

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
April 25, 2017, Meeting**

14. **COA-015024-2017** (D. Kleymen)

**2310-2310 ½ Venable Street
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

Project Description:

Construct a new duplex.

Staff Contact:

M. Pitts

The applicant requests conceptual review and comment on the construction of a duplex on a vacant lot mid-block in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. The residential character of the north side of Venable Street is primarily 2-story three bay brick Italianate structures set on raised foundations with full façade front porches. The south side of Venable Street is developed with two large 2-story brick structures of attached single family dwellings. Each single family home has three bays, many with 2 bay front porch, and seven of the homes have false mansard roofs.

The applicant is proposing to construct an Italianate inspired duplex of frame construction. The structure will be approximately 24'-8" in height and 20' in width and will be clad in fiber cement lap siding. The façade is organized in three bays with two adjacent front doors in the outer bay. The applicant is proposing a full façade front porch with a hipped membrane roof and fiberglass doric columns. The structure will have a bracketed cornice and a shed roof clad in membrane. The applicant is proposing to install PVC windows with simulated divided lites, and all visible windows will have a 2/2 configuration. At the rear of the structure, the applicant is proposing a two story porch constructed of wood.

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. Commission staff reviewed the project through the lens of the "Standards for New Construction: Residential" on pages 44 and 45 of the *Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* utilizing the checklist below.

S=satisfies

D=does not satisfy

NA=not applicable

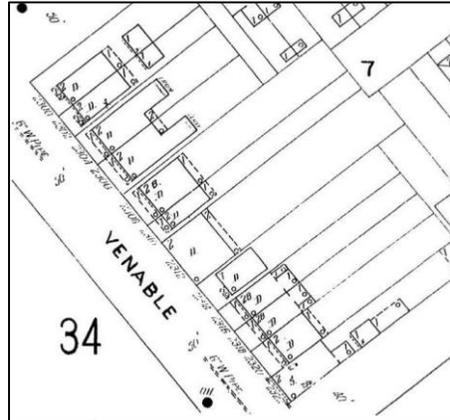
S **D** **NA**

New infill construction should respect the prevailing front and side yard setback patterns in the surrounding district

The applicant is proposing to align the structure with the property to the west. This setback is consisted with the setback pattern prevalent in the district.

Where the adjoining buildings have different setbacks, the setback for the new building should be based on the historical pattern for the block

The setback of the building to the west is consistent with the historical pattern for the block. The proposed structure matches this setback.



1905 Sanborn Map for the Subject Block

New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site

The structure addresses Venable Street.

New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the district. Form refers to the combination of massing, size, symmetry, proportions, projections and roof shapes that lend identity to a building.

The project is of a similar scale to the single family homes in the area. The applicant has incorporated the full façade porch, the shed roof with a bracketed cornice, and the three bay organization of the façade that characterize the neighboring development. Staff has concerns that the inclusion of two front doors is not a building form found in the district.

New construction should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps.

The new construction incorporates human-scale elements including a cornice and front porch.

New construction should respect the typical height of surrounding buildings

The heights of structures on the subject block vary from 20 to 30 feet. The proposed structure is consistent in height with the two story structures on the south side of the street.

New construction should respect the typical width, organization of bays, vertical alignment and symmetry of surrounding buildings.

The project is of similar width to single family homes on the block. Staff has concerns that the two front doors disrupt the symmetry of the façade. Buildings with two adjacent front doors are not characteristic of the Union Hill Old and Historic District. When two front doors are present on structures such as in 1920 Princess Anne Avenue, they are grouped in one element such as in an alcove through an arched opening and are balanced on the façade with a prominent element such as a projecting bay. Staff recommends the applicant remove the 2nd front door or consider an alternative design to incorporate two front doors that is more consistent with building forms found in the district.

The size, proportion, and spacing patterns of doors and window openings should be compatible with patterns established in the district.

The proposed windows are of typical size, proportion, and spacing patterns found in the district. Though transom windows are not a typical windows form found in the district, the proposed windows will not be visible from the public right way. Staff recommends the applicant consider alternative door placement as noted above as the presence of adjacent front doors on a single structure is not a building form found in the district.

Porch and cornice heights should be compatible with adjacent buildings

While the proposed porch and cornice heights do not align with the adjacent structures, the heights are consistent with those of the structures across the street and are compatible with the development in the block which varies in height

Materials used in new construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district. Vinyl, asphalt, and aluminum siding are not permitted.

The proposed construction will use smooth, unbeaded fiber cement siding; fiberglass doors; PVC windows with simulated divided lites; and membrane roofing. Staff finds the materials are compatible with the frame structures found in the district. As the subject block is predominantly brick, the Commission may wish to consider if brick is a more appropriate material for the structure.

The following items will need to be included for final review:

1. Mechanical equipment and trash locations on the site plan.