

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
May 22, 2018, Meeting**

8. **COA-034581-2018** (Z. Frederick)

**2018 E. Broad Street
(304 N 21st Street)
Shockoe Valley Old and Historic District**

Project Description:

**Rehabilitate and demolish a portion
of a commercial building.**

Staff Contact:

K. Chen

Description of Existing Structure: The existing structure is located on the northwest corner of East Broad and N. 21st streets. There is an unimproved area to east that is depressed below the grade of the sidewalk to the east and the alley to the north. It is enclosed with a brick retaining wall and a chain link fence.



There is an asphalt parking area across the southern face of the property between the brick sidewalk and the face of the building. There is a low brick wall between the asphalt paving and the brick sidewalk between the two curb cuts from E. Broad Street.





The structure on the site is composed of two sections. The larger rear portion with the stepped gable was constructed ca. 1938 along with a small utility building to east that housed a boiler and access to the basement. The 1-story concrete block and brick veneer portion of the building appears to have been constructed in 1966 and largely repaired and rebuilt in 1989 according to city assessor's records.



Proposal: The applicant requests approval to demolish the 1-story concrete block and brick veneer portion of the building and the small utility building to the east, and substantially rehabilitate the larger stepped gable portion of the building. New storefront and glazed opening will be added to the façade of the building where there is evidence of previously infilled openings. The ca. 1950 photograph illustrates the existence of multiple large openings on the façade of the building.

Two metal canopies with tie-backs will be installed over the new openings. The existing steel industrial windows on the east and west elevations will be repaired and retained. The overhead door opening on the rear (north) elevation will be infilled with cement board panels and two new doors that will be recessed behind the face of the brick. The brick will be cleaned a tuck pointed as needed and painted brick on the façade will be Sherwin Williams Cajun red (SW 0008). The unpainted brick on the remaining three elevations will not be painted. A new shingle roof installed.

The eastern most curb cut will be abandoned but the existing asphalt block paving retained. The site will be regraded to provide a secondary entry/exit from the alley to the rear and the area paved marked for parking. Staff has some concern with how the proposed grading will impact the east elevation of the building and the existing brick retaining walls. A dumpster pad will be installed at the northeast corner of the parking lot and screened with a metal panel enclosure. A similar enclosure will be constructed at the northeast corner of the building to conceal the mechanical units. A 4'-0" metal post and metal mesh panels will be installed along the east and south sides of the parking lot as screening. While this is not a fencing type found in the district, it is industrial/commercial in character and compatible with the building.

Previous Reviews: This is the Commission's first review of this project.

Staff recommends approval of the demolition. Under the provisions of Section 30.930.7 (d) of the Historic Preservation Ordinance, the Commission shall approve requests for demolition when there are no feasible alternatives to the proposed demolition; the building is deemed not to be a contributing part of the historic character of the Old and Historic District; or the building has deteriorated beyond the point of feasible rehabilitation. Staff finds that this mid-20th to late century office and retail structure does not represent the pattern of commercial buildings found in the district and does not contribute to the architectural or historic character of the district.

Staff recommends approval of the project with conditions. The proposed rehabilitation general meets the Commission's Guidelines for the rehabilitation of commercial buildings on page 54 of the *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* as the proposal repairs and retains historic materials and features of the building. Staff has concerns about the impact of the proposed grading. Staff recommends that additional site drawings with grading details be submitted for staff review.

It is the assessment of staff that the application, with the conditions above, is consistent with the Standards for New Construction outlined in Section 30-930.7 (c) of the City Code, as well as with the Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines, specifically the page cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.