



Commission of Architectural Review

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| 5. COA-184528-2026 | Conceptual Review | Meeting Date: 5/22/2026 |
| Applicant/Petitioner | Syd Shoaf | |
| Project Description | Partial demolition and new addition to the side of an existing single-family building | |
| Project Location | | |
| Address: 2219 M Street | | |
| Historic District: Union Hill | | |
| <p>High-Level Details:</p> <p>The applicant proposes to demolish a small frame side addition on the east side of a vernacular frame cottage circa 1891.</p> <p>Two options for additions have been submitted for consideration:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. a one-story addition that references the form and materiality of traditional secondary structures commonly found in the district. 2. a larger two-story contemporary addition connected to the historic cottage by a recessed hyphen element. | | |
| Staff Recommendation | Conceptual Review | |
| Staff Contact | Alex Dandridge, Alex.Dandridge@RVA.gov, (804)646-6569 | |
| Previous Reviews | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 12/19/2023: The Commission approved an application to replace non-original wood fiber/ pressboard siding and damaged wood siding on visible elevations | |
| Staff Recommendations | <p>Staff finds that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff finds that the existing side addition reads as a secondary mass that evolved over time rather than as part of the original primary structure. As such, selective demolition of the secondary addition may be appropriate when accompanied by a preservation approach that prioritizes the retention and restoration of the historic primary cottage, and avoids the loss of historic fabric. | |

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For proposal #1, Staff recommends that any proposed siding utilize a different reveal, exposure, or detailing profile than the historic siding • Staff finds that Proposal #1 achieves a more balanced relationship between preservation and livability, and reinforces the historic hierarchy of the site while supporting the continued use and preservation of the primary structure in order to distinguish the new work from old, and consider using a lower pitch roof form, or shed roof, to further differentiate the addition from the primary mass of the building. • For proposal #2, Staff finds that careful attention should be given to massing, setbacks, and materials, to ensure that the addition remains visually subordinate and does not overwhelm the historic structure. <p>In addition, for the portions of the cottage proposed for retention:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff recommends that the extant windows be repaired and retained, extant trim, decorative moldings, and built-in gutter be retained and repaired, extant center chimney be repaired and retained, and that the siding be retained, or replaced with an appropriate horizontal siding. • Staff recommends that all repairs and preservation methods pertaining to the primary cottage be submitted with the final review. • Staff recommends that any alterations to the extant parged masonry wall and front porch be submitted with the final review. • Staff recommends that the applicant submit substantial photographic documentation of the existing conditions of the site, including its materials and any areas of deterioration, including interior documentation as it relates to the request. |
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Staff Analysis

| Surrounding Context | | |
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| <p>The subject property is located within the Union Hill Historic District, in a block that features late nineteenth-century frame buildings with Italianate and vernacular residential forms. Surrounding buildings are generally one-story and two-story frame structures with vertically proportioned windows, bracketed cornices, projecting bays, and full-width elevated porches.</p> <p>According to the Union Hill nomination form, the subject building at 2219 M Street is described as an 1891 one-story, two-bay, gable-roofed frame cottage building. Nearby buildings include larger two-story Italianate dwellings at 604–606 North 23rd Street, 608 North 23rd Street, 612–614 North 23rd Street, 614½ North 23rd Street, and 616 North 23rd Street, all of which feature decorative cornices, porches, and vertically proportioned façades. Despite the larger scale of many neighboring structures, the subject cottage contributes to the district through its modest scale and vernacular residential character.</p> | | |
| Guideline Reference | Reference Text | Analysis |
| The Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, pg. 4 | <p>1. <i>A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.</i></p> <p>2. <i>The historic character of a property shall be retained and</i></p> | <p><i>Historic Evolution & Partial Demolition Proposal</i></p> <p>Historic Sanborn maps indicate that the side addition portion of the structure evolved over time through multiple alterations and additions. The maps show changes in footprint, alignment, and surrounding building forms, indicating that the side mass developed incrementally and does not retain the same</p> |

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| | <p><i>preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.</i></p> <p><i>3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.</i></p> <p><i>4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be preserved.</i></p> | <p>level of integrity or significance as the original cottage structure.</p> <p>In contrast, the primary gable-front cottage form has remained consistent over time and continues to represent the most historically significant portion of the property.</p> <p><u>Staff finds that the existing side addition reads as a secondary mass that evolved over time rather than as part of the original primary structure. As such, selective demolition of the secondary addition may be appropriate when accompanied by a preservation approach that prioritizes the retention and restoration of the historic primary cottage, and avoids the loss of historic fabric.</u></p> <p><u>Staff further notes that thoughtful additions can support the long-term preservation and continued residential use of historic structures by improving livability and functionality.</u></p> |
| <p>New Construction, Residential Outbuildings, pg. 51</p> | <p><i>1. Additions should be subordinate in size to their main buildings and as inconspicuous as possible. Locating additions at the rear or on the least visible side of a building is preferred.</i></p> | <p><i>Addition</i></p> <p>The guidelines specify that any new addition should remain visually subordinate to the historic cottage and should clearly read as a later addition rather than as part of the original historic structure. Appropriate methods for achieving this include setbacks from the primary façade, differentiated materials or detailing, lower overall height, and simplified massing. Additions should avoid creating a false sense of historical development while remaining compatible with the scale and character of the district.</p> |
| | | <p><i>Proposal #1: One-Story Addition</i></p> <p>The one-Story Addition Proposal #1 consists of a one-story addition that references the scale, roof form, and material character of traditional accessory and secondary structures found throughout the district. The proposed gable form and residential proportions are compatible with the existing cottage while remaining subordinate in height and scale. Staff finds that the reduced height of the addition is favorable, as it allows the historic cottage to remain the visually dominant element on the site.</p> <p>While the proposal references historic forms and materials, the addition should still maintain sufficient differentiation from the original structure.</p> <p><u>For proposal #1, Staff recommends that any proposed siding utilize a different reveal, exposure, or detailing profile than the historic siding in order to distinguish the new work from old, and consider using a lower pitch roof form, or shed roof, to further differentiate the addition from the primary mass of the building.</u></p> <p><i>Proposal #2: Two-Story Contemporary Addition</i></p> <p>Proposal #2 features a substantially larger two-story addition expressed in a contemporary architectural language and connected to the historic cottage through a recessed hyphen element. Staff finds that</p> |

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| | | <p>the use of a hyphen successfully creates visual separation between the historic building and the new addition and clearly establishes the addition as later construction. The proposal also avoids creating a false sense of historical development, as the contemporary design is clearly identifiable as new work. Additionally, the flat roof of the proposed two-story addition replicates the form of the historic roof proposed to be replaced.</p> <p>However, the addition introduces a significantly larger mass adjacent to the modest historic cottage. Although the addition is set back and does not project forward or stand proud of the historic structure, its overall scale and height may challenge the perception of the historic cottage as the primary form on the site.</p> <p><u>For proposal #2, Staff finds that careful attention should be given to massing, setbacks, and materials, to ensure that the addition remains visually subordinate and does not overwhelm the historic structure.</u></p> |
| <p>The Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, pg. 4</p> | <p><i>9. New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.</i></p> | <p><i>Conceptual Review</i></p> <p>At the conceptual level, both proposals present approaches that address the addition as clearly new construction while seeking to preserve the primary historic cottage. Proposal #1 emphasizes compatibility through scale and traditional form, while Proposal #2 emphasizes differentiation through contemporary design and separation of masses.</p> |
| | | <p>While both proposals present viable conceptual approaches for accommodating an addition to the historic cottage, staff finds Proposal #1 to be the more appropriate approach within the context of the district and the existing historic resource. The one-story addition maintains a clearly subordinate relationship to the historic cottage through its reduced height, smaller scale, and simplified massing, allowing the original structure to remain the dominant feature on the site. The proposal references traditional forms and roof shapes commonly found in secondary and accessory structures throughout the district, while still allowing opportunities for differentiation between historic and new construction through material detailing.</p> <p>By contrast, although Proposal #2 successfully differentiates itself as contemporary construction and avoids creating a false sense of history, its substantially larger scale risks overwhelming the modest historic cottage despite the use of setbacks and a connecting hyphen.</p> <p><u>Staff finds that Proposal #1 achieves a more balanced relationship between preservation and livability, and reinforces the historic hierarchy of the site while supporting the continued use and preservation of the primary structure.</u></p> |

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| <p>SOI Standards for Rehabilitation, pg. 4</p> | <p><i>2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.</i></p> | <p>With the removal of non-original, yet portion of the building that contributes to the history of development of the site, staff finds that the sensitive rehabilitation of the main cottage be prioritized. <u>Staff recommends that the extant windows be repaired and retained, extant trim, decorative moldings, and built-in gutter be retained and repaired, extant center chimney be repaired and retained, and that the siding be retained, or replaced with an appropriate horizontal siding. Staff recommends that all repairs and preservation methods pertaining to the primary cottage be submitted with the final review.</u></p> <p>In front of the extant cottage, there is a parged masonry wall in front of a masonry front porch with a concrete floor. On a site visit, staff observed that poor drainage has caused the porch floor to sag and deteriorated, and there is biological growth that indicates substantial moisture retention. <u>Staff recommends that any alterations to the extant parged masonry wall and front porch be submitted with the final review.</u></p> <p>Staff recommends that the applicant submit substantial photographic documentation of the <u>existing conditions of the site, including it materials and any areas of deterioration, including interior documentation as it relates to the request.</u></p> |
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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.

Figures



Figure 1: Sanborn Map, 1905

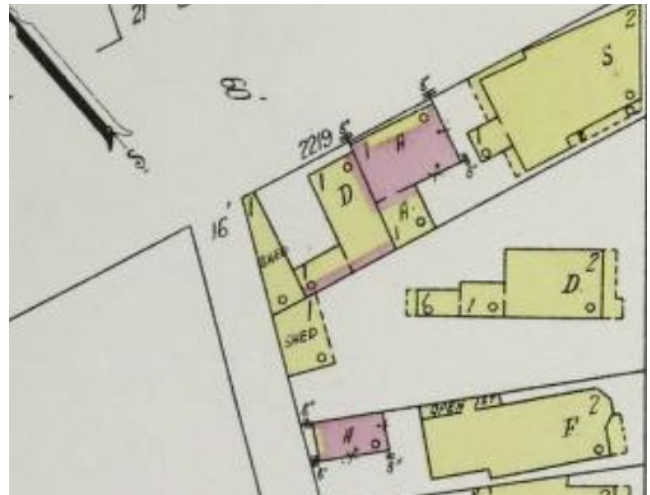


Figure 2: Sanborn Map, 1925



Figure 3. 2219 M Street 1950s.



Figure 4. 2219 M Street, 2025.