COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
March 28, 2017 Meeting

17. CAR No. 17-042 (C. & M. McCalla) **2900 East Leigh Street**
Church Hill North Old and Historic District

Project Description: **Construct a new single family dwelling.**

Staff Contact: **M. Pitts**

The applicant requests conceptual review and comment on the construction of a single family dwelling on a vacant lot at the corner of North 29th Street and East Leigh Street in the Church Hill North Old and Historic District.

The residential character of the north side of the subject block of East Leigh consists of two 4-bay, 2 story Greek Revival double houses with false mansard roofs and a new, 2 ½ story, Italianate inspired, single family dwelling. Much of the property on the south side of the subject block of East Leigh is vacant excluding a two story, 3-bay brick structure and 2-story frame Italianate structure which fronts North 29th. At the west corner of the North 29th and East Leigh Streets is a 1 ½ story, concrete block building with a gable roof. At the north corner, the property is developed with a 2 ½ story, Queen Anne mixed use structure clad in stone with a false mansard roof and a commercial storefront on the first floor.

The applicant is proposing to construct a 2 ½ story home to address East Leigh Street. The front mass of the home will have a metal clad side gable roof and be clad in fiber cement lap siding in a dark grey color. The applicant is proposing a full façade front porch with a flat roof that will wrap from the front to the rear of the structure. On the façade, the applicant proposes three evenly spaced windows on the second story and a triple window and a full lite door with a transom above on the first story. The front entry will be recessed and emphasized through the use of unpainted wood siding. On the side elevation, the applicant proposes vertically aligned windows of varying widths. At the rear, the applicant is proposing a dormer with French doors to access a rooftop deck. The applicant is proposing a two story flat roof mass projecting from the rear of the gable roof structure which will be setback from the East Leigh Street building face. This element will be clad in fiber cement panels. All railings are proposed to be cable wiring or metal horizontal railings. The small shed is proposed for the rear of the property and a privacy fence is proposed for the rear yard.

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 for staff to determine the compatibility of the 3 foot setback.

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

The building is located on the corner with only one adjoining building.

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

The structure addresses East Leigh Street. Historically, development at this corner has addressed East Leigh 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 double homes and the new construction on the block. The proposed side gable roof form is an element that can be found on homes in the district including 510 North 29th Street which is on the adjacent block. The applicant has incorporated other elements that characterize development in the district including a 3-bay façade composition, a full façade front porch, and a recessed rear portion.

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

The proposed project incorporates human-scale elements including an entrance portico, a side porch, 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 applicant has included a side porch and an extension of the front porch to the side elevation.

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

The typical heights of the surrounding buildings are 2 to 2 ½ stories. The cornice of the proposed structure will align with the adjacent structure and the height at the ridge is compatible with taller residential structures in the neighborhood.

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

The project is of similar width to the adjacent double houses on the block. The proposed project does maintain the vertical alignment and the symmetry of the surrounding buildings.

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

The typically fenestration pattern includes ranked windows. Though the majority of openings on the façade are ranked windows, staff recommends an additional window be added to the second story of the façade to create ranked triple windows on the façade. 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. The applicant has followed this guideline by including ranked windows on the side and highly visible rear elevations.

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

The porch and cornice heights appear to be compatible though dimensions have not been provided on the context elevation.

☒ ☐ ☐ **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 fiber cement siding and panels, wood siding, a metal roof, casement windows, and cable wiring or metal horizontal railings. Staff finds the materials are compatible with the frame structures found in the district.

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

1. Fully dimensioned elevations
2. Vertical dimensions on the context elevations to include cornice, porch and roof ridge heights.
3. A dimensioned context site plan.
4. Mechanical equipment and trash locations.
5. List of windows and doors, including size, materials, and design.
6. Detailed material description for all elements including primary roof, porch roof, stairs, decking, foundation, and fence.
7. Details including site plan, elevations, and materials for the proposed shed.