

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW  
STAFF REPORT  
December 19, 2017 Meeting**

10. **COA-027043-2017** (M. Jarreau)

**2825 M Street  
Church Hill North Old and Historic District**

**Project Description:**

**Construct a duplex.**

**Staff Contact:**

**M. Pitts**

The applicant requests approval to construct two attached single family dwellings in the Church Hill North Old and Historic District. The proposed structure will be located on a vacant corner lot at the intersection of North 29<sup>th</sup> Street and M Street. The subject blocks of M Street and North 29<sup>th</sup> Streets have lost most of their historic structures. The remaining historic structure on the south side of the 2800 block of M Street is a single story, 3-bay Italianate structure, and the remainder of this side of the subject block has been infilled with new 2-story residential frame buildings. On the north side of M Street, there are a public park and water towers. The subject block of North 29<sup>th</sup> street is primarily developed with 2 to 2 ½ story, 2 and 3 bay, new single family and attached single family frame homes. The limited historic structures on the block include a 2-story Greek revival frame structure with a side gable roof. The structure immediately across North 29<sup>th</sup> Street is a 1945, 1 ½ story, brick, Cape Cod cottage. The structures in the immediate area have a variety of roof forms and bay configurations.

The applicant proposes to construct two attached 2 ½-story, 3-bay frame dwellings that are contemporary adaptations of the Greek Revival dwellings found throughout the district. The structure will be set on a low, parged concrete foundation and will be clad in fiber cement siding. Each dwelling will have a 3-bay façade and a recessed front entry. The applicant is proposing a side gable roof to be clad in standing seam metal to be painted Black Fox (SW7020) on the front slope and w architectural shingles on the rear slope. The applicant is proposing to include two, front gable dormers and a two story rear porch with a shed roof on each dwelling. The windows are proposed to be primarily 2/2 composite windows.

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**  
     

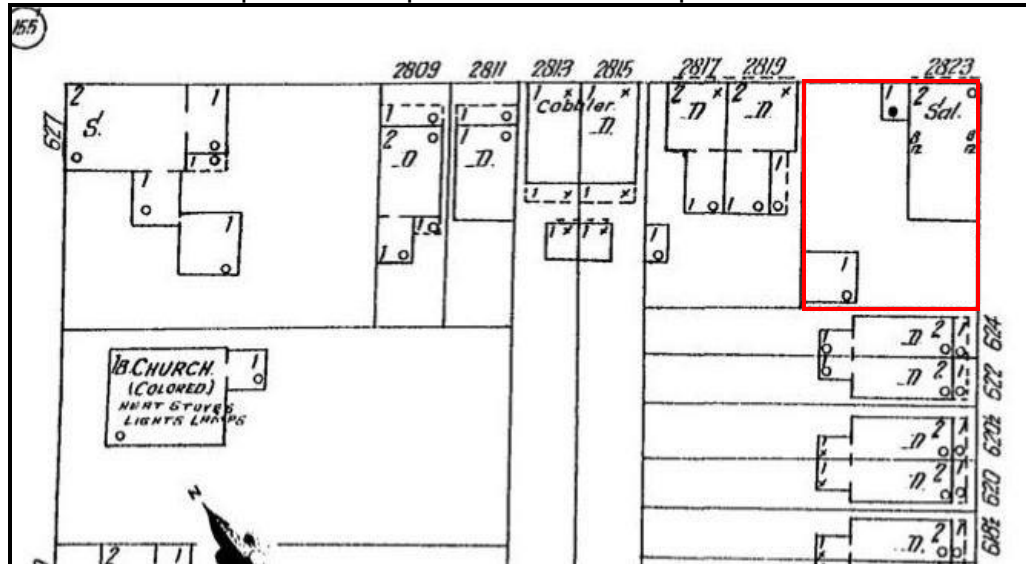
**New infill construction should respect the prevailing front and side yard setback patterns in the surrounding district**

The applicant has not provided a context site plan.

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

The subject lot was developed with a structure which sited on the property lines at the corner of North 29<sup>th</sup> Street and M Street. The structures immediately adjacent on M Street were built with no front yard setbacks. The double houses which were built on North 29<sup>th</sup> had consistent front yard and side yard setbacks. The applicant has not provided a context site plan to compare to the historic pattern.



1905 Sanborn Map

**New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site**

The structure addresses North 29<sup>th</sup> Street which is the primary street frontage. The proposed project is located on a corner lot and interacts with M Street through the presence of windows on the side elevation. The Commission may wish to encourage additional architectural elements as recommended by the Commission's Guidelines for Corner Properties (pg. 48) be included on this side elevation as M Street is a prominent street bordering the site.

**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 gable roofed, 2 ½ story, 3-bay massing is a form found throughout the Church Hill North district. The proposed dwellings are located on block which was historically characterized by double homes. The limited remaining historic fabric on the subject blocks includes Greek Revival architecture of which the proposed structure draws inspiration. While projecting front porches are characteristic of the district and of the historic and new homes on the subject blocks, recessed entries such as the one proposed can be found on homes of a similar style including the Greek Revival double house at 621-623 North 30<sup>th</sup> Street.

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

The proposed project incorporates human-scale elements including a cornice, and front steps as part of the project. The Guidelines encourage human scale elements to be included on the secondary, corner elevation for corner properties. The Commission may wish to consider if additional architectural elements should be incorporated into the M Street elevation of the structure.

**New construction should respect the typical height of surrounding buildings**

The structure is proposed to be 34' at the ridge. The applicant has not provided a dimensioned context elevation to compare the height with the surrounding structures. The typical height of the surrounding buildings is 2 to 2 ½ stories though the new construction is consistently taller than the historic structures. The proposed 2 ½ story structure is in keeping with the typical height of the buildings on the surrounding blocks.

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

The proposed project does maintain the vertical alignment and the symmetry of the surrounding buildings. The three bay façade is characteristic of the district. The subject double house is, at 64', considerably wider than the double houses found on the subject block. The width of each dwelling is similar to that of the larger Greek Revival homes found in neighboring blocks including 510 North 29<sup>th</sup> Street.

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

The proposed windows on the façade are vertically aligned and symmetrically placed which is consistent with patterns in the district. As the Commission's Guidelines for Corner Properties note that windows and doors on the corner elevations should be organized following the principals of the primary elevation to include being aligned vertically, staff recommends the windows on the M Street Elevation should not include the proposed transom window as it is not a window form found in the district.

**Porch and cornice heights should be compatible with adjacent buildings**

As a dimensioned context elevation has not been provided, staff is unable to determine the compatibility of the porch and cornice heights with the adjacent structure. The Commission's Guidelines for Corner Properties note that 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 and that heights should be kept to a level that will enhance, not detract, from the pedestrian experience. Though it appears the applicant is proposing an appropriate foundation height, staff recommends dimensions of the foundation height be provided.

**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 utilizes fiber cement siding and trim; composite windows, standing seam metal, architectural shingles, steel railings, wood decking and railings, and a brick foundation. The materials are compatible with frame structures found in the district. As the rear of the structure is visible from the public right of way, the Commission may wish to consider if it would be more appropriate for the entire roof to be clad in standing seam metal.

The following items will need to be included for final review (please refer to the Commission's New Construction Checklist and Required Dimensions document for additional details):

1. Fully dimensioned elevations
2. Roof plan
3. List of windows and doors to include size, material, and design
4. Description of all materials (attach specification sheets if necessary)
5. Site plan to include parking, trash, and mechanical equipment locations
6. Dimensioned context elevation and site plans.
7. Statement of how the *Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* informed the proposed work.