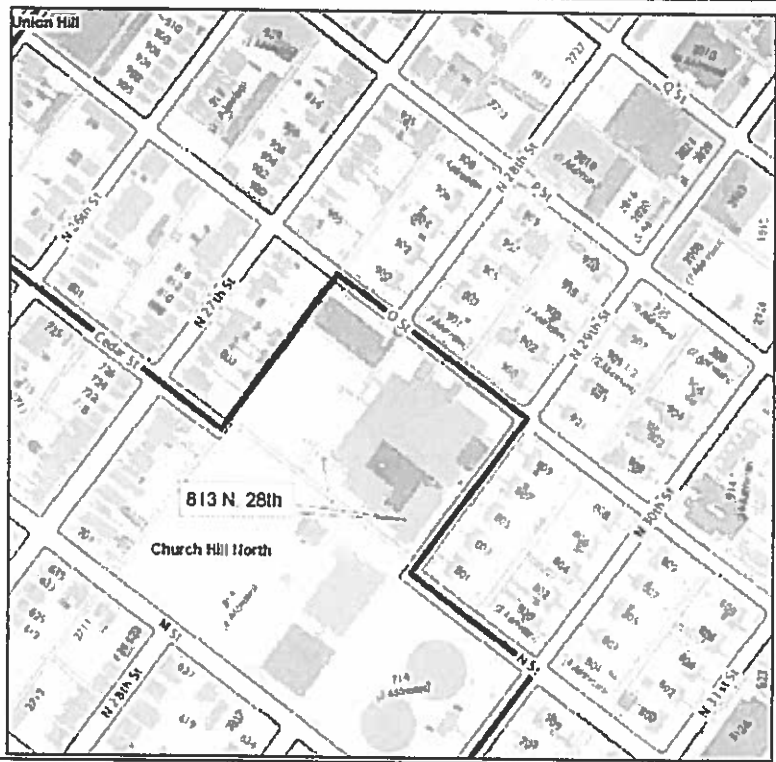
Carey L. Jones

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
-

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

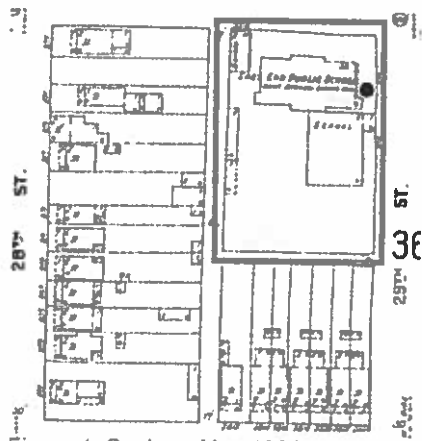


Figure 1. Sanborn Map 1905.

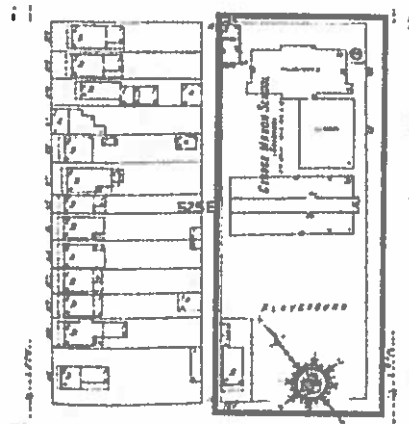


Figure 2. Sanborn Map 1925

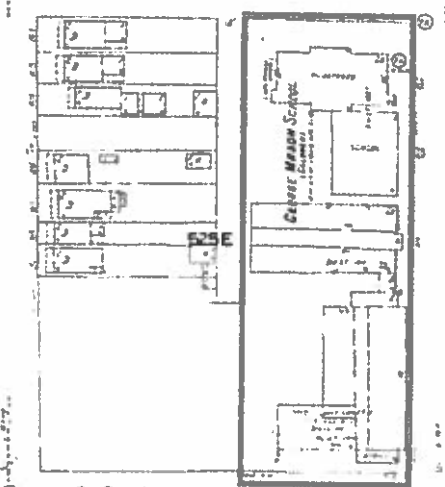


Figure 3. Sanborn Map 1950



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

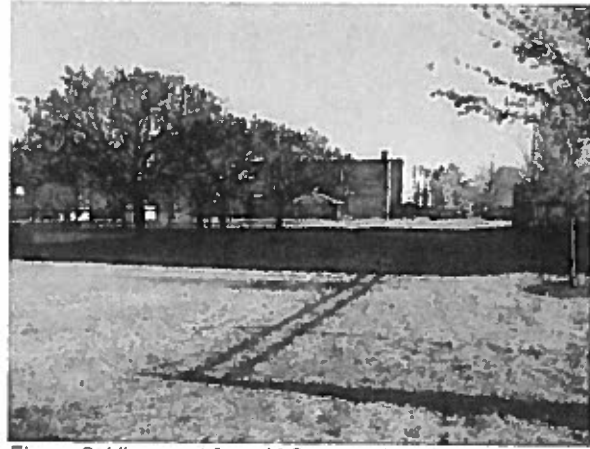


Figure 8. View east from M Street to location of proposed school building



City of Richmond

City Hall
900 East Broad Street

Meeting Minutes - Draft Commission of Architectural Review

Tuesday, January 22, 2019

3:00 PM

5th Floor Conference Room of City Hall

Call to Order

James Klaus, the Chairman, called the January 22nd meeting of the Commission of Architectural Review to order at 3:33 pm.

Roll Call

Present -- 9 - * Commissioner David C. Cooley, * Commissioner Sanford Bond, * Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, * Commissioner James W. Klaus, * Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., * Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, * Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, * Commissioner Sean Wheeler and * Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

Approval of Minutes

A motion was made by Commissioner Neville C. Johnson, Jr., seconded by Commissioner James W. Klaus, that the November 27, 2018 minutes be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 6 - Commissioner David C. Cooley, Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Kathleen Morgan and Commissioner Sean Wheeler

Excused -- 1 - Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer

Recused -- 2 - Commissioner Sanford Bond and Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

November 27, 2018

OTHER BUSINESS

Secretary's Report

Commission Secretary Carey Jones described the Commission staff 2019 Work Plan, which includes: developing a homeowner education and outreach plan to provide information to individuals and community groups about the obligations and benefits of living in a City Old and Historic District; updating the Guidelines, work which is already underway; continuing to work internally and with the City Attorney to develop a standardized methodology for enforcements, which includes clearing out some outstanding enforcements; and updating public information materials, including the website. With an upcoming update to Richmond.gov it will be easier for staff to update the website than it currently is.

Ms. Jones stated that the CAR staff has had many applicant meetings in the past month, including a site visit to 2218 East Grace Street to meet with David Branch regarding replacement columns.

the location, design, and materials of gutters and handrails be submitted for administrative review and approval. The motion carried by the following vote:

- Aye --** 8 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Lawrence Pearson
- No --** 1 - Commissioner David C. Cooley

3 COA-047059-2019 **813 North 28th Street - Construction of a new 750 student school, site improvements, and new playground facilities.**

Attachments: [Application and Plans](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Staff Report](#)

Ms. Jones presented this application.

Ms. Jones stated that the Commission of Architectural Review conceptually reviewed this application at the November 18, 2018 meeting, and that at this 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.

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 yet received an application for the demolition.

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 lighting plans.

The applicants brought additional updated details to the current meeting, with changes including the parking lot which had been the bus loop location has been reduced in size, and more detail of a buffered area between the proposed bus path and the revised drop-off area, including a crossing section. The applicants also provided materials details, including red brick on exterior walls, brown brick for the raised foundation, and precast concrete details.

At the Commission's request, the applicants provided images of the prototype schools from which the public school designs are drawn.

Ms. Jones stated that staff recommends approval of the construction of a new school at 813 North 28th Street, with the condition that decorative fence and other site improvements be submitted for administrative review and approval.

Mr. Wheeler voiced concern about the existing school buildings, particularly the historic one which appears to be gone in the plans under review. He asked if it would be possible for their demolition or preservation to be treated separately from the new construction currently being reviewed.

Commissioner Klaus stated that the old school buildings will not be demolished until after the new school is complete, and that the applicants are aware of the Commission's concern about the historic school building on the site.

Mr. David Wiggins of RRMM Architects and Mr. Steve Raugh of Timmons Group introduced themselves as representatives of the applicant.

Commissioner Morgan asked that the Commission be shown the additional window openings which were requested in the applicant's previous review.

Mr. Wiggins stated that in one of the areas in question, the walls where windows were requested are referred to as the teaching walls of the classroom, which have projectors, marker boards, and other equipment. He stated that windows could be installed in these walls by employing spandrels but that the cost would be considerable, and would not be beneficial to the overall design or the intent of the Commission's review.

Mr. Wiggins stated that, in the other area where additional windows were requested, at the end of the building, the scale of the area of unrelieved brick was less considerable than it might have appeared to the Commission.

Commissioner Hendricks asked if the applicant would be open to removing the keystone element which has been applied to the middle of the windows.

Commissioner Johnson stated that the modular prototype nature of the school seemed to limit the changes the architects could make, e.g., adding windows. Mr. Wiggins confirmed that, due to the nature of the prototype floor plans, the teaching wall will always be in a similar location.

Commissioner Morgan stated that in some areas where windows are not possible, some other detailing is necessary in order to break up the mass of the structure.

Commissioner Morgan pointed out the "Reflect Room" as a place where a good amount of windows would presumably be desired, as well as a northwestern section of the plan lacking in windows.

Mr. Wiggins stated that this is the location of the mechanical enclosure which contains chillers, generators, and other equipment, which is screened at the back of the building by a 14-foot-high wall.

Commissioner Morgan pointed out that in some areas of the design variations in brick color and other details had been employed to add variety, and asked if assurances could be provided to the Commission that other areas currently monotonous would receive similar improvement.

Mr. Wiggins stated that actual window openings would be difficult in the area specified, but that faux-window brick picture frame detailing would not be difficult to add, perhaps modeled on the two actual windows around the corner.

Commissioner Morgan asked Ms. Jones if the design changes discussed at the current meeting would require an additional Commission meeting to be reviewed again, or if these could be specified items that staff would follow up on and review and approve.

Ms. Jones stated that the Commission could choose either option.

Ms. Morgan stated that, as a large important building, the school would be worth Commission's time to discuss and review again, if necessary.

Chairman Klaus asked if there was any public comment.

Shane Flansburg, resident and owner of 801 North 27th Street, expressed concern about the school's lighting and whether its non-intrusiveness in the neighborhood could be followed up on and checked after construction; the mechanical noise from the school's generators and other equipment, and whether it would be distant and well-screened enough; trash pickup and dumpster locations, and anticipated frequency of pickups and resultant noise and traffic disruption; whether there would be enough parking or if there would be overflow use of street parking spots; and whether the parking area would be secured at night.

Mr. Flansburg requested clarification on whether the current review included the parking area.

Chairman Klaus stated that the present review was for new construction not within the footprint of the existing school buildings.

Danielle Porter of Historic Richmond Foundation stated that the Foundation is strongly in favor of preserving the historic building on the George Mason school site, as it is a rare example from an era shortly after the establishment of public schools in the region. Ms. Porter pointed out that the building could have alternative uses, for example as a fieldhouse.

Chairman Klaus asked if one of the applicant representatives would answer the questions raised.

Program Manager for the City of Richmond, Mr. Mike McIntyre, of AECOM, introduced himself. Mr. McIntyre stated that the mechanical section with chillers and other equipment would be screened with a 14-foot-high wall with double doors. Mr. McIntyre stated that there would be sufficient parking for teachers and staff, and that plans call for 3 parking lots, one small lot and two larger ones, which together will be more than sufficient to ensure that school parking does not impinge on on-street parking. Mr. McIntyre stated that the parking lot will have a lockable swing-arm gate to be locked after hours, and left locked on weekends. Mr. McIntyre stated that he did not have information on trash pickup times for the school's dumpsters. He stated that George Mason is a "recyclable" school, so all the cafeteria paper goods go into recycling containers, which equates to greater pickup needs, most likely twice a week. Mr. McIntyre stated that the trash area is set up to be easily hosed down.

Chairman Klaus stated that the lighting plan would go through the City's permitting process, which includes Commission staff approval. This will provide an opportunity to double-check that the lighting plan is not intrusive for the neighborhood.

Mr. McIntyre stated that there are still possible design changes for the school, but that it is necessary, in order to stay on schedule, that the work begin and the changes be addressed as the work is going on.

Chairman Klaus asked if there was any further public comment. Hearing none, he opened the floor for a motion on the item.

Commissioner Morgan asked if the Urban Design Committee, which is currently reviewing

two other schools, would also review George Mason after it clears Commission of Architecture Review. Chairman Klaus stated that they would not, that their purview is only the school projects which are not in historic districts.

Commissioner Pearson expressed concern about the large setback and driveway at the front of the school, as being inconsistent with the neighborhood.

Chairman Klaus stated that, for safe pickup and drop-off, it is considered necessary to pull these functions away from the street – otherwise, it is necessary to close off the street twice a day.

Commissioner Pearson stated that a defined street pickup and drop-off area could act as a traffic calming measure.

Commissioner Hendricks voiced partial agreement with Commissioner Pearson, stating concern about the lack of delineation of pedestrian access.

Mr. McIntyre stated that off-street parent drop-off and pickup is the standard for school design, for safety and security reasons, and that the goal is to separate buses, cars, and pedestrians. Mr. McIntyre stated that on-street pickup is dangerous, especially in the afternoon when parents may be parked across the street, and creates traffic congestion.

Chairman Klaus expressed concern about the lack of a clearly marked path for students approaching the school along 28th Street. Mr. McIntyre stated that there will be marked sidewalks and pedestrian crossings at the drop-off areas on the school grounds, but that the school construction funds cannot be used to make changes to public sidewalks.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hendricks, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, that this Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness be approved as submitted for the reasons cited in the staff report provided that the following condition is met: the decorative fence be submitted for administrative review and approval. The Commission approved the building location and offered suggestions to alter the decorative details to simplify the window keystones and splayed brick headers, to add brick detailing or recesses to unarticulated areas of the elevations, including the main entry on the east elevation, and north and south elevations at the end of the classroom wing. The Commission did not approve the overall site plan and recommended preservation of the historic school. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - Commissioner David C. Cooley, Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan and Commissioner Sean Wheeler

No -- 1 - Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

4 COA-047275-2019 **19 West Leigh Street - Installation of two plate glass windows and addition of rear stairs.**

Attachments: [Application and Plans](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Staff Report](#)

The application was presented by Ms. Jones.



CITY OF RICHMOND

DEPARTMENT OF
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW
COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

April 3, 2019

Bob Stone
900 E. Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

RE: Application No. 049220-2019
813 N 28TH ST

Dear Applicant:

The enclosed certificate has been issued for the above referenced address.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carey Jones". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carey Jones, Secretary
Commission of Architectural Review

Enclosures



Commission of Architectural Review

CITY OF RICHMOND
900 EAST BROAD STREET
RICHMOND VIRGINIA 23219
(804) 646-6335

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

This certificate is issued pursuant to Chapter 30, Article IX, Division 4 of the Richmond City Code (Old and Historic Districts) to the applicant:

Bob Stone
900 E. Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

For the property at: 813 N 28TH ST

with respect to the exterior architectural features as described in the application for this certificate and the information and plans filed with the application for this property, pursuant to the following resolution adopted by the Commission of Architectural Review and recorded in the minutes of the Commission:

Resolution: WHEREAS, the applicant proposes to revise approved plans to consider exterior details; and

WHEREAS, the decorative fence and other site improvements be submitted for review and approval; and

WHEREAS, the application is approved as submitted for the reasons cited in the staff report with the noted conditions; and

NOW, THEREFORE, LET IT BE RESOLVED that the Commission approves the work as being in conformity with the intent of Division 4 Section 30-930 of the Richmond City Code.

The applicant shall comply with all City Codes in the execution of this project. The certificate shall be valid for a period of one year from the date of issuance.

Sincerely,

Carey L. Jones, Secretary
Commission of Architectural Review

Date of Issuance: February 26, 2019
Document Date: April 2, 2019
Certificate No.: 049220-2019



CITY OF RICHMOND

DEPARTMENT OF
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW
COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

January 23, 2019

Bob Stone
900 East Broad Street RM 602
Richmond, VA 23219

RE: 813 N 28TH ST
Application No. COA-047059-2019

Dear Applicant:

At the January 22, 2019 meeting of the Commission of Architectural Review, the review of your application for a Certificate of Appropriateness resulted in the following action: **partially approved**. Specifically, the Commission partially approved the application as presented for the reasons cited in the staff report provided that the following condition is met: the decorative fence be submitted for administrative review and approval. The Commission approved the building location and offered suggestions to alter the decorative details to simplify the window keystones and splayed brick headers, to add brick detailing or recesses to unarticulated areas of the elevations, including the main entry on the east elevation, and north and south elevations at the end of the classroom wing. The Commission did not approve the overall site plan and recommended preservation of the historic school.

You, or any aggrieved party, have the right to appeal a decision of the Commission of Architectural Review to City Council as specified in Section 30.930 of the Richmond City Code. A petition stating reasons for the appeal must be filed with the City Clerk within 15 days of this meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (804) 646-7550 or by e-mail at Carey.Jones@richmondgov.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carey Jones".

Carey L. Jones, Secretary
Commission of Architectural Review

10. COA-049220-2019

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

February 26, 2019

PROPERTY ADDRESS

813 N 28th Street

DISTRICT

Church Hill North

Commission of
Architectural Review

STAFF REPORT



APPLICANT

City of Richmond – Capital Projects

STAFF CONTACT

C. Jones

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Revise approved plans to consider exterior details.

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.



The City of Richmond assumes no liability either for any errors, omissions, or inaccuracies in the information provided regardless of the cause of such or for any decision made, action taken, or action not taken by the user in reliance upon any maps or information provided herein.

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 lighting plans.

At the January 22, 2019 the Commission reviewed revisions to the plans. During the meeting, Commissioners asked to see additional window openings, to remove the keystone element which has been applied to the middle of the windows, and that in some areas where windows are not possible, the addition of other detailing in order to

break up the masses of the structure, and for clarification on the brick color variations. Additionally, the Commission expressed concern about the large setback and driveway at the front of the school as being inconsistent with the neighborhood, and about the lack of a clearly marked path for students approaching the school along North 28th Street.

At the November and January 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.

STAFF ANALYSIS

Standards for New Construction: Commercial, Form, pg. 52, #3	<i>3. New commercial construction should incorporate human-scale elements at the pedestrian level.</i>	The applicant has responded to Commission suggestions and has incorporated false openings to add architectural interest to the building and to break up the massing.
Standards for New Construction, Height, Width, Proportion & Massing, pg. 53, # 2	<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 additional false openings are vertically aligned and help to reinforce a repeating bay pattern.
New Construction: Corner Properties – Commercial, pg. 54	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. Secondary elevations of corner properties should reference massing similar to other corner locations in the historic district.</i> <i>2. The material used in the primary elevation should be continued along the second, corner elevation.</i> <i>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.</i> 	Staff finds the proposed elevations use a consistent pattern of architectural details and materials. Staff further finds that the addition of false openings and alternating brick patterns on the north, south, and east elevation help to create a cohesive architectural design.

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.



City of Richmond

City Hall
900 East Broad Street

Meeting Minutes - Draft Commission of Architectural Review

Tuesday, February 26, 2019

3:30 PM

5th Floor Conference Room of City Hall

Call to Order

James Klaus, the Chairman, called the January 22nd meeting of the Commission of Architectural Review to order at 3:31 pm.

Roll Call

- Present -- 8 -** * Commissioner Sanford Bond, * Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, * Commissioner James W. Klaus, * Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., * Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, * Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, * Commissioner Sean Wheeler and * Commissioner Lawrence Pearson
- Absent -- 1 -** * Commissioner David C. Cooley

Approval of Minutes

December 18, 2018

Commissioner Klaus pointed out a correction to be made: the vote tally for the 6th item, in the consent agenda, were missing. Ms. Carey Jones stated that staff would correct this omission.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, Jr., seconded by Commissioner Bond, that the December 17, 2018 Meeting minutes be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

- Aye -- 8 -** Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

January 15, 2019 (Quarterly Meeting)

January 22, 2019

Review of National Register Nominations

NHR 2019 1 Deep Run Hunt Club

Attachments: Deep Run Hunt Club
Deep Run Hunt Club Staff Report

Ms. Jones stated that the Deep Run Hunt Club is located at the end of Avondale Avenue in the Rosedale neighborhood near the Laburnum Avenue entrance ramp to Route 64. It is not currently listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The nomination states

and provided information to them about the Commission and our review process,

Chairman Klaus asked if this contact with owners was a new procedure, or if it was something staff has done before. Ms. Jones stated that she has begun to do this with larger properties, as owners in enforcement situations often state that they did not know about the Guidelines. Ms. Jones stated that significant property sales come to her notice by various means, including social media. Chairman Klaus stated that Commission members could assist by bringing them to her attention when they are aware of them.

Staff responded to a complaint about the acoustics in the meeting room. Staff worked with IT staff to fix the sound system. Hopefully this will result in better acoustics for members of the public. On that note, staff requests that Commission members speak loudly, clearly, and one at a time.

Administrative Approvals

There was no discussion of administrative approvals.

Enforcement Report

Staff have received several complaints about 617 W 29th Street in the Springhill neighborhood. Ms. Kim Chen and Ms. Jones have met with the owner three times to address concerns about the building foundation and first floor height. Staff has requested an application from the owner to address the discrepancy in building height between what was approved by the Commission and what is currently being built. There is a stop-work order and a notice of violation in effect.

Staff continues to follow up on violations for fences in Jackson Ward, a window replacement on East Franklin Street, and a newly reported porch violation on West Grace Street. Staff anticipates applications for each of these violations.

Other Committee Reports

Chairman Klaus stated that, going forward, he will, with Ms. Jones' assistance, share the agenda of upcoming Urban Design Committee items with Commission members, and solicit feedback to then bring to the UDC meeting. Mr. Klaus believes this will be much more useful than providing a recap of the UDC meeting just past, as he has previously done.

Please Note

Public comment on cases brought before the CAR will be heard after the applicant's explanatory remarks of the case and before CAR deliberation. Applicants and individuals wishing to comment on specific aspects of a given case are asked to briefly address issues related to the application.

CONSENT AGENDA

The Chairman invited the Commission to suggest projects that they would like to move from the regular agenda to the consent agenda. He explained to the applicants present that, if they did not wish for their applications to be placed on the consent agenda, they would have an opportunity to have it moved back to the regular agenda.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hendricks, with Commissioner Klaus seconding,

to move the 5th item, COA-048375-2019, 512 West 19th Street, and the 6th item, COA-048376-2019, 602 West 19th Street, to the consent agenda. The Commission unanimously approved moving the item.

A motion was made by Commissioner Klaus, with Commissioner Bond seconding, to move the 3rd item, COA-049226-2019, 2230 Venable Street, to the consent agenda. The Commission approved the item with all in favor except Commissioner Lane Pearson and Commissioner Sean Wheeler abstaining.

A motion was made by Commissioner Morgan, with Commissioner Bond seconding, to move the 14th item, COA-047063-2019, 401 North Allen Street to the consent agenda. The Commission unanimously approved moving the item.

A motion was made by Commissioner Morgan, with Commissioner Bond seconding, to move the 8th item, COA-048388-2019, 2711 East Broad Street to the consent agenda. The Commission unanimously approved moving the item.

A motion was made by Commissioner Klaus, with Commissioner Bond seconding, to move the 9th item, COA-049218-2019, 312 North 32nd Street, to the consent agenda. The Commission approved the item with all in favor except Commissioner Lane Pearson and Commissioner Sanford Bond abstaining.

A motion was made by Commissioner Klaus, with Commissioner Johnson seconding, to move the 11th item, COA-049214-2019, 802 North 22nd Street to the consent agenda. The Commission unanimously approved moving the item.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hendricks, with Commissioner Johnson seconding, to move the 10th item, COA-049220-2019, 813 North 28th Street to the consent agenda. The Commission unanimously approved moving the item.

A motion was made by Commissioner Klaus, with Commissioner Wheeler seconding, to move the 12th item, COA-048392-2019, 200 West Marshall Street to the consent agenda. The Commission unanimously approved moving the item.

A motion was made by Commissioner Morgan, with Commissioner Pearson seconding, to move the 18th item, COA-049230-2019, 1137 West Grace Street to the consent agenda. Chairman Klaus stated his concern that the change from 2/2 to 1/1, for about 300 windows, constitutes a major change to the design. The motion failed by the following vote:

Aye – 3 – Commissioner Kathleen Morgan Commissioner Sanford Bond, and Commissioner Lawrence Pearson,

No – 4 – Commissioner Ashleigh Brewer, Commissioner James Klaus, Commissioner Jason Hendricks, Commissioner Neville Johnson, and

Abstaining – 1 – Commissioner Sean Wheeler

A motion was made by Commissioner Klaus, seconded by Commissioner Wheeler, to move item 2, 604 Saint James Street, from the consent agenda to the regular agenda. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye – 6 – Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner

Sanford Bond, and Commissioner Sean Wheeler

No – 1 Commissioner Lane Pearson

Abstaining – 1 - Commissioner Kathleen Morgan

Chairman Klaus asked if there was any public comment concerning the items on the consent agenda.

Jill Nolt requested confirmation in regard to the item number 14, 401 North Allan, since this proposal includes two options. Chairman Klaus affirmed that approval of this item would mean approval of both options.

A motion was made by Commissioner Klaus, seconded by Commissioner Bond, that the Consent Agenda be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

1 COA-048378- 3317 Monument Avenue - Construct a new, brick patio.
2019

Attachments: [Site Map](#)
[Application and Plans](#)
[Staff Report](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Klaus, seconded by Commissioner Bond, to approve the application as submitted for the reasons cited in the staff report provided that the following conditions are met: the installation of a brick patio is approved, but not the work shown on the elevations. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

3 COA-049226- 2230 Venable Street - Revise approved plans to modify window design.
2019

Attachments: [Site Map](#)
[Application and Plans](#)
[Staff Report](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Klaus, seconded by Commissioner Bond, to approve the application as submitted for the reasons cited in the staff report provided that the following condition is met: any additional project changes are coordinated with staff. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler and Commissioner Lawrence Pearson



CITY OF RICHMOND

DEPARTMENT OF
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW
COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

February 27, 2019

Bob Stone
900 E. Broad Street
Richmond, Va 23219

RE: 813 N 28TH ST
Application No. COA-049220-2019

Dear Applicant:

At the February 26, 2019 meeting of the Commission of Architectural Review, the review of your application for a Certificate of Appropriateness resulted in the following action: **approved with conditions**. Specifically, the Commission approved the application as submitted for the reasons cited in the staff report provided that the following condition is met: the decorative fence and other site improvements be submitted for review and approval.

You, or any aggrieved party, have the right to appeal a decision of the Commission of Architectural Review to City Council as specified in Section 30.930 of the Richmond City Code. A petition stating reasons for the appeal must be filed with the City Clerk within 15 days of this meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (804) 646-7550 or by e-mail at Carey.Jones@richmondgov.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carey Jones".

Carey L. Jones, Secretary
Commission of Architectural Review



COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

PROPERTY (location of work)

Address 813 N 28th Street, Richmond, VA 23223

Historic district Church Hill

Date/time rec'd:	_____
Rec'd by:	_____
Application #:	_____
Hearing date:	_____

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Name Darin Simmons

Phone 804-780-7710

Company Richmond Public Schools

Email dsimmons2@rvaschools.net

Mailing Address 301 North 9th Street, Richmond, VA 22

Applicant Type: Owner Agent
 Lessee Architect Contractor
 Other (please specify): _____

OWNER INFORMATION (if different from above)

Name _____

Company _____

Mailing Address _____

Phone _____

Email _____

PROJECT INFORMATION

Review Type: Conceptual Review Final Review

Project Type: Alteration Demolition New Construction
(Conceptual Review Required)

Project Description: (attach additional sheets if needed)

Demolition of the existing school building at this address and installation of school and community amenities to replace joint amenities displaced by the construction of the new school building. The new amenities include two tennis courts, 1 basketball court, a playground for community use, and a multi sports field/green space for community use.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF RESPONSIBILITY

Compliance: If granted, you agree to comply with all conditions of the COA. Revisions to approved work require staff review and may require a new application and CAR approval. Failure to comply with the COA may result in project delays or legal action. The COA is valid for one (1) year and may be extended for an additional year, upon written request.

Requirements: A complete application includes all applicable information requested on checklists to provide a complete and accurate description of existing and proposed conditions. Applicants proposing major new construction, including additions, should meet with Staff to review the application and requirements prior to submitting an application. Owner contact information and signature is required. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

Zoning Requirements: Prior to Commission review, it is the responsibility of the applicant to determine if zoning approval is required and application materials should be prepared in compliance with zoning.

Signature of Owner

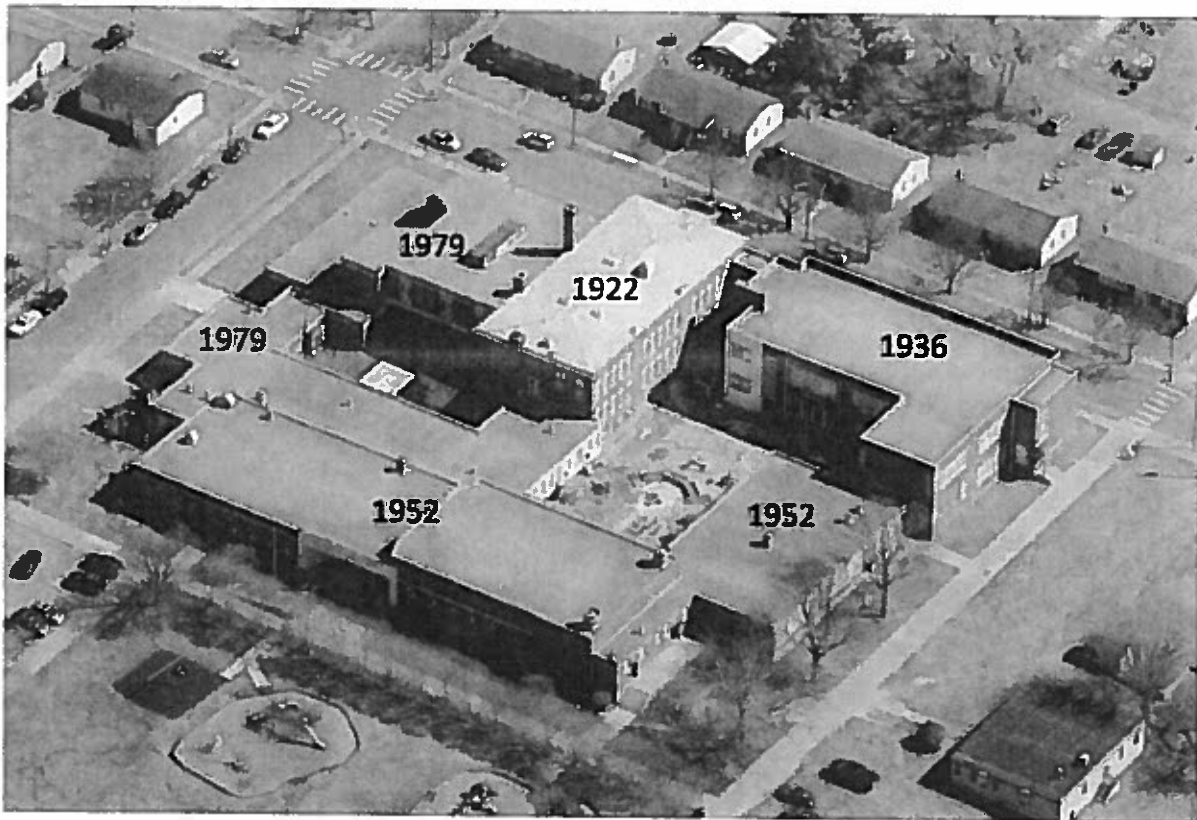
Date

8/27/19

GEORGE MASON ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

School Facility Overview

The existing George Mason Elementary School is situated on a 7.840 acre site and totals approximately 83,001 square feet comprised of an existing building structure built in 1922 with three separate building additions added over the next 57 years. George Mason Elementary School was originally constructed as a three-story building in 1922 consisting of approximately 18,525 square feet. The first two-story building addition was added in 1936 consisting of approximately 19,094 square feet. In 1952, the second single-story building addition was added consisting of approximately 28,048 square feet. The third two-story building addition was added in 1979 consisting of approximately 17,334 square feet. See aerial image below depicting the location of the multiple building additions.



Below is a brief description of the spaces located within each building addition;

Original Building (1922)

Counseling Office Suite	Main Electrical Room
Teacher Workroom/Conference Rooms	Boiler Room
Librarian Workroom/Dark Room	Elevator
Audio/Visual Storage	Restrooms
General Classrooms (10)	

Building Addition (1936)

Resource Center	General Classrooms (13)
Teacher Workroom	Restrooms
General Office Area	

Building Addition (1952)

Administrative Office Suite	Cafeteria
Clinic	Kitchen
Auditorium	Restrooms
General Classrooms (7)	

Building Addition (1979)

General Classrooms (2) w/ Adjoining Shared Amphitheatre	Covered Outdoor Activity Area (below Library Media Center)
Library Media Center	Restrooms
General Storage Room	

No significant upgrades or renovations have been completed to these buildings since completion of their addition to the overall school.

Assessment Overview

Architectural

The exterior brick walls are in fair condition with significant deterioration to many exterior façade elements including damaged brick masonry units, rooftop brick chimney deterioration, brick masonry cracks, masonry mortar joint deterioration, expansion, vertical joint and window caulking failure and broken or single pane windows. These extensive envelope deficiencies allow significant water and/or air penetration which can cause further deterioration of building materials and unhealthy indoor conditions.

Overall the school interior appears to be in poor condition. Typical ceilings throughout the school are acoustical ceiling tile (ACT) and are in poor condition. Floors throughout the school consist of terrazzo, vinyl composition and/or carpet and are in poor to fair condition. Painted wall finishes throughout are typically in fair condition. Numerous doors and frames have been damaged over time as a result of daily high traffic use. Finishes in all spaces (i.e. classrooms, auditorium, cafeteria, kitchen, offices, etc.) are outdated and need replacement.

Minimal upgrades or renovations have been completed over the years to address changing building codes, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance or Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) regulations.

Structural

The roof structure generally consists of a metal roof deck on metal bar joists on a combination of steel framing and exterior masonry bearing walls. All exterior walls have a brick veneer. Masonry interior walls do not appear to be load bearing. On the roof are a number of mechanical exhaust units servicing isolated interior functions such as the kiln room, kitchen area and restrooms. The school structure was generally covered with finishes inside and out and only limited portions could be observed.

Demolition and removal of the three building additions would certainly present significant structural challenges. Their demolition would create three significant sized openings in three of the four exterior façade elevations demanding a comprehensive structural evaluation to determine requirements for the support and enclosure of the façade at these locations not to mention the potential requirement for the building to be brought up to current building structural code (i.e. wind and seismic loads).

Mechanical

The vast majority of components (i.e. boilers, window A/C units, piping, etc.) associated with the existing HVAC system have reached or exceeded the end of their useful service life requiring replacement of the existing systems. System replacement would provide the opportunity to consider more cost effective and efficient systems and incorporate any programmatic changes that might be desired for the facility. Any major renovation should be preceded by an analysis of different system types such as variable air volume (VAV), heat pumps with dedicated outside air systems, and variable refrigerant volume (VRV) with dedicated outside air systems.

Electrical

Power Distribution is provided via electric service from the local Power Company and terminates in a switchboard with main switches. These switches serve distribution gear and branch circuit panelboards located throughout the building. Branch circuit panelboards serve lighting, receptacle, and mechanical loads in the building. The vast majority of components (i.e. main distribution gear, electrical panels, breakers, wiring, light fixtures, light switches and receptacles, low voltage systems, etc.) associated with the existing electrical system have reached or exceeded the end of their useful service life requiring replacement of the existing systems.

Plumbing

The vast majority of components (i.e. hot water heaters, piping, toilet fixtures, sinks, etc.) associated with the existing plumbing system have reached or exceeded the end of their useful service life requiring replacement of the existing systems. The current age of the underground water supply and sanitary lines causes concern with regard to the original material type and material durability into the future.

Hazardous Materials

Davis & Floyd, Inc. was retained by Richmond Public Schools to conduct a AHERA Re-Inspection Report of George Mason Elementary School in 2005. Davis & Floyd's scope of work included a visual inspection to reassess the existing condition of all previously identified asbestos-containing materials (ACM's). Although isolated areas of abatement have occurred over the years, this inspection report identified and noted the condition of numerous asbestos-containing materials that remain within the building including but not limited to vinyl floor tile, suspended acoustical ceiling

tile, wall/ceiling plaster, and mastic adhesive materials to identify a few. No report for lead-based paint (LBP) materials has been acknowledged and/or received. Based on the age of the existing original building and the subsequent building additions, it is presumed that LBP paint materials existing within the building(s).

Summary

Extensive funding would be required in order to perform the demolition (demolish three building additions) and renovation/modernization work (complete interior demolition and renovation) required to transform the building into occupiable space for future tenancy.

In addition to significant interior renovation costs (i.e. demolition, wall erection, major system distribution, fire alarm, sprinkler system, restroom upgrades, casework, finishes, etc.) to mitigate outdated building systems or components, the below items would also have to be taken into consideration during such an undertaking and could represent substantial additional costs in order to alleviate;

- ***Building Integrity (Structural Consequences with Demolition of Building Portions)***
- ***Structural Code Requirements (Wind and Seismic Loads)***
- ***Hazardous Materials Abatement (Asbestos and Lead-Based Paint)***
- ***Building Code Compliance (Current Building Codes)***
- ***Major Building System Infrastructure Replacement (i.e. HVAC, Electrical & Plumbing)***
- ***Extensive Building Envelope Repairs (i.e. brick/precast repairs, expansion joints, window replacement,***
- ***ADA Compliance (Accessibility and Path of Travel)***
- ***OSHA Compliance (Safety Regulations)***
- ***Parking (Occupancy and Use Group Requirements)***

Based on the assessed criteria above and anticipated scope of work, demolition and renovation costs for the existing original building would be estimated to exceed the costs associated with building a new building of equal size and use.

DRAFT

Richmond City School Board Meeting - 6:00 p.m. (Monday, August 19, 2019)

School Board of the City of Richmond
School Board Room, 17th Floor City Hall
301 N. Ninth Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Members present

Mrs. Dawn Page, Chair
Mrs. Elizabeth Doerr, Vice Chair
Mr. J. Scott Barlow
Mrs. Kenya Gibson
Mr. Jonathan Young
Ms. Felicia Cosby (arrived late)
Mrs. Cheryl Burke
Ms. Linda Owen (left early)

Officers

Mr. Jason Kamras, Superintendent
Mrs. Angela Wilson, Clerk
Dr. Tracy Epp, Chief Academic Officer/Agent
Mr. Darin Simmons, Jr., Chief Operating Officer/Deputy Agent

Attorney

Ms. Jonnell Lilly

Others present

Ms. Michelle Hudacsko, Chief of Staff
Mr. Harry Hughes, Chief of Schools
Mrs. Jennifer Bramble, Chief Talent Officer
Mr. Mauricio Tovar, Director, Safety & Security

Absent

Dr. Patrick Sapini, School Board Member

1. Opening

The Chair called the meeting called to order

1.01 Roll call

The Clerk called the roll and noted that a quorum was present.

1.03 Adoption of the Agenda

On a motion by Cheryl Burke, seconded by Linda Owen, the agenda was adopted as presented.

1.04 Approve the corrected minutes of the August 5, 2019 meeting

The minutes of the August 5, 2019 School Board meeting were deferred.

2. Public Information

The following citizens addressed the School Board: Vilma Seymour, Eddy Munoz, Jose Diaz Montealgre, Bob Argabright, David Jones, Cassie Powell, Milondra Coleman, Harold Aquino, Charles Willis, Justes Publes, Bismark Gamble

The topics of discussion were: the dropout rate of Latino students; racial disparities; dispelling the myths of the REA and announcement of its first meeting; assisting ESL students; 3rd Annual City Summit; thank you to the Board Chair for reaching out to the TJ-JAW Foundation to identify the needs of and encouraged all Board members to reach out; introduction of a teaching tool entitled Plug-In; lack of guidance counselors at George Wythe High School; the success of the National Night Out initiative; The Better Me organization developed for young people ages 16 - 28.

3. Board Action Items

3.01 Receive for action the Program of Studies

Dr. Epp presented the program of studies to include the following local courses for Board adoption:

General Education Courses:

- African American Studies
- Creative Writing
- Intensified Algebra
- Sociology
- Strategic Reading

ESL Courses:

- Developmental Reading for English Learners
- English as a Second Language I
- English as a Second Language II
- English as a Second Language III
- English as a Second Language IV
- History for Newcomers
- Science for Newcomers

The Board voted 7-0 to approve Program of Studies for 2019 - 2020, including the approval of local courses contained therein.

Motion by: Linda Owen, second by Cheryl Burke

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Aye: J. Scott Barlow, Jonathan Young, Felicia Cosby, Cheryl Burke, Linda Owen, Elizabeth Doerr, and Dawn Page

Abstained: Kenya Gibson

Absent from the meeting and vote: Patrick Sapini

The document may be viewed at the following link on BoardDocs:

<https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/richmond/Board.nsf/Public>

3.02 Receive for action a Resolution regarding the demolition of the existing George Mason Elementary School and an update from the Joint Construction Team

Mr. Simmons shared that due to the location of George Mason Elementary School plans for the new school had to be reviewed by the Committee for Architectural Review (CAR), which is Richmond's official historic preservation body.

He shared that George Mason's CAR submission had been done in two phases: submission of architectural plans for the new George Mason Elementary building; which CAR approved with minor modifications in the fall of 2018, and a plan for the existing structure; which RPS and the City would take to CAR in the fall of 2019. The plan for the new building anticipated using the land that was currently occupied by the existing structure for athletic fields, tennis courts, basketball courts, and playgrounds. The administration was

recommending that the Board codify the plan by adopting a resolution calling for the complete demolition of the existing George Mason Elementary School.

The document may be viewed at the following link on BoardDocs:

<https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/richmond/Board.nsf/Public>

The Board voted 7-1 to approve the action to resolve the demolition of the existing George Mason Elementary School.

Motion by: Cheryle Burke, second by Linda Owen

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Aye: J. Scott Barlow, Jonathan Young, Felicia Cosby, Cheryl Burke, Linda Owen, Elizabeth Doerr and Dawn Page

No: Kenya Gibson

Absent from the meeting and vote: Patrick Sapini

3.03 Review and receive for action the job description and pay grade of the Senior Auditor Position

Mrs. Doerr shared that the Finance Committee had agreed to interview a total of eight candidates on September 4th and 5th beginning at 4:00 p.m.

Mrs. Gibson desired to know why there such a difference in pay grade of the Sr. Auditor and the Lobbyist.

The document may be viewed at the following link on BoardDocs:

<https://go.boarddocs.com/vsba/richmond/Board.nsf/Public>

The Board voted 7-1 to approve the paygrade of the Sr. Auditor position as presented

Motion by: Elizabeth Doerr, second by Cheryl Burke

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Aye: J. Scott Barlow, Jonathan Young, Felicia Cosby, Cheryl Burke, Linda Owen, Elizabeth Doerr and Dawn Page

No: Kenya Gibson

Absent from the meeting and vote: Patrick Sapini

3.04 Personnel Actions

Mrs. Bramble presented the following Personnel Actions for approval:

For approval:

- The nomination of eighty-six (86) employees.
- The change of contract of twenty-five (25) employees.

For Information:

- The resignation of fifteen (15) employees.
- The furlough of six (6) employees.
- The rescission of employment of one (1) employee.
- The termination of one (1) employee.

The Board voted 8-0 to approve the Personnel Actions.

Motion by Linda Owen, second by Cheryl Burke

Final Resolution: Motion Passes

Aye: J. Scott Barlow, Kenya Gibson, Jonathan Young, Felicia Cosby, Cheryl Burke, Linda Owen, Elizabeth Doerr, and Dawn Page

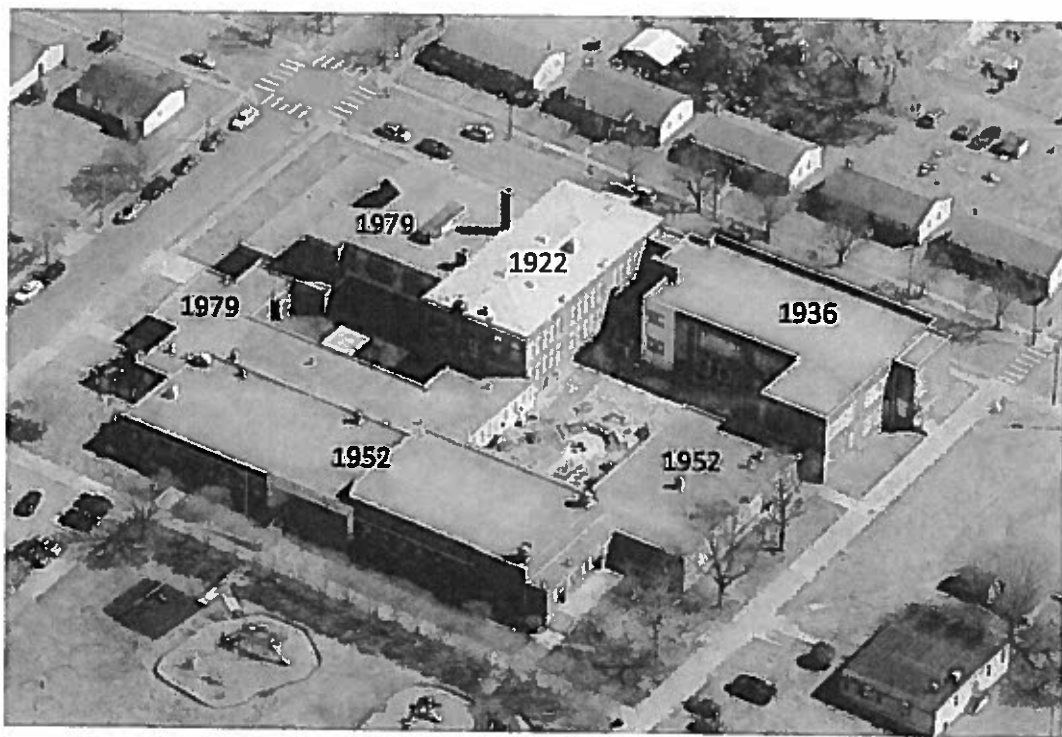
Absent from the meeting and vote: Patrick Sapini

George Mason School Site Around 1952

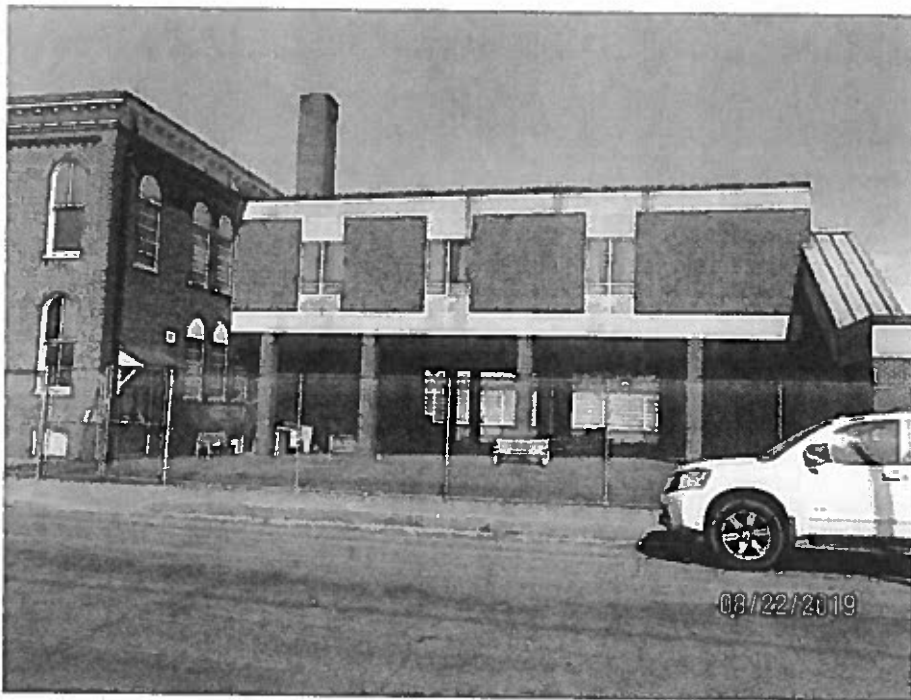


Both 1880s buildings demolished in mid/late 1970s

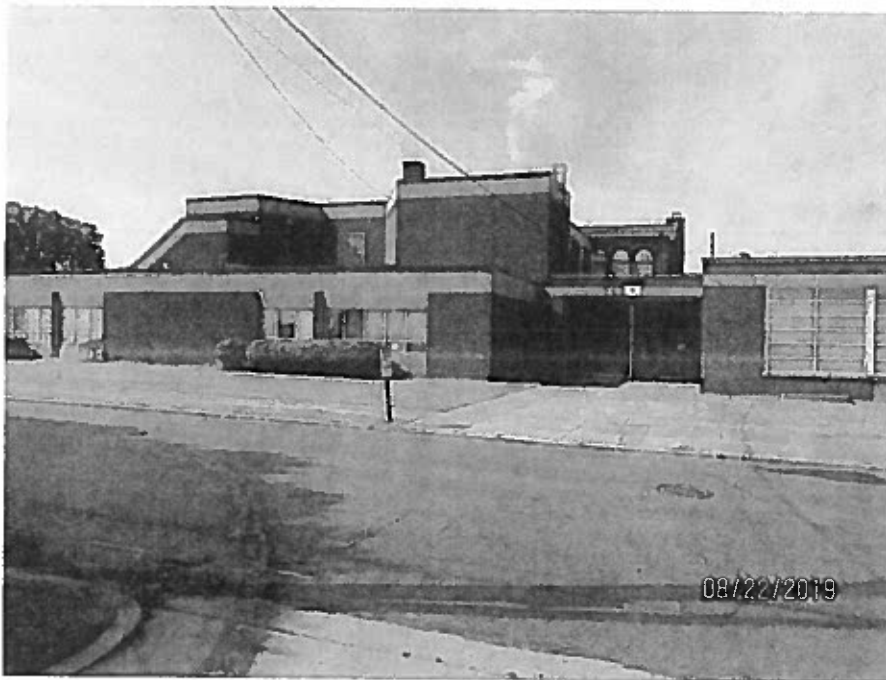
George Mason School Site Today

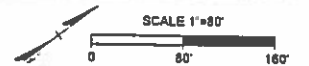
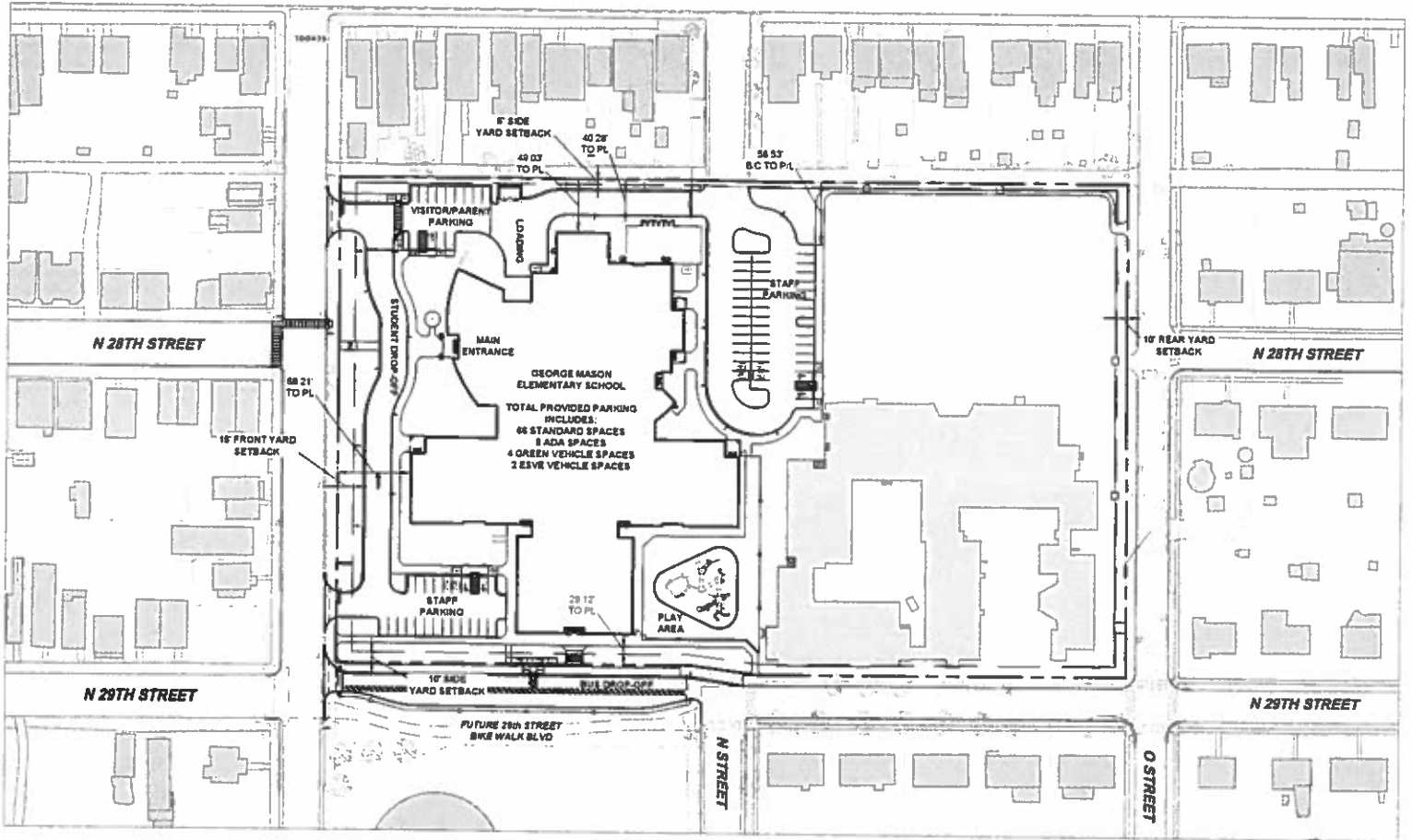


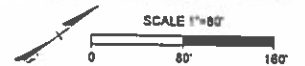
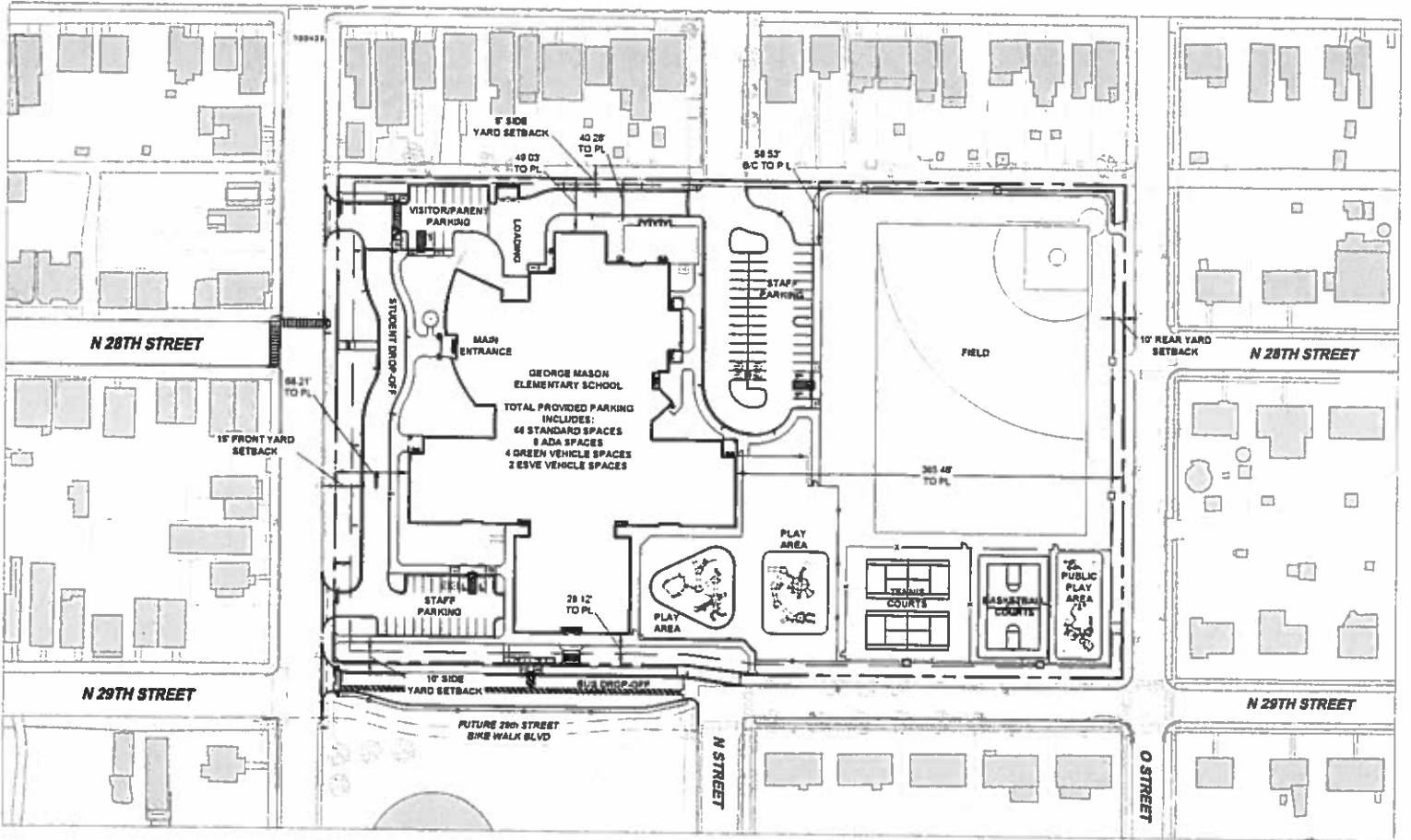
Location of original 1881 School replaced by 1979 Addition

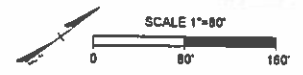
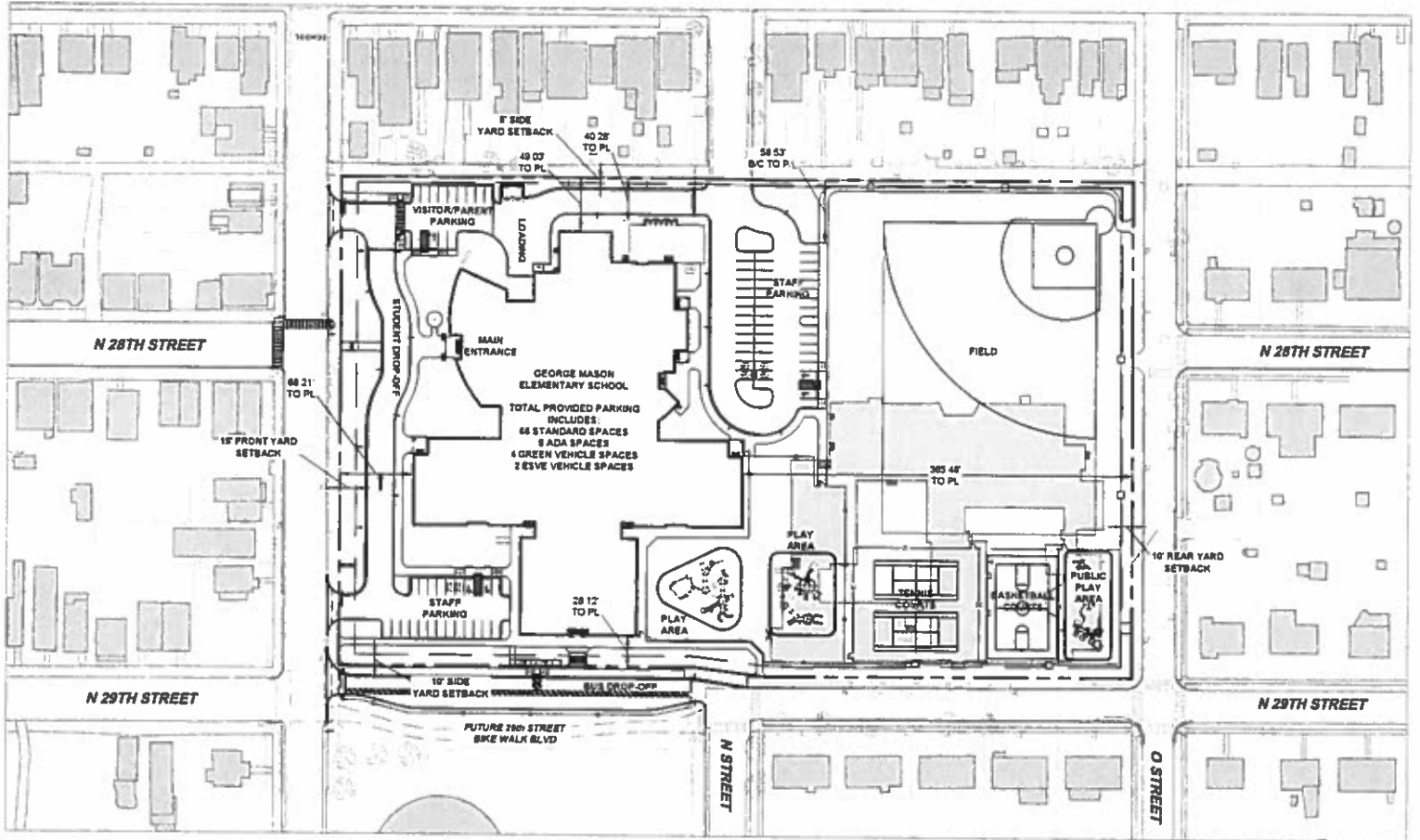


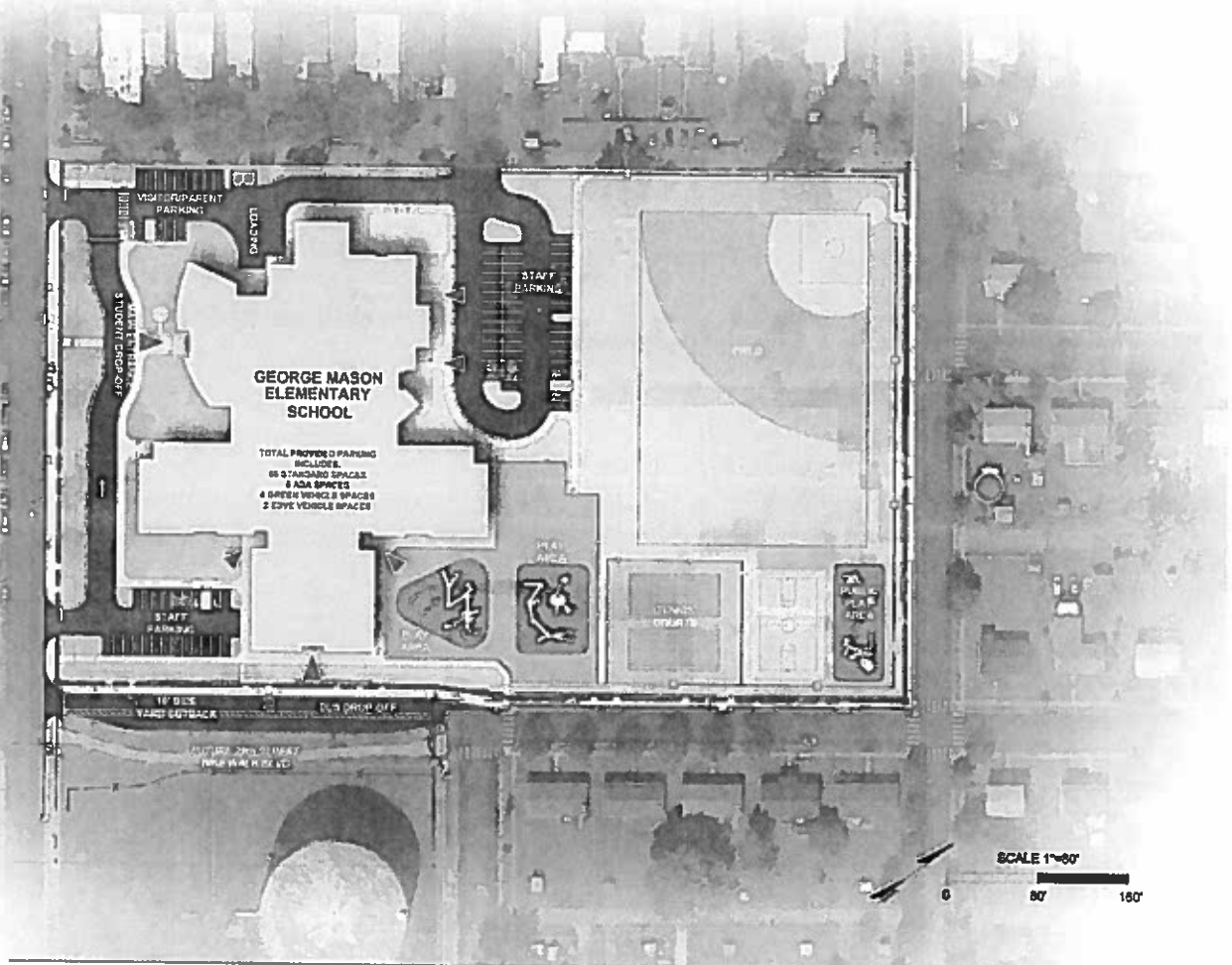
Location of original 1887 2-story East End School replaced by 1979 Addition







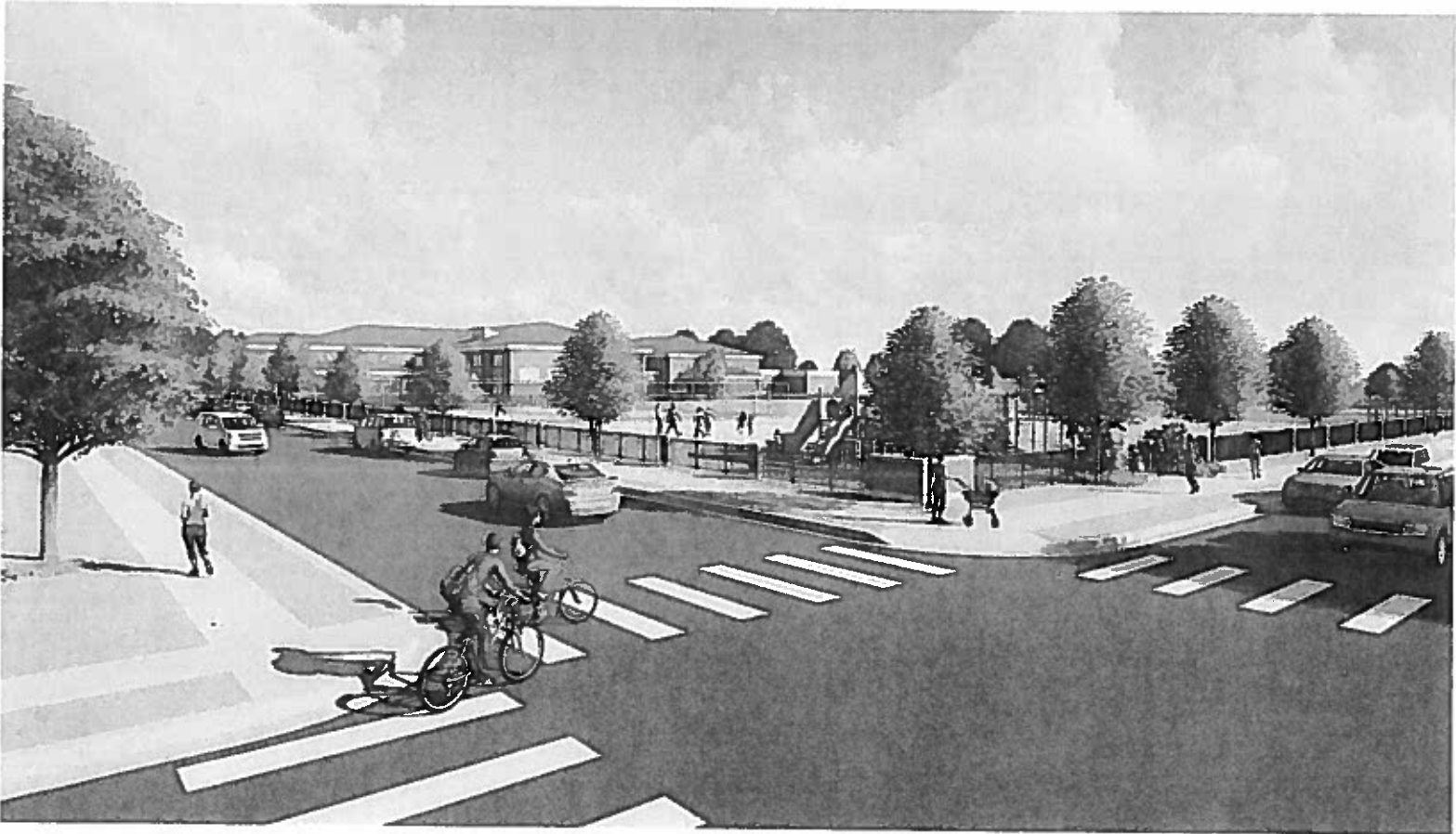




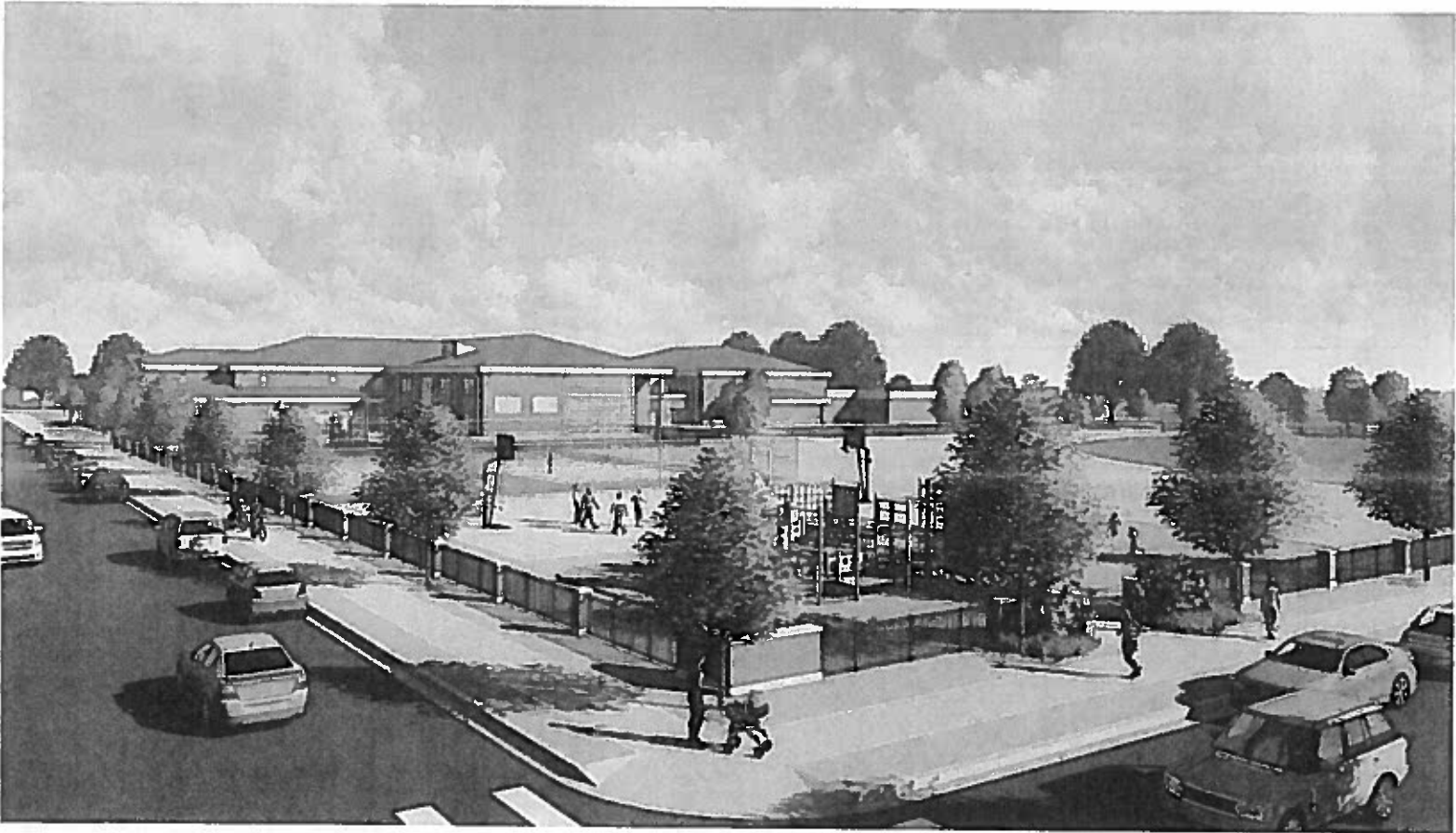
**GEORGE MASON
ELEMENTARY
SCHOOL**

TOTAL PROVIDED PARKING
INCLUDES:
66 9 STANDARD SPACES
8 ADA SPACES
4 BUSES VEHICLE SPACES
2 CYCLE VEHICLE SPACES

SCALE 1"=60'
0 60 120







9. COA-060187-2019

**Commission of
Architectural Review
STAFF REPORT**



PUBLIC HEARING DATE

September 24th, 2019

PROPERTY ADDRESS

813 N. 28th Street

DISTRICT

Church Hill North

APPLICANT

City of Richmond Public Schools

STAFF CONTACT

C. Jones

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Demolish an existing school building.

PROJECT DETAILS

- The applicant requests permission to demolish the ca. 1922-1979 George Mason Elementary School.
- The applicant proposes to install tennis and basketball courts, athletic fields, and play areas on the cleared site.



The City of Richmond assumes no liability either for any errors, omissions, or inaccuracies in the information provided regardless of the cause of such or for any decision made, action taken, or action not taken by the user in reliance upon any maps or information provided herein.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

DEFER

PREVIOUS REVIEWS

The Commission has not previously reviewed the demolition of the existing George Mason Elementary School. The Commission approved the construction of a new elementary school on the site along the M Street frontage at the February 26th, 2019 monthly meeting.

STAFF COMMENTS

- The applicant consider all feasible alternatives to the demolition of the 1922 section, including 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.

STAFF ANALYSIS

According to Sec. 30-930.7(d) of the Historic Preservation Ordinance: The commission of architectural review 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. The demolition of any building deemed by the commission to not be a part of the historic character of an old and historic district shall be permitted. The demolition of any building that has deteriorated beyond the point of being feasibly rehabilitated is permissible, where the applicant can satisfy the commission as to the infeasibility of rehabilitation. The

commission may adopt additional demolition standards for the review of certificates of appropriateness applications to supplement these standards.

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.

In order to rehabilitate the building, extensive asbestos and lead paint remediation would be necessary. Additional upgrades to the heating, electric, and plumbing systems would also be needed to bring the building to current code requirements and address ADA compliance issues.

Staff acknowledges the challenges to the rehabilitation of the building. However, staff finds that the applicant has not explored feasible alternatives to the demolition of the 1922 section. Staff recommends the applicant consider all feasible alternatives to the demolition of the 1922 section, including 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.

The building is located within the Church Hill North City and Old Historic District. When the boundaries of the Church Hill North City and Old District were determined, they specifically included this school in acknowledgement of its significance to the neighborhood. Staff finds the building contributes to the historic character of the Old and Historic District as it was constructed during the period of significance, reflects the areas of significance for the District, and is in keeping with the general architectural styles of the historic buildings in the District.

3) The Commission deems that a building or structure has deteriorated beyond the point of feasible rehabilitation.

The applicant has indicated that in order to rehabilitate the school building, including the 1922 section, substantial exterior and interior work would be required. If the later additions to the 1922 building were to be demolished, portions of the exterior walls of the 1922 building would need to be rebuilt. On the north elevation, this would include the majority of the exterior wall. On the south elevation, one bay each of brick and windows would need to be rebuilt. On the rear, the west elevation, it appears that the lower two stories on the southern-most bays would need to be reconstructed.

The interior of the building reflects a traditional educational facility with a double-loaded corridor, classrooms, and end staircases. The applicant has indicated that the interior has asbestos and lead paint. Staff has observed substantial cracking in the interior including floors, walls, and ceilings, and general deterioration.

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.*

Historic Richmond provided the following research and analysis to staff. The full version of this information can be found here:

<https://www.historicrichmond.com/property/george-mason-school/>. The oldest section of the existing school dates to 1922 when a 12-classroom building was built to alleviate overcrowding in the original 1881 frame building and 1887 brick building on the site. The 1922 building is a reconstruction of an 1873 building which originally housed Richmond High School, later John Smith School, at 805 East Marshall Street. Construction drawings for the 1922 building on the site indicate that the materials, such as the bricks and windows, from the John Smith School were used for the construction of the 1922 George Mason School. The drawings also indicate that Charles M. Robinson, architect to Richmond Public Schools from 1909-1930, oversaw the new school construction. Staff finds that the 1922 section is potentially significant for its association with early twentieth century educational trends in the City of Richmond and with Charles Robinson, a noted architect of education buildings in Richmond. Staff also finds it is potentially significant as a representative example of late-nineteenth century educational architecture.

The first expansion of the school occurred in 1936 when a 14-room wing was added. In 1951, a 12-classroom wing was constructed. The original 1881 frame building was demolished in 1974 and the 1887 brick building was demolished in 1979 for the construction of the Marsh Wing. Staff finds that the 1936-1979 additions do not possess historic or architectural significance.

2) *The effect that demolition will have on the surrounding neighborhood.*

The demolition of the entire school complex will remove a physical reminder of the historical development of the area and the public school system.

3) *The type and quality of the project that will replace the demolished building.*

The proposed new use of the site is basketball and tennis courts, play areas, and an athletic field for use by the students of the new school and members of the surrounding community.

4) *The historic preservation goals outlined in the Master Plan and Downtown Plan.*

The 2000 Master Plan does not address schools in the East Planning District but does recognize the contribution of historic and architectural resources to the character of the community.

FIGURES



Figure 1. George Mason Elementary School, ca. 1922 section.



Figure 2. George Mason Elementary School, ca. 1936 section.



Figure 3. George Mason Elementary School, ca. 1956 addition.



Figure 4. George Mason Elementary School, ca. 1956 addition.

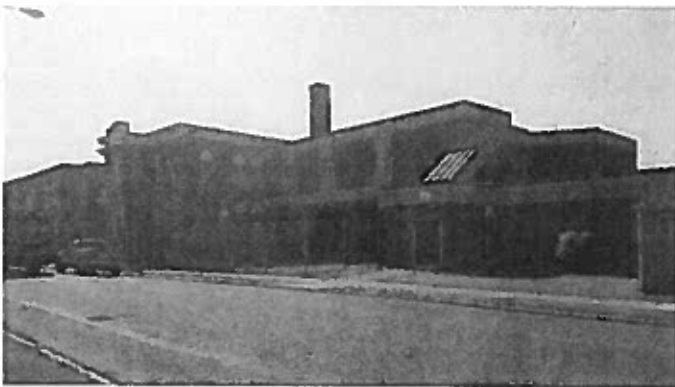


Figure 5. George Mason Elementary School, ca. 1979 addition.

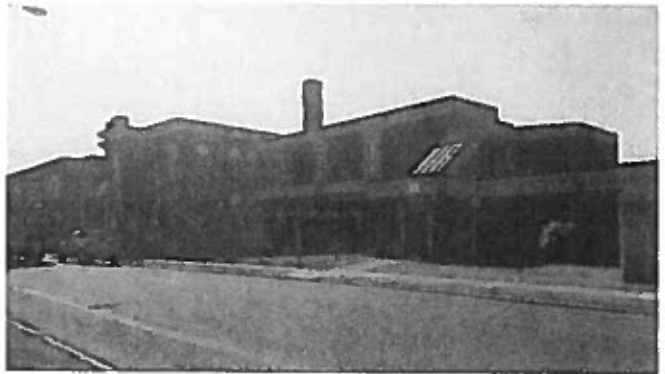


Figure 6. George Mason Elementary, ca. 1922 and 1979 sections.



Figure 7. Original George Mason Elementary School at right in foreground, the 1881 frame section in the middle, and the current (1922) section in background. Courtesy: Historic Richmond.

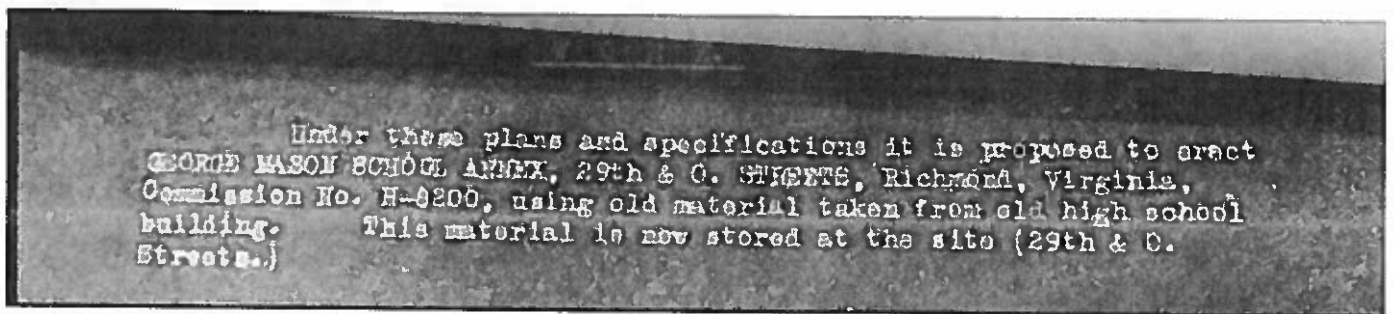


Figure 8 Specifications for the George Mason School, 1922. Courtesy: Historic Richmond

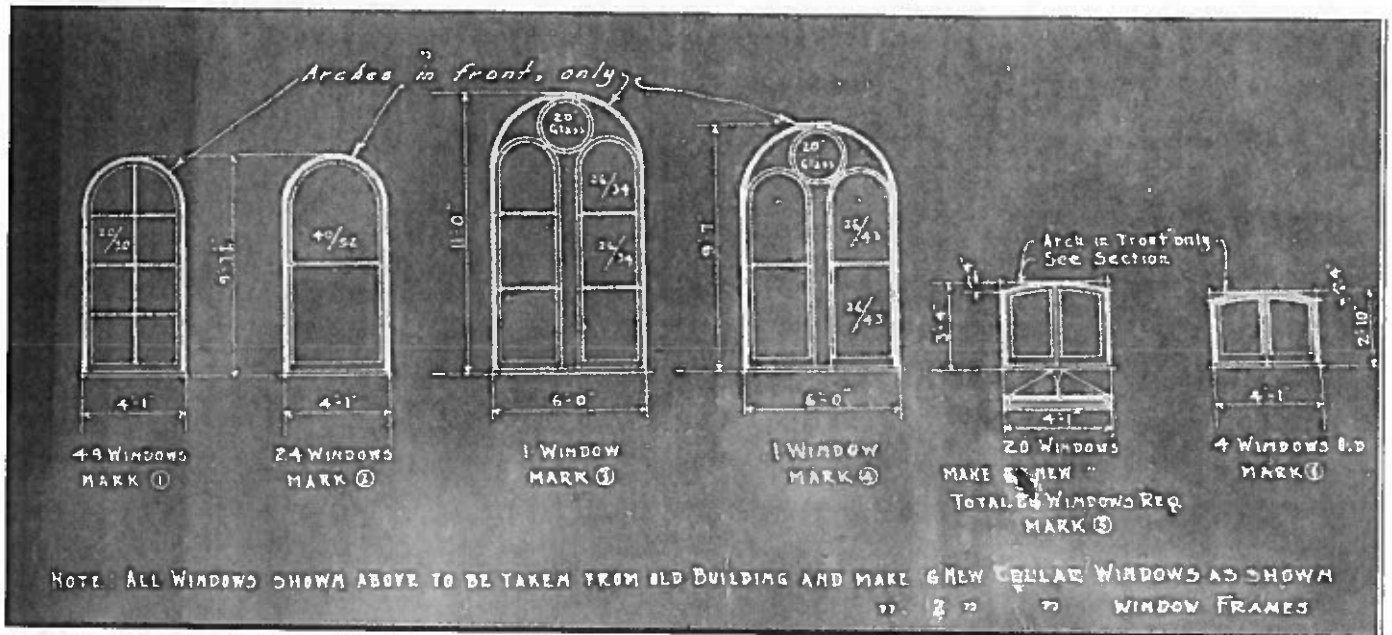


Figure 9. Window drawings for the George Mason Elementary School, 1922. Courtesy: Historic Richmond



Figure 10. Cracking terrazzo floors, 1922 section.



Figure 11. Non-ADA compliant bathroom corridors and spaces, ca. 1922 section.

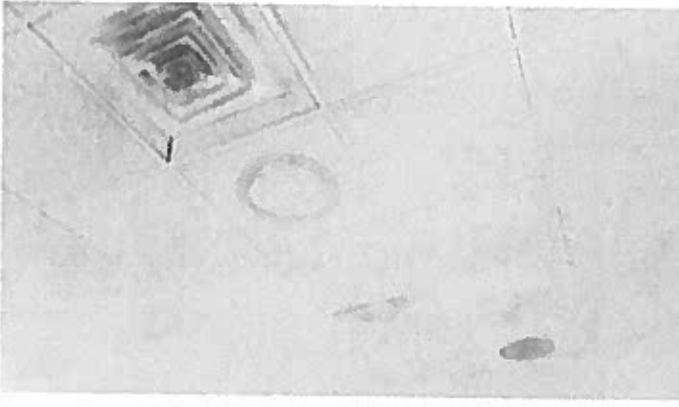


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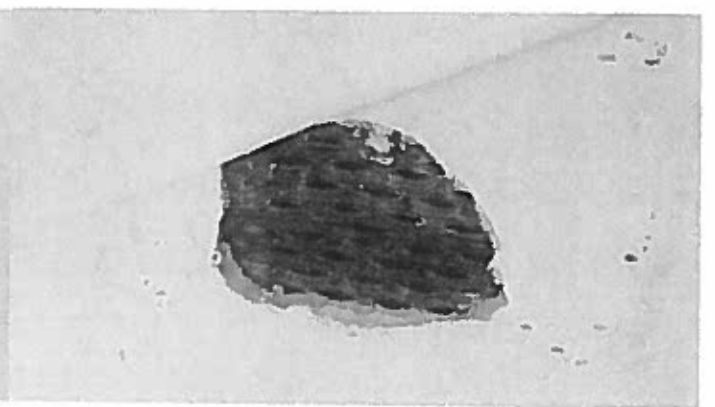


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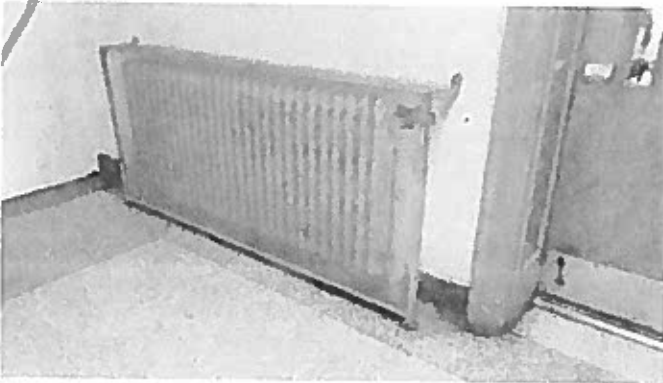


Figure 14. Current heating system, ca. 1922 section



Figure 15. Outdated mechanical systems ca. 1922 section.



City of Richmond

City Hall
900 East Broad Street

Meeting Minutes Commission of Architectural Review

Tuesday, September 24, 2019

3:30 PM

5th Floor Conference Room of City Hall

Call to Order

Call to Order

James Klaus, the Chairman, called the business portion of the September 24 meeting of the Commission of Architectural Review to order at 3:30 pm.

Roll Call

Present -- 9 - * Commissioner Sanford Bond, * Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, * Commissioner James W. Klaus, * Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., * Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, * Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, * Commissioner Sean Wheeler, * Commissioner Lawrence Pearson and * Commissioner Mitch Danese

Approval of Minutes

August 27, 2019

A motion was made by Commissioner Neville Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Jason Hendricks, that the August 27 2019 Meeting minutes be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson and Commissioner Mitch Danese

Excused -- 1 - Commissioner Sanford Bond

Other Business

Secretary's Report

Ms. Carey L. Jones, Secretary to the Commission of Architectural Review, stated that the location and agenda have yet to be set for the upcoming CAR quarterly meeting on October 8th. Two agenda items which Ms. Jones stated she would like to add are: updating guidelines for new construction to make them more context-sensitive; and updating demolition guidelines. Commission members should contact Ms. Jones with any other items they would like added. Ms. Jones asked if there was an alternate location for the meeting, hearing none, it was decided that the upcoming quarterly meeting would be held in City Hall.

Commissioner Morgan asked what the process is for updating the Guidelines. Ms. Jones stated that updates are proposed and discussed by Commission, usually at quarterly

- 7 COA-060189- 613-615 North 28th Street - Remove an existing rear deck and construct a
2019 new screen porch.

Attachments: [Application and Plans](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Staff Report](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Wheeler, seconded by Commissioner Bond, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: the porch be inset at least 6 inches from the side walls; the porch railing be wood and utilize a Richmond Rail or the pickets be placed on the interior of the rail; the screening be installed on the interior of the columns and railings; and the porch be painted or stained a neutral color with the color submitted to staff for administrative approval. The motion carried by the following vote:

- Aye -- 9 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson and Commissioner Mitch Danese

- 8 COA-060031- 505 North 24th Street - Construct a new one-story accessory building.
2019

Attachments: [Application and Plans](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Staff Report](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Wheeler, seconded by Commissioner Bond, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: the roof be clad in a more compatible material, and final roof specifications be submitted for administrative review and approval; the proposed cypress trim and rainscreen be painted or opaquely stained, and the color selection be submitted to staff for administrative approval. The motion carried by the following vote:

- Aye -- 9 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson and Commissioner Mitch Danese

REGULAR AGENDA

- 9 COA-060187- 813 North 28th Street - Demolish an existing school building and construct
2019 new community amenities.

Attachments: [Application and Plans](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Staff Report](#)

Darin Simmons, Chief Operating Officer for Richmond Public Schools, introduced himself. Mr. Simmons stated that RPS does not currently have a need or use for the existing school building, and that the space is needed for basketball courts and other recreation

space and amenities for the school and neighborhood and to meet the state requirements for recreational space.

Jason Kamras, Superintendent of Richmond Public Schools, introduced himself and reiterated Mr. Simmons' point that recreation facilities are needed. He also stated that the existing school building and its HVAC equipment are in poor condition. Mr. Kamras argued that the cost of preserving the existing schools takes resources from other schools in the system.

Cheryl Burke introduced herself as the 7th District School Board representative and a longtime Church Hill resident. Ms. Burke expressed concern that such an old school building has been in use without improvement or sufficient maintenance, and that the space it takes will take away space for children's recreation.

Cyane Crump, Executive Director of Historic Richmond, stated that Historic Richmond has been supportive of the new school plan, but has also advocated for alternatives to demolition for the most historic component of the existing school structure. If the historic school buildings are demolished, Historic Richmond has three requests: 1) a community panel be convened to determine how best to memorialize the historic school and its complex history at this site, possibly including preserving components of the historic school and incorporating them into the landscape plan; 2) an intensive survey be performed prior to demolition to glean more historic information about the site and school, as Department of Historic Resources performed a survey in 1991; 3) the survey and nomination for Richmond public schools should be updated and expanded to bring them up to date and carried forward to current times. Ms. Crump affirmed that Historic Richmond is excited for the new school and investment it represents.

Richard Rumrill, a neighbor whose children attend Chimborazo Elementary, stated that Chimborazo Elementary has half the playground space that George Mason Elementary will have, as is the case with many local schools. He suggested other spaces in the neighborhood as options, e.g., the space adjacent to an old water tower, for playgrounds. Mr. Rumrill stated that to say the play is being stolen from the children is very strong. Mr. Rumrill stated that he is a member of Church Hill Association Transportation Committee, which has been looking at pedestrian options for the 29th Street corridor. Mr. Rumrill expressed surprise that the school is considered to be on 28th St, because the old school structure is on 29th Street, and that is where the entrance is located. Mr. Rumrill stated that the school name of George Mason, to his knowledge, dates from the 1920s when the area was rezoned, at which time the density of houses per block went from 40 to 10. Mr. Rumrill continued that this is the reason many children attending the school will be coming from far away, and the reason that more people were not at the meeting to comment on the application. Mr. Rumrill added that putting up a new school building, as opposed to using a well-maintained older building as elsewhere, could be viewed as reflecting a lack of concern about children of the neighborhood. Mr. Rumrill stated that the proposed school building, suitable for suburban areas, as opposed to a 2- or 3-story school, uses up a lot of the space which school officials claim they need for play areas. Addressing Mr. Kamras, Mr. Rumrill stated that at a recent meeting Mr. Kamras had stated that he did not know how much play time students have at the school. Mr. Rumrill stated that his understanding was that the area where the old building is currently will not be for the school, but rather for the community, and that it will actually be fenced off from the school.

Chairman Klaus asked if there was any further public comment. There was none.

Chairman Klaus stated that the mandate of the Commission is to uphold the Commission

Guidelines, and that this should not be perceived as being opposed to children having playgrounds; and that there is an appeal process for Commission decisions.

Commissioner Bond suggested that, in line with Ms. Crump's remarks, that there could be alternate ways to preserve the history of this school, or perhaps the façade of the historic building could be retained and used as a gateway to the new playing fields with the suggestion that preserving the history in some way does not require preserving the whole building intact. Chairman Klaus expressed agreement, suggesting that some sort of middle ground could be figured out and that a deferral would allow time for to work on this.

Commissioner Hendricks stated that there had been considerable time for the applicants to consider alternatives to demolition in the time since the first CAR review for the project, and that the Commission had been clear in their opposition to demolition of the historic building.

Commissioner Hendricks expressed agreement with Mr. Rumrill about investigating alternate playground space, and expressed frustration that the Commission is now being placed in a position of opposition to the need for schools and amenities for children and the public.

Commissioner Morgan read aloud a portion of a public comment letter from Gail Robinson, a Church Hill/Shockoe Bottom resident of about 50 years. Ms. Robinson's letter expressed support for the preservation of African-American historical sites, especially as they relate to education, and that therefore believed the George Mason Elementary School building should be preserved and a community panel assembled to determine how best to memorialize the history of the school at its site.

Commissioner Morgan stated that the Commission often reviews properties which are in much worse condition than the current George Mason Elementary School, and that therefore it is problematic to allow its demolition. Commissioner Morgan expressed agreement that some portion of the building should be preserved, to retain the historical significance of the site.

Commissioner Morgan stated that the Commission has already approved construction of the new school, and that not allowing the demolition of the old school building does not prevent children from attending the new one. Chairman Klaus added the next application should specifically address the 1922 building.

A motion was made by Commissioner Hendricks, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to defer the application for the reasons cited in the staff report and to allow the applicant the opportunity to consider all feasible alternatives to the demolition of the 1922 section, including an appropriate new use and rehabilitation, relocation of the structure to a compatible site, re-sale of the property to an individual committed to suitable rehabilitation or relocation; and consider preservation of important architectural elements of the building. The motion carried by the following vote:

- Aye --** 9 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson and Commissioner Mitch Danese

10 COA-060013- 614 North 27th Street - Rehabilitate an existing front porch.
2019



CITY OF RICHMOND

DEPARTMENT OF

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW

COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

September 25, 2019

Richmond Public Schools
900 E. Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

RE: 813 N 28TH ST
Application No. COA-060187-2019

Dear Applicant:

At the September 24, 2019 meeting of the Commission of Architectural Review, the review of your application for a Certificate of Appropriateness resulted in the following action: **deferred**. Specifically, the Commission deferred the application for the reasons cited in the staff report and to allow the applicant the opportunity to consider all feasible alternatives to the demolition of the 1922 section, including an appropriate new use and rehabilitation, relocation of the structure to a compatible site, re-sale of the property to an individual committed to suitable rehabilitation or relocation; and consider preservation of important architectural elements of the building.

You, or any aggrieved party, have the right to appeal a decision of the Commission of Architectural Review to City Council as specified in Section 30.930 of the Richmond City Code. A petition stating reasons for the appeal must be filed with the City Clerk within 15 days of this meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (804) 646-7550 or by e-mail at Carey.Jones@richmondgov.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carey Jones".

Carey L. Jones, Secretary
Commission of Architectural Review



Richmond Public Schools
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER
Darin D. Simmons, Jr.
EMAIL: dsimmons2@rvaschools.net

October 11, 2019

Re: 813 N 28th Street
Application No. COA-060187-2019

Ms. Jones:

Richmond Public Schools (RPS) does not agree with the Commission of Architectural Review's deferment for the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the George Mason Elementary building. In fact, we believe that any continued deferment of action may jeopardize the City and RPS' ability to provide the necessary green space when the school opens in August 2020. This would cause RPS to absorb significant operational costs for the school as we provide supplemental activities and programming to meet physical education requirements at the school, while this issue is resolved.

In response to the request to examine all feasible options to the demolition of the 1922 section of the building, RPS believes that many of the proposed considerations are not feasible due to a lack of available funding. The three new schools that the City and RPS are building are being funded through the increase to the meals tax, which was projected to provide \$150 million dollars of additional City debt capacity. Current project budgets estimate the total cost of the three schools to be approximately \$146 million dollars, and RPS plans to use remaining funds for the design of a new George Wythe high school. With each of the new school construction projects, funding is a key constraint that has been publicly noted and discussed. Each of the Commission's suggested considerations are addressed below.

- **Find an appropriate New Use and rehabilitate the building**
Neither RPS nor the City has a programmed use nor sufficient funding for the rehabilitation of the 1922 section of the George Mason building. Moreover, integrating the current building into the design of the new building would not have been feasible given our timeline to have the new school ready by September 2020. Doing so would have required students to vacate the 1922 section of the building, which would have led to a major disruptions in school operations and caused overcrowding on the site. The building would require extensive and very costly

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renovation to abate asbestos material, replace all plumbing, electrical, and mechanical systems, and make design changes to bring it into compliance with today's building code, safety, energy efficiency and ADA requirements.

- **Relocation of the structure to a compatible site**

In addition to considerable costs estimated to move the structure to a different site, the design, structure, and condition of the 1922 section makes the relocation of the building technically unfeasible. Further, RPS does also not own a suitable site for a relocation or a programmed use for the building on a new site. Any such attempted relocation, even if rebuilt brick by brick, would entail the costly design modifications and upgrades discussed in the previous paragraph.

- **Resale of the property to an individual committed to suitable rehabilitation or relocation**

While RPS does not have a need for the building, RPS does need the property to come close to meeting minimum space guidelines for new school construction. Given the school's capacity of 750 students and Virginia Department of Education guidelines related to space requirements for a school of this size, RPS requires the property to provide needed recreation/play areas for the school and the community. Because of this, RPS does not believe the resale of the property to an organization committed to the rehabilitation of the building is a feasible option and that doing so would deprive the school and community of the necessary greenspace.

- **Preservation of important architectural elements of the building**

To preserve elements of the building, RPS would propose using brick from the 1922 structure in the creation of the fence columns for the new school. Though there would be an unforeseen project cost associated with this, we believe the added cost would be manageable given the salvage and reuse of old bricks in lieu of buying new brick.

Thank you for your review of our concerns and our discussion of the feasibility of the recommendations presented at the September 25, 2019 CAR meeting. We hope that the Commission will take these responses into consideration and grant approval for the complete demolition of the existing George Mason Elementary School.

Sincerely,



Darin Simmons, Jr.
Chief Operating Officer
Richmond Public Schools

5. COA-060187-2019

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

November 26th, 2019

PROPERTY ADDRESS

813 N. 28th Street

DISTRICT

Church Hill North

APPLICANT

City of Richmond Public Schools

STAFF CONTACT

C. Jones

**Commission of
Architectural Review
STAFF REPORT**



PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Demolish an existing school building.

PROJECT DETAILS

- The applicant requests permission to demolish the ca. 1922-1979 George Mason Elementary School.
- The applicant proposes to install tennis and basketball courts, athletic fields, and play areas on the cleared site.



The City of Richmond assumes no liability either for any errors, omissions, or inaccuracies in the information provided regardless of the cause of such or for any decision made, action taken, or action not taken by the user in reliance upon any maps or information provided herein.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

DEFER

PREVIOUS REVIEWS

The Commission reviewed the application for the demolition of the George Mason Elementary School at the September 24, 2019, meeting. At this meeting the Commission voted to defer the application for demolition to allow the applicant the opportunity to consider all feasible alternatives to the demolition of the 1922 section, including 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; and consider preservation of important architectural elements of the building.

STAFF COMMENTS

The applicant has responded to the request to consider feasible alternatives to demolition in a letter dated October 11, 2019. In the letter the applicant responded to the requirements to consider feasible alternatives; however, the applicant did not respond to the additional requirements the Commission must consider when reviewing an application for demolition.

In the October 11, 2019 letter the applicant proposes to salvage some of the brick from the 1922 section to create fence columns for the new school. Staff acknowledges that there is an additional project cost associated with this proposal and that this will be a manageable cost given the salvage value of the bricks. Staff believes

that there are other important architectural elements that should be preserved to memorialize the significant history of the building and its association with public education in the City of Richmond. Staff has requested that the applicant work with staff and members of the Commission to develop feasible alternatives to the demolition and to discuss additional ways to commemorate and memorialize the history of this school and important alumnae.

In the letter dated October 11, 2019, the applicant states their belief that: *any continued deferment of action may jeopardize the City and RPS' ability to provide the necessary green space when the school opens in August 2020.* Staff acknowledges that project delays have the potential to incur additional costs. However, staff also notes that the Commission raised concerns about the preservation and potential demolition of the school building during the conceptual review of the new school at the November 27, 2018 meeting. The Commission raised the same concerns at the January 22, 2019 meeting when it approved construction of the new school.

STAFF ANALYSIS

According to Sec. 30-930.7(d) of the Historic Preservation Ordinance: The commission of architectural review 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. The demolition of any building deemed by the commission to not be a part of the historic character of an old and historic district shall be permitted. The demolition of any building that has deteriorated beyond the point of being feasibly rehabilitated is permissible, where the applicant can satisfy the commission as to the infeasibility of rehabilitation. The commission may adopt additional demolition standards for the review of certificates of appropriateness applications to supplement these standards.

Under the provisions or 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.*

- *an appropriate new use and rehabilitation*

The applicant has responded that neither RPS nor the City have a use or funding for the rehabilitation of the 1922 section of the building. In the October 11, 2019 letter the applicant explains that the renovation and rehabilitation of the building would be costly due to the need to abate asbestos; replace the plumbing, electrical and mechanical systems; and address current building code requirements. The applicant has not provided a detailed description of the work required and the costs associated with converting the building to a new use and/or rehabilitating it using other funding sources such as the historic rehabilitation tax credit, the City of Richmond Tax Abatement program, or grants.

- *relocation of the structure to a compatible site*

In the October 11, 2019 letter the applicant states that there would be considerable cost associated with relocating the building and that they do not have a site to allow for relocation. The applicant states that moving the 1922 section of the building is "technically unfeasible" but does not provide any data or analysis to support this statement or as to whether they have considered other nearby City-owned sites.

-
- *re-sale of the property to an individual committed to suitable rehabilitation or relocation*

In the October 11, 2019 letter the applicant reiterates that RPS does not have a need for the building and explains that RPS needs the land in order to provide recreation and play areas for the school and community. On account of the need for play spaces and recreational areas, the applicant does not believe that allowing for the rehabilitation of the building by a separate party is feasible. However, the applicant has not indicated that they have considered other nearby City-owned locations for the community recreational areas.

2) A building or structure is deemed not to be a contributing part of the historic character of an Old and Historic District.

The building is located within the Church Hill North City Old and Historic District. When the boundaries of the Church Hill North City Old and Historic District were determined, they specifically included this school in acknowledgement of its significance to the neighborhood. Staff finds the building contributes to the historic character of the Old and Historic District as it was constructed during the period of significance, reflects the areas of significance for the District, and is in keeping with the general architectural styles of the historic buildings in the District.

3) The Commission deems that a building or structure has deteriorated beyond the point of feasible rehabilitation. A determination that a building or structure no longer presents an opportunity for feasible rehabilitation is arrived at only after an on-site visit by Commission members and a thorough structural analysis has been undertaken by a licensed structural engineer experienced in historic preservation work.

The applicant has indicated that in order to rehabilitate the school building, including the 1922 section, substantial exterior and interior work would be required. However, the applicant has not provided additional information regarding the nature, extent, and cost of the rehabilitation or a structural analysis by a licensed structural engineer.

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.*

Historic Richmond provided the following research and analysis to staff. The full version of this information can be found here:

<https://www.historicrichmond.com/property/george-mason-school/>. The oldest section of the existing school dates to 1922, when a 12-classroom building was built to alleviate overcrowding in the original 1881 frame building and 1887 brick building on the site. The 1922 building is a reconstruction of an 1873 building which originally housed Richmond High School, later John Smith School, at 805 East Marshall Street. Construction drawings for the 1922 building indicate that the materials, such as the bricks and windows, from the John Smith School were used for the construction of the 1922 George Mason School. The drawings also indicate that Charles M. Robinson, architect to Richmond Public Schools from 1909-1930,

oversaw the new school construction. Staff finds that the 1922 section is potentially significant for its association with early twentieth-century educational trends in the City of Richmond and with Charles Robinson, a noted architect of education buildings in Richmond. Staff also finds it is potentially significant as a representative example of late-nineteenth century educational architecture.

The first expansion of the school occurred in 1936 when a 14-room wing was added. In 1951, a 12-room wing was constructed. The original 1881 frame building was demolished in 1974 and the 1887 brick building was demolished in 1979 for the construction of the Marsh Wing. Staff finds that the 1936-1979 additions do not possess historic or architectural significance.

2) *The effect that demolition will have on the surrounding neighborhood.*

The demolition of the entire school complex will remove a physical reminder of the historical development of the area and the public school system.

3) *The type and quality of the project that will replace the demolished building.*

The proposed new use of the site is basketball and tennis courts, play areas, and an athletic field for use by the students of the new school and members of the surrounding community.

4) *The historic preservation goals outlined in the Master Plan and Downtown Plan.*

The 2000 Master Plan does not address schools in the East Planning District but does recognize the contribution of historic and architectural resources to the character of the community.

FIGURES



Figure 1. George Mason Elementary School, ca. 1922 section.



Figure 2. George Mason Elementary School, ca. 1936 section.



Figure 3. George Mason Elementary School, ca. 1956 addition.



Figure 4. George Mason Elementary School, ca. 1956 addition.

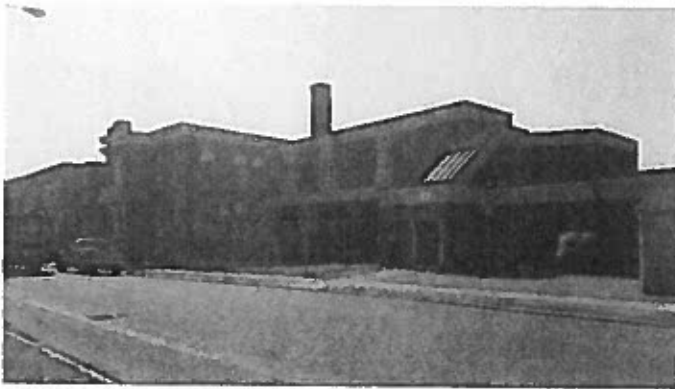


Figure 5. George Mason Elementary School, ca. 1979 addition.

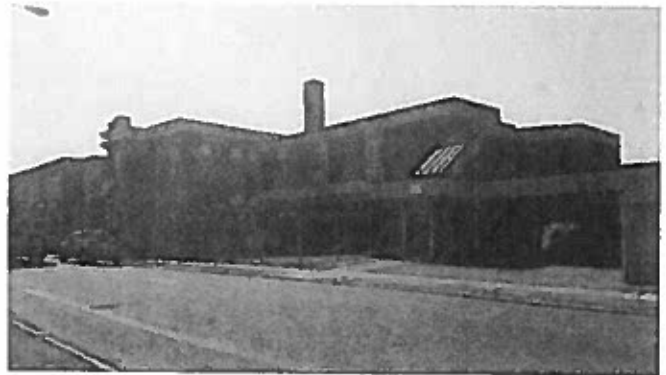


Figure 6. George Mason Elementary, ca. 1922 and 1979 sections.

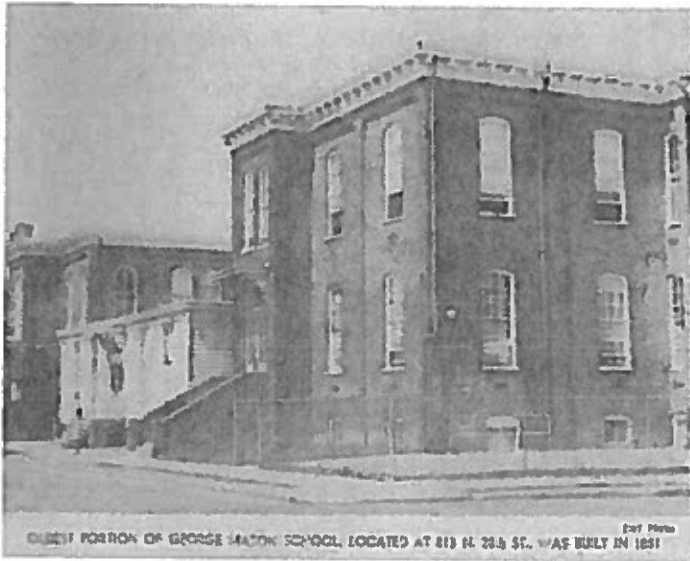


Figure 7. Original George Mason Elementary School at right in foreground, the 1881 frame section in the middle, and the current (1922) section in background. Courtesy: Historic Richmond.

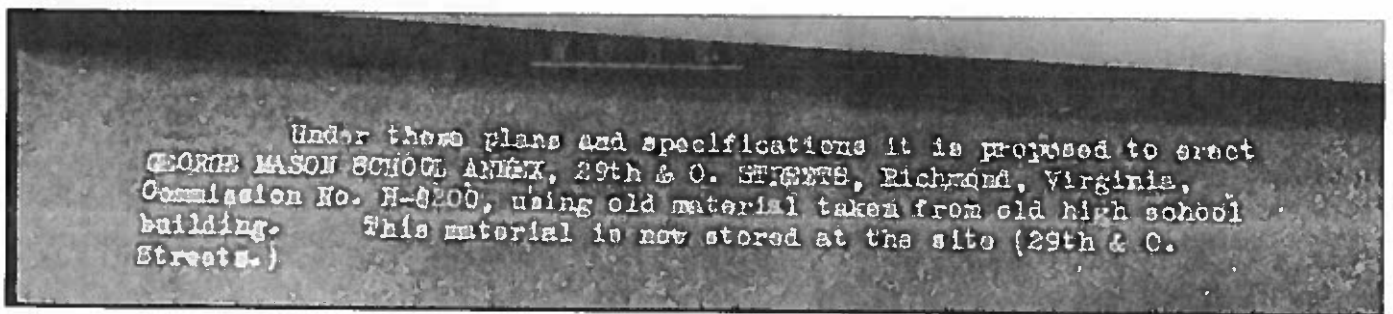


Figure 8 Specifications for the George Mason School, 1922. Courtesy: Historic Richmond.

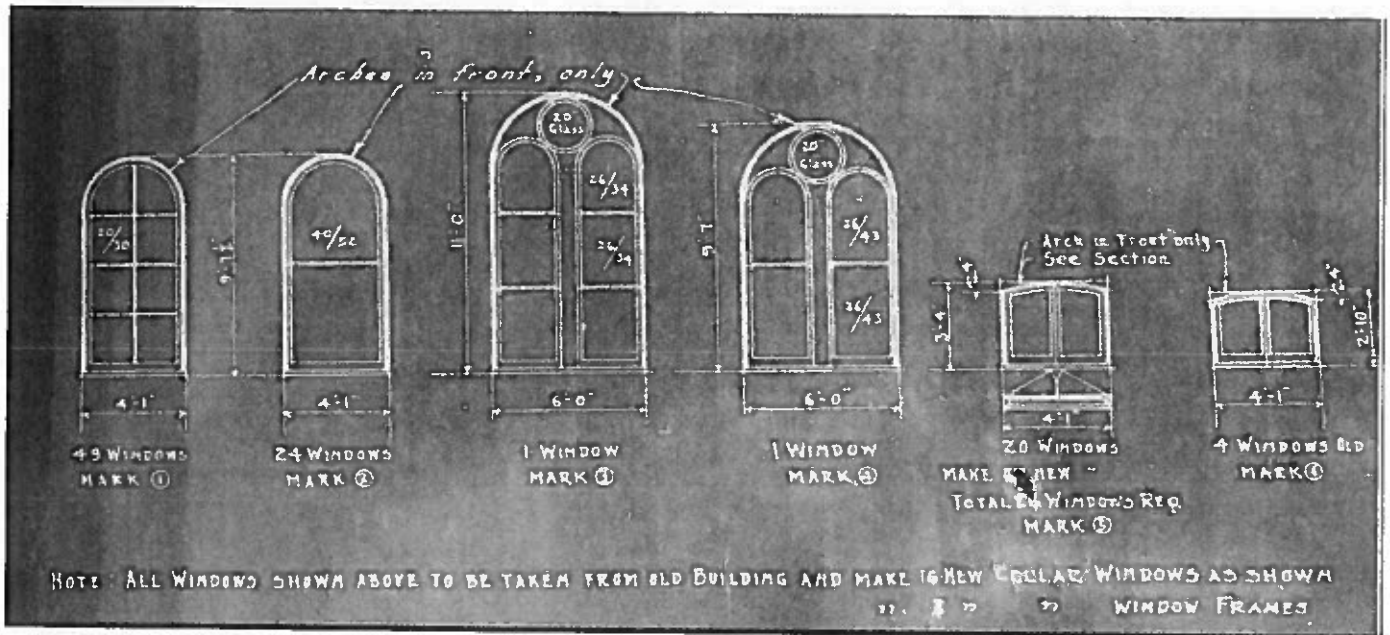


Figure 9. Window drawings for the George Mason Elementary School, 1922. Courtesy: Historic Richmond



Figure 10. Cracking terrazzo floors, 1922 section



Figure 11. Non-ADA compliant bathroom corridors and spaces, ca. 1922 section

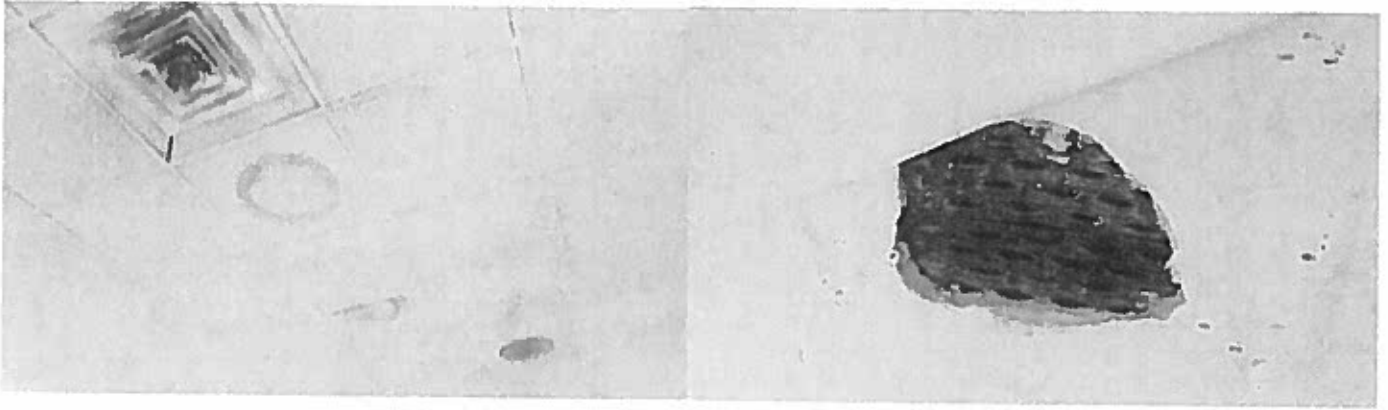


Figure 12. Extensive water damage observed on the ceilings.

Figure 13. Damage to walls, ca. 1922 section.

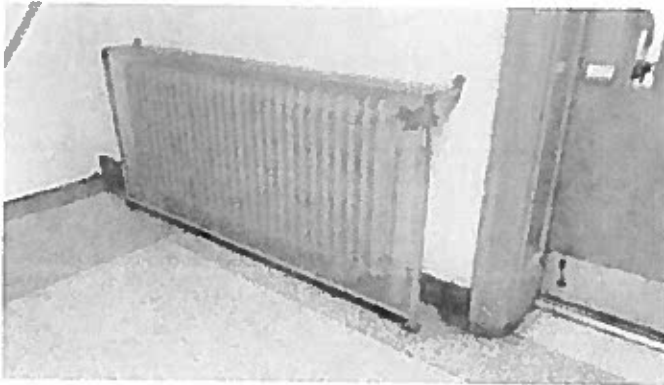


Figure 14. Current heating system, ca 1922 section.



Figure 15. Outdated mechanical systems ca 1922 section.



City of Richmond

City Hall
900 East Broad Street

Meeting Minutes Commission of Architectural Review

Tuesday, November 26, 2019

3:30 PM

5th Floor Conference Room of City Hall

Call to Order

James Klaus, the Chairman, called the business portion of the November 26 meeting of the Commission of Architectural Review to order at 3:39 pm.

Roll Call

- Present --** 8 - * Commissioner Sanford Bond, * Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, * Commissioner James W. Klaus, * Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, * Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, * Commissioner Sean Wheeler, * Commissioner Lawrence Pearson and * Commissioner Mitch Danese
- Excused --** 1 - * Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr.

Approval of Minutes

October 22, 2019

A motion was made by Commissioner Ashleigh Brewer, seconded by Commissioner Sean Wheeler, that the October 22, 2019 Meeting minutes be approved. The motion carried by the following vote:

- Aye --** 6 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson and Commissioner Mitch Danese
- Excused --** 3 - Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr. and Commissioner Kathleen Morgan

OTHER BUSINESS

Secretary's Report

Ms. Jones distributed the 2020 Commission meeting schedule to Commissioners.

Ms. Jones stated that Commission staff have been working with the owners of the Woodward House at 3017 Williamsburg Avenue to have temporary bracing installed, as the house has a worsening lean. Staff and owners have been working with Historic Richmond, which has an easement on the property, to develop a plan to repair the building.

Ms. Jones stated that herself, Ms. Jeffries, and Commissioners Wheeler and Klaus recently met with Bob Weatherford, who provided copious information about windows of various compositions, designs, and durability. This information will be passed along to the other Commissioners. One idea which emerged from this discussion was that there should be a distinction between window options for new construction as opposed to

staff to ensure the work is consistent with the Commission's Standards for Rehabilitation and submit an additional application for a Certificate of Appropriateness as necessary.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson and Commissioner Mitch Danese

Excused -- 1 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr.

3. COA-063207-2019 3309 Monument Avenue - Revise fenestration pattern for previously approved plans.

Attachments: [Application and Plans](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Staff Report](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Wheeler, seconded by Commissioner Bond, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: the new rear windows and the new side door be wood or aluminum clad wood with true or simulated divided lights with interior and exterior muntins and a spacer bar between the glass and the stairway use a Richmond rail and be painted or opaquely stained a neutral color to be administratively approved.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson and Commissioner Mitch Danese

Excused -- 1 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr.

REGULAR AGENDA

4. COA-064118-2019 2330 Monument Avenue - Install one freestanding sign in a front yard.

This application was withdrawn by the applicant.

5. COA-060187-2019 813 North 28th Street - Demolish an existing school building and construct new community amenities.

Attachments: [Application and Plans \(9/24/2019\)](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Staff Report \(9/24/2019\)](#)

[RPS Response to CAR](#)

[Staff Report](#)

The application was presented by Ms. Jones.

Commissioner Bond asked when RPS first brought the application for CAR to approve the school plan. Ms. Jones stated that the conceptual review occurred at the November 27, 2018 meeting, and the final approval at the January 22, 2019 meeting. Commissioner Bond stated that at that meeting, the demolition had been brought up, and the Commission had stated that there would be historical elements to deal with and that the applicants would have to make a separate application for the demolition. Commissioner Bond commented that it took a year for RPS to do that [apply for demolition], whereas they could have made it a year ago. Commissioner Bond stated that RPS was now trying to ram it through without due consideration.

Chairman Klaus stated that the ordinance of the Commission of Architectural Review is to protect the historic character of buildings in our Old and Historic Districts, of which the building under consideration is one. Chairman Klaus stated that the uses to which these buildings are put falls outside of the Commission's responsibility; and asked that those present understand that the fact of the projected playground use of the site does not factor into the Commission decision.

Mr. Darin Simmons, Jr., Chief Operating Officer, with Richmond Public Schools, introduced himself and stated that he had reviewed the staff report and had met with Ms. Jones and Ms. Chen on November 25th, 2019, and that the applicants understood and appreciated the charge of the Commission to preserve the history of Richmond. Mr. Simmons stated that Richmond Public Schools have millions of dollars' worth of deferred maintenance, including roof leaks and heating and hot water problems, and therefore the applicants do not agree with the recommendation that they spend resources to study a building that they wish to remove to make way for play space for children and the community.

Mr. Simmons stated that the proposed site for play space meets the bare minimum of space required for this purpose, and that proposals such as relocating the historic property or selling it are outside of the locus of control of RPS. The play area cannot be relocated to the nearby water tank area, as was suggested, as this is owned by Richmond Department of Public Works. The land of the site cannot be granted by RPS to a developer for rehabilitation, as RPS does not own the land or the buildings; to do this, RPS would have to "surplus" the land back to the city.

Mr. Simmons stated that the building under discussion should have been demolished a decade ago, and that the school children need a modern school building with modern amenities.

Chairman Klaus asked if there was any public comment.

Ms. Ann Wortham read from a letter she wrote stating that RPS had not responded to the Commission with additional information as required which the Commission must consider when reviewing an application for demolition; and that the Commission raised concerns about the demolition of the school building during the conceptual review meeting in November 2018, and again at the January 2019 meeting. Ms. Wortham stated that deferring the application today may cause costly delays; however, for RPS to complain about such delays is specious because RPS was apprised of the concerns and requirements over a year ago; and RPS could have saved millions of dollars had it used a different bid process. Ms. Wortham stated that the Richmond Free Press reports that the more costly bid process was used for political reasons. Ms. Wortham stated that, since RPS has not provided information necessary for the Commission to review the

application, that the Commission should defer the application.

Chairman Klaus asked if there was further public comment.

Mr. Jim Adams, a resident of O Street, stated that he had chosen to live in Church Hill partly because of the Commission and its work to preserve historic buildings. Mr. Adams stated that Ethel Furman Park was also an attractive feature, used by many residents, and that this park was taken away a year ago. Mr. Adams stated that School Board, City Council members, the Parks Department, and the Mayor all made promises that the park would be preserved and rebuilt on the site of the existing school. He further stated that if the Commission maintains its stance, there will be no park for the neighborhood to use. Mr. Adams expressed dismay that a Commissioner had stated that the Commission's sole concern was to protect historic buildings in the City. Mr. Adams asked that the Commission to consider "the lives of the people who had their park taken away from them by your actions." Mr. Adams stated that a deferral by the Commission would set back the process by another 4-5 months, and that he hoped the Commission would reconsider.

Chairman Klaus asked if there was further public comment.

Ms. Nancy Lampert, a Union Hill resident, stated that she fully supported the staff recommendation and hoped that the Commission would decide in accordance with it. Ms. Lampert stated that RPS should be ashamed for disregarding the living history of the George Mason School in its plans to demolish and build a new structure. Ms. Lampert stated that notable figures of the African-American community had attended the school both in its early and its recent history, and a reuse of the building could be devised to recognize that. Ms. Lampert cited examples of George Mason alumni, including Governor Wilder, Senator Marsh, the philanthropist Thomas Cannon, and Ethel Bailey Furman, a noted Richmond architect, as well as the history of the school structure itself, with which Ms. Furman's father was probably involved. Ms. Lampert stated that other historic sites in Richmond have been honored, and it is a shame on RPS that they are not taking the trouble to honor their own history and that of children who have attended, and that there are moneys which could have been used for the restoration. Ms. Lampert stated that the Superintendent of RPS is making more money than the governor of New York, that RPS is attempting to hold the kids of Richmond hostage, and that the cultural history of the schoolchildren is more important than a shiny new school.

Chairman Klaus asked if there was further public comment.

Ms. Deborah Morton, Deputy Director for Parks, Recreation and Community Facilities asked the Commission to not defer the application, stating that the community fought hard to have the Ethel Bailey Furman Park named after Ms. Furman and refurbished. Ms. Morton stated that Parks and Recreation had been about to put several hundred thousand dollars' worth of improvements into the Park, and had been told that when the new school was built where the park is currently, the park would be rebuilt in the footprint of the existing school complex. Ms. Morton stated that the park is important for both the schoolchildren and the community, and is used extensively.

Chairman Klaus asked if there was further public comment.

Mr. Jason Kamras, Superintendent of Richmond Public Schools, asked that the Commission approve RPS' application for demolition. Mr. Kamras expressed disagreement with Chairman Klaus's statement that the Commission of Architectural Review's sole responsibility is the preservation of historic elements, stating that the

ordinance does mention that there may be competing interests and provides recommended actions to be taken before resorting to demolition. Mr. Kamras argued that, if the preservation of historic buildings is to be without exception, then no humans would be required to make judgments on individual cases. Mr. Kamras stated that the Commission's charge is to weigh the historic value of buildings against competing values and efforts that have been made toward preservation.

Mr. Kamras conceded that RPS had not provided a detailed plan for the historic school building's preservation, due to such a project not being possible within the limited budget of RPS. Mr. Kamras stated that money put to this purpose would have to be diverted from basic upkeep of school infrastructure, school supplies, and teacher salaries.

Mr. Kamras stated that the original historic building was torn down and no longer exists. Mr. Kamras stated that the reason historic sites are preserved is because they have meaning, which in this case would be the history of expanding rights for African-Americans in Richmond, which is important, but, Mr. Kamras argued, the essence of that would be to ensure that current African-Americans students have access to a modern school and its amenities.

Chairman Klaus asked if there was further public comment.

Ms. Cheryl Burke, 7th District Representative on the School Board, stated that she and her family had been long-term residents of Richmond and that she has considerable respect for history. Ms. Burke stated that the building under discussion was not the 1881 building built for African-Americans, and that there has not been a new school building in the eastern district since 1967. Ms. Burke stated that her constituents live in small apartments and rely on schools and school grounds as gathering places and play areas. Ms. Burke expressed disappointment about the Commission's deferral, although she stated that she understood the Commission's position. Ms. Burke asked that the Commission reconsider the deferral, and make a decision in the best interest of children.

Chairman Klaus asked if there was further public comment. Hearing none, he closed public comment and opened the floor for a Commission motion and discussion.

Chairman Klaus stated that the Commission is sensitive to Richmond Public Schools' plight, sympathetic to the needs of children, and aware of the need to move the proposal forward. Chairman Klaus stated that he wished to remind those present that there is an appeal process for Commission decisions, and that a Commission denial followed by an appeal would allow the proposal to be determined by the Richmond City Council, who could weigh both the historic and educational imperatives and hopefully reach a decision in a timely manner.

A motion was made by Commissioner Klaus, seconded by Commissioner Brewer, to deny the application for demolition.

Commissioner Bond stated that the reason for the current situation was that RPS did not make a timely application despite being informed a year ago of the need to apply for a demolition permit. Commissioner Bond suggested that a potential win-win solution, which the Commission could approve, would be to preserve the façade of the building, converting it into a gateway into the playground. This would not take up park space, as the façade is right along the sidewalk edge. This had been suggested to RPS at an earlier meeting, and Commissioner Bond stated that, due to the failure of Richmond Public Schools to follow up on the suggestion, he would support a denial of the application.

Commissioner Pearson stated that the present moment was when action could potentially be taken to preserve the building, and that once the decision was passed on to the City Council, this opportunity would be lost.

Commissioner Hendricks expressed agreement and concern that, if the Commission were to vote to deny, a political process would follow in which sympathies would be appealed to. Chairman Klaus stated that he did not believe the applicants would ever come forth with a proposal for the reuse or preservation of the building, and therefore it would not be useful for the Commission to continue meeting with them.

Commissioner Wheeler asked if, when RPS representatives met with Commission staff on November 25, the idea of preserving the façade had been discussed. Ms. Jones stated that it had not been mentioned, and that the discussion had been focused on what RPS would have to provide in terms of information in order to make possible a decision other than deferral.

Commissioner Hendricks referred to applicants' submitted plans of the 1922 building, and suggested that the public play area be converted into the school's play area, thus the schoolchildren would have the same square footage of play area that they had previously.

Commissioner Morgan stated that it was important to note that the majority of public comments from school neighbors had not been in favor of preserving the historic school building, and that comments about preservation have not expressed concern about the contextual history.

The motion failed by the following vote:

Aye – 3 - Commissioner Ashleigh Brewer, Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner James Klaus,

No – 5 - Commissioner Lane Pearson, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Mitch Danese, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Jason Hendricks

Excused – 1 – Commissioner Neville Johnson

A motion was made by Commissioner Bond, seconded by Commissioner Wheeler, to defer the application for the reasons cited in the staff report to allow the applicant the opportunity to respond to staff and Commission comments.

Commissioner Brewer asked what would actually be gained by deferring the application again. Commissioner Hendricks stated that the time-frame of the proposal is not in the Commission's control, and that if the owners had done their due diligence on the site, things could have moved forward quickly.

Commissioner Danese stated that the Commission could vote for demolition with retaining the façade.

Commissioner Hendricks stated that the Commission could vote for demolition of all but the 1922 portion of the building; this would provide green space, and the building could be mothballed at low cost until a plan for its use could be devised.

Chairman Klaus stated that approving demolition of all but the façade seemed like a compromise solution. Commissioner Hendricks stated that demolition of all but the façade could be fairly expensive, although it would make an attractive backdrop.

Commissioner Wheeler stated that it should be emphasized that the Commission is only

concerned about preserving the historic portion of the building, not the whole complex.

Commissioner Bond withdrew the motion.

A motion was made by Commissioner Danese, seconded by Commissioner Hendricks, to partially approve the application for demolition as submitted. The Commission approved the demolition of the 1936-1979 additions. The Commission expressed a strong preference for the retention of the entire 1922 building and denied the demolition of the façade of the 1922 building.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - Commissioner Sanford Bond, Commissioner Gerald Jason Hendricks, Commissioner James W. Klaus, Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson and Commissioner Mitch Danese

Excused -- 1 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr.

6. COA-063206-2019 1500 N. Lombardy Street - Install four internally illuminated wall signs on the Belgian Building Tower.

Attachments: [Application and Plans](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Staff Report](#)

This application was withdrawn by the applicant.

8. COA-062062-2019 3101-3105 E. Marshall Street - Renovate first floor of an existing building and add a third story; and construct a three-story side addition.

Attachments: [Application and Plans \(10/22/2019\)](#)

[Site Map](#)

[Staff Report \(10/22/2019\)](#)

[Application and Plans](#)

[Staff Report](#)

The application was presented by Ms. Jones.

The applicant, Sean Jefferson, stated that the rear portion which the applicants plan to remove is not original. Regarding staff comments about reducing the scale of the rear, Mr. Jefferson stated that he had thought this was already sorted out at the previous review of the project.

Commissioner Morgan asked Mr. Jefferson about the height of the addition in relation to the historic structure, stating that the addition appeared to be taller. Mr. Jefferson stated that the addition could be lowered.

Chairman Klaus stated that in an earlier review the Commission had asked that the roof-top addition be set back further to reduce visibility from the street, and that the applicants had done so. Chairman Klaus also stated that the height of the addition is the same height as the historic building, if the parapet is included.



CITY OF RICHMOND

DEPARTMENT OF
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT REVIEW
COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW

November 27, 2019

Richmond Public Schools
900 E. Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

RE: 813 N 28TH ST
Application No. COA-060187-2019

Dear Applicant:

At the November 26, 2019 meeting of the Commission of Architectural Review, the review of your application for a Certificate of Appropriateness resulted in the following action: **partial approval**. Specifically, the Commission partially approved the application for demolition as submitted. The Commission approved the demolition of the 1936-1979 additions. The Commission denied the approval of the 1922 building in whole or in part.

You, or any aggrieved party, have the right to appeal a decision of the Commission of Architectural Review to City Council as specified in Section 30.930 of the Richmond City Code. A petition stating reasons for the appeal must be filed with the City Clerk within 15 days of this meeting.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (804) 646-7550 or by e-mail at Carey.Jones@richmondgov.com.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Carey Jones". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Carey L. Jones, Secretary
Commission of Architectural Review



George Mason School, 813 N 28th Street

Our original Richmond@Risk website post, dated August 20, 2019, has been updated with additional information, research, findings, and photographs.

Background

Thanks to some super sleuths, it was noted that the oldest remaining portion of George Mason Elementary School (Figure 1) incorporates a cornerstone with a 1922 date. The George Mason Elementary School has a complex history, more complex than could be appropriately captured in our original brief post. This cornerstone is an important element in understanding how the George Mason School site reflects the larger story of public education in Richmond, including disparities in the construction and treatment of racially segregated schools.

History of George Mason Elementary School

The first school building constructed on the George Mason School site was a four-room frame building built in 1881. In 1887, a brick addition was constructed to accommodate crowding at the school. (The one story frame 1881 structure can be seen in the center of the photo in Figure 2 below, while the 1887 structure can be seen on the right). The 1887 brick structure was built in a simplified Romanesque Revival style, with slightly arched windows and a decorative cornice. Until 1909, when the school's name was changed to George Mason, the school at this location was known as the East End School.

Chronic school overcrowding necessitated expansion. In 1922, a twelve classroom brick building was added to the site. (This structure can be seen in Figure 1 and in the left background of Figure 2.) It is this 1922 structure that has raised a few questions. Why does this structure so closely resemble an Italianate building of the 1880s in design, materials and workmanship, yet incorporate a 1922 cornerstone?

In essence, this building is a 1922 reconstruction and reinterpretation of an 1873 school building, which was one of the first purpose built structures of Richmond's public education system. The 1922 structure was overseen by Charles M. Robinson, Richmond's Public School Architect from 1909-1930, who is credited with some of Richmond's most architecturally significant school buildings. There are many reasons this structure is so intriguing. Perhaps one of the most intriguing is its provenance and origins. The architectural fabric of this structure was drawn from Richmond High School, later known as the John Smith School building, constructed in 1873 at 805 E. Marshall Street (Figure 3).

Richmond High School Building Reinterpreted at George Mason

Richmond High School was created in 1872 as a formal high school with William F. Fox as its first principal. A new building, part of the Richmond school system's first building program, was completed in 1873 at a cost of \$40,000. This building served as Richmond's principal high school until 1909 when John Marshall High School opened across the street (behind the John Marshall House). Richmond High School was renamed John Smith School and continued to serve the community as a school until 1922, when the building was razed to allow the construction of George Wythe Junior High School (an annex for John Marshall High School) on the site.

According to the 1922 construction drawings for the George Mason addition, materials such as bricks and windows from the John Smith School building were taken to the George Mason site and used in the construction of a "new building" at the George Mason School with a form similar to that of the John Smith School building. (See Figures 4, 5, 6, and 7).

George Mason School continued to serve as the Black elementary school in the East End until segregation ended. The school was expanded with additions including: a 14-room addition in 1936; a 12-classroom wing in 1951; and the Henry L. Marsh III Wing in 1979-1980. Published accounts refer to the demolition of the original 1881 frame building in 1974, but the two-story 1887 brick structure also was demolished to accommodate the Marsh Wing.

Development of Richmond Public Schools

It is helpful to understand the George Mason school buildings within the larger context of public education in Richmond. Richmond took the first steps to launch a system of public education in 1868, working with the Freedman's Bureau, the Peabody Fund and other groups. In 1869, City Council established a system of free schools. In 1871, Richmond's schools became a part of the state system, established following the adoption of the 1869 Virginia constitution.

Prior studies of Richmond's public education have referred to two significant periods of its early development: 1869 to 1909 and 1909-1930. The earlier period is associated with pioneering efforts in public education, when funding, programs, and personnel were in their infancy.

Buildings not specifically designed as schools were frequently rented or purchased. In general, purpose-built schools dating from this earlier period were smaller, less numerous, and not as well constructed and designed as those dating from the later period. Schools from the later period, when Dr. J.A.C. Chandler was named Superintendent of Richmond Public Schools and Robinson its architect, embodied the increasing importance of public education to the economic prosperity and quality of life in the City of Richmond. During the latter period, Chandler and Robinson embarked upon an extensive school building and renovation program. Richmond operated a segregated school system throughout both periods.

In 1991, the Virginia Department of Historic Resources undertook a survey of all Richmond public schools during these periods. At the time, there were no definitive studies on the history of education, so this DHR survey assisted in providing valuable context and information about Richmond's historic school buildings during these early periods from 1869 to 1930. This survey work is now outdated and could benefit from additional available information and expansion to address schools developed in later periods.

Application to Demolish George Mason

In 2017, the Richmond School Board announced plans to build a new George Mason Elementary School as part of a larger comprehensive plan. Designs for the new school building to be located south of the current school buildings on the site were approved by the City's Commission of Architectural Review in January 2019. This approval did not include landscape plans for the larger site or the demolition of the current school buildings. On August 20, 2019, the School Board voted to demolish the existing George Mason Elementary School buildings and an application for demolition is anticipated to be on the agenda for the Commission of Architectural Review on September 24, 2019. Public comment will be heard at this meeting.

Historic Richmond is excited to see the new investment in George Mason represented by the construction of a new school and believes its design to be generally compatible with the surrounding historic neighborhood. We spoke at the Commission of Architectural Review's meetings on November 27, 2018 and January 22, 2019 in support of the new school, while recognizing that an application for demolition of the existing school would be presented later in the process.

We ask that careful consideration be given to the oldest George Mason structure and potential alternatives to its demolition. For example, could it serve as a field house or some other use in the new campus plan? Could material be salvaged and incorporated into new buildings or the amenities within the landscape plan? We recommend creating a community panel to determine how to best memorialize the history of this school on this site.

In addition, we strongly recommend that the City undertake a comprehensive survey of all Richmond Public Schools to better understand the history of our schools. We ask that an intensive level survey of the George Mason school buildings and site be performed. We note that similar surveys were prepared in connection with the recent demolitions of historic school buildings at Armstrong High School and Westhampton School. Furthermore, the survey and nomination for the National Register of Historic Places for Richmond Public Schools should be updated and expanded with additional information relating to George Mason Elementary School and its role in the larger story of public education in Richmond, and all Richmond Public Schools should be surveyed in light of additional information and resources.



Figure 1. Oldest remaining portion of George Mason School. 2019.



Figure 2. George Mason Elementary School with 1887 structure at right in foreground, 1881 original frame building in middle ground, and 1922 structure in background. Photo courtesy Richmond News Leader, June 16, 1971.



Figure 3. On left: Richmond High School, built 1873. Photocopy from the Library of Virginia. On right: George Mason Elementary in 2019.

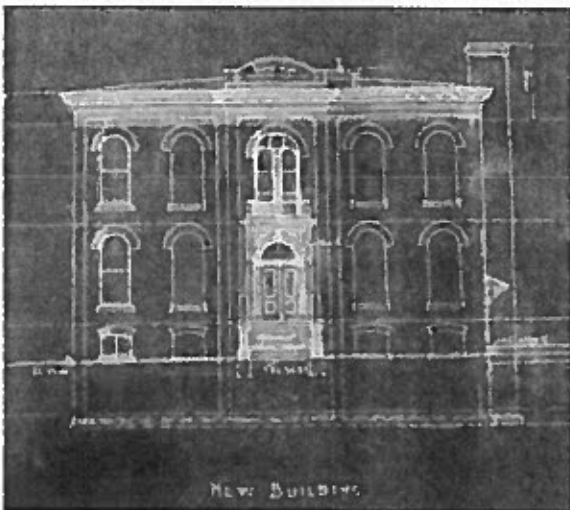


Figure 4. North elevation drawings of the "New Building" at George Mason School. Charles M. Robinson, 1922. Library of Virginia.

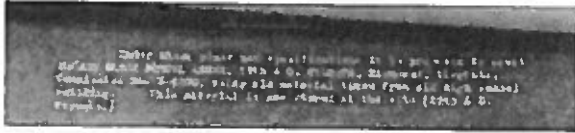


Figure 5. Specifications from plans for George Mason School, Charles M. Robinson, 1922, Library of Virginia.

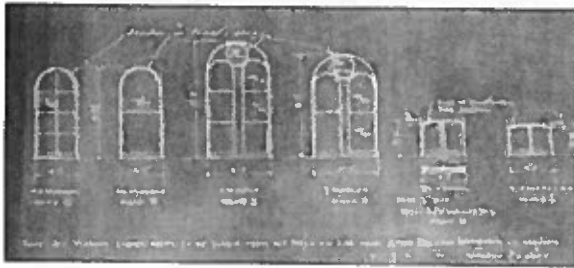


Figure 6. Window drawings for George Mason School, Charles M. Robinson, 1922, Library of Virginia.

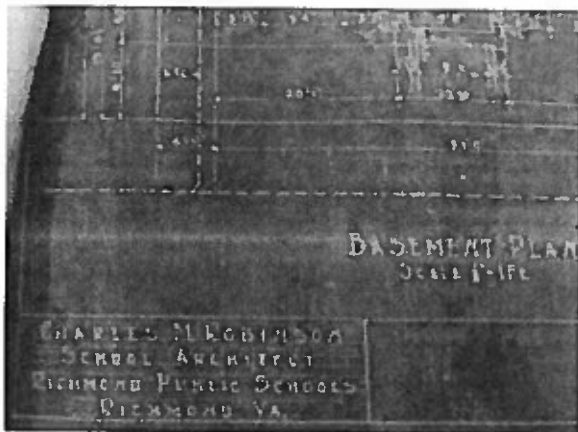


Figure 7. Charles M. Robinson signature on George Mason plans, Charles M. Robinson, 1922, Library of Virginia.

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