



Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia



Commission of Architectural Review

10. COA-144129-2024	Final Review	Meeting Date: 5/28/2024
Applicant/Petitioner	Will Gillette, Baker Development Resources	
Project Description	Construct four single family dwellings in groups of two.	
Project Location		
Address: 810-812 N. 22 nd Street		
Historic District: Union Hill		
<p>High-Level Details:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant proposes to construct 4 buildings as two pairs on vacant corner lots. The new construction will be located at the corner of Burton Street and 22nd Street. • The townhomes will be three stories tall, • The new construction will be frame with full-width front porches. • The land is currently vacant. 		
Staff Recommendation	Deferral	
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, alex.dandridge@rva.gov , (804) 646-6569	
Previous Reviews	<p>This application was reviewed at the April 2024 meeting of the Commission. The Commission was supportive of the first two stories of the proposed buildings but was not in support of the third-floor setbacks. Commissioners believed that the applicant should embrace a full three stories in this location. They recommended that the applicant look at existing three-story residential buildings nearby to inform the design. While this question was raised, the appropriateness of having three story buildings along Burton Street was raised and two-stories recommended; however, there was not a clear conclusion to the conversation as it related to the buildings fronting 22nd Street. At conceptual this grouping of buildings was oriented towards Burton Street and not 22nd.</p> <p>The Commission conceptually reviewed this application at the November 2023 meeting. Comments from Commissioners included asking the applicant to consider the height of the proposed three-story buildings. Some Commissioners expressed that the height of the building would be less of a concern if there was more diversity in architectural style of the new construction. An English basement form was suggested to accomplish the desired space while limiting the overall height. They asked that the 2300 block of Venable be studied as a good example of uniform buildings that featured pedestrian scale elements while still appearing to be distinct from one another. The Commission asked that the buildings have porches and stoops. The</p>	

	massing was not discussed in length, but it was recommended that the individual units could be in groupings of two rather than two and three.
Staff Recommendations	<p>Staff recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed drawings of the cornice and corner board detail be submitted for Administrative Review. • Applicant reduce the height of the units to better reference the typical height of residential buildings on the subject block or incorporate an English basement as typically seen in the few three-story residential buildings. • Information on hardscaping for sidewalks, alleys, and any parking pads, including materiality and dimension be submitted for Administrative Review. • Details on any proposed walls or fences be submitted for Administrative Review • The decorative cornice features extend the full length of the three-story portion of the Burton Street elevation for greater articulation of this elevation.

Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
Standards For New Construction, page 46	<i>All new residential and commercial construction, whether in the form of additions or entire buildings should be compatible with the historic features that characterize the setting and context. To protect the context of the surrounding historic district, new construction should reference the materials, features, size, scale, proportions, and massing of the existing historic buildings in its setting.</i>	<p>The proposed buildings will be constructed on vacant corner lots. There is an altered CMU, mid-century building, new construction, and a historic building adjacent to the site on 22nd Street. These three buildings are two-stories in height.</p> <p>The new construction will feature architectural elements that are like other Italianate Style buildings in the district, including: a decorative cornice and brackets, vertically aligned windows, and full width, covered front porches.</p> <p>Since the last review, the applicant has revised the elevations to eliminate the third-floor setbacks from the facades. The revised elevations are three-stories on the façade and two-stories on the rear with a walk out. While most residential Italianate style buildings are two story in the district, there are examples of Greek Revival and Vernacular Style buildings in the immediate area that are three stories tall and have raised foundations.</p> <p>The new buildings will be 36'8" tall.</p> <p>Above the third-story windows, there will be a decorative cornice. Staff finds that the proportions of the cornice appear to be incorrect as the brackets should extend the full depth of the cornice. <u>Staff recommends that detailed drawings of the cornice and corner board detail be submitted for Administrative Review.</u></p>
Standards For New Construction: Siting, page 46	<i>2. New residential infill construction should respect the prevailing front and side yard setback patterns of the surrounding block. The minimum</i>	The setbacks of the new buildings will be approximately 11'9" from the facade of the building to the sidewalk. This setback is like the setback of other dwellings in the district and reinforces the street wall.

	<i>setbacks evident in most districts reinforce the traditional street wall.</i>	
Standards For New Construction: Form, page 46	<i>1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district. Building form refers to the specific combination of massing, size, symmetry, proportions, projections, and roof shapes that lend identity to a building.</i>	<p><i>Massing:</i> The massing of the units appears to be narrower and taller than what is typically seen on the subject block. They will be approximately 14'-8" wide. The building directly adjacent to the corner of 22nd Street has an approximately 6'x13' side projection that will face Burton Street.</p> <p><i>Symmetry:</i> The new construction is generally symmetrical; however, the pair of buildings directly adjacent to the corner of 22nd street and Burton Street will have roof features that wraps the corner.</p> <p><i>Roof shapes:</i> The buildings will have flat roofs with hipped, standing seam metal roofs over the front porches.</p>
Standards For New Construction: Form, page 46	<i>2. New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic, residential construction in the district.</i>	The plans have been revised to include full-width front porches that address the front sidewalk and street.
Standards for New Construction: Height, Width, Proportion & Massing, page 47	<p><i>1. New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.</i></p> <p><i>2. New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in surrounding historic districts. New designs that call for wide massing should look to the project's local district for precedent. For example, full-block-long row house compositions are rare in Richmond. New residential buildings that occupy more than one third of a block face should still employ bays as an organizational device, but the new building should read as a single piece of architecture.</i></p> <p><i>3. The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i></p>	While there are a few larger, taller masonry buildings in the immediate area, they are institutional/religious buildings, most residential buildings in the immediate area are two-stories in height. The proposed buildings will be three-stories tall (36'-8") with setback third floors on the rear. From the last review, the issue of height in this location was not resolved. <u>Staff recommends that the applicant reduce the height of the units to better reference the typical height of residential buildings on the subject block or incorporate an English basement as typically seen in the few three-story residential buildings.</u>
Standards for New Construction: Materials & Colors, page 47	<i>2. Materials used in new residential construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.</i>	<p>The new construction will be clad in horizontal siding, which generally resembles other types of horizontal siding found within the district.</p> <p>Porch roofs will be standing seam metal. Windows will be aluminum clad wood.</p> <p>The trim will be a composite material. Porches and decking will be wood. The foundation will be parged masonry.</p>

		Staff finds that the selected materials are appropriate for the district.
Standards For New Construction: Doors and Windows, page 56	<i>2. The size, proportion and spacing patterns of door and window openings on free-standing new construction should be compatible with patterns established in the district.</i>	The building will have single windows that are vertically aligned. The three, closely spaced, small windows on the third story of the right and left elevations are atypical for the district and will be highly visible from the public right of way.
Site improvements: Sidewalks & Curbs, page 76	<p><i>4. Brick or granite pavers are the most appropriate choice in most Old and Historic Districts.</i></p> <p><i>5. Existing granite curbing should be retained whenever possible.</i></p> <p><i>6. Sidewalk design should allow for the installation of appropriate urban landscaping.</i></p>	<u>Staff recommends that information on hardscaping for sidewalks, alleys, and any parking pads, including materiality and dimension be submitted for Administrative Review.</u> Appropriate paving for the Union Hill City Old and Historic District includes brick pavers, granite pavers, and gravel.
Standards for New Construction, Residential, Fences & Walls, pg. 51	<p><i>1. Fence, wall, and gate designs should reflect the scale of the historic structures they surround, as well as the character of nearby fences, walls, and gates.</i></p> <p><i>2. Fence, wall, or gate materials should relate to building materials commonly found in the neighborhood.</i></p> <p><i>3. Privacy fences along the side and rear of a property should be constructed of wood of an appropriate design. Privacy fences are not appropriate in front of a historic building.</i></p>	No information was given on any walls or fences that will be installed in association with the new construction. <u>Staff recommends that details on any proposed walls or fences be submitted for Administrative Review.</u> Walls and curbing will require review by the Commission, whereas wooden fences may be administratively approved if in compliance with the Commission's adopted Administrative Approval guidelines.
Standards for New Construction: Corner Properties - Residential	<p><i>1. Secondary elevations of corner properties should reference massing like other corner locations in the historic district.</i></p> <p><i>2. The material used in the primary elevation should be continued along the second, corner elevation.</i></p> <p><i>4. Windows and doors on the secondary, corner elevation should be organized following the principles of the primary elevation: windows should be proportioned appropriately, aligned vertically, and arranged as though designing a primary elevation.</i></p>	To address the corner, the building referenced as Plan Type "D" located on lot 17 will have a projecting bay on the Burton Street elevation. The decorative cornice turns the corner and is present on the projecting bay where it terminates into the Burton Street elevation. <u>Staff recommends that the decorative cornice features extend the full length of the three-story portion of the Burton Street elevation for greater articulation of this elevation.</u>

5. For residential corner properties, we strongly encourage the use of architectural elements that are typical of residential corner properties in Richmond's historic districts: porches that turn from primary to secondary elevations, corner towers, projecting bay windows, side entrances (including porticos, and shed roofs, where appropriate), side porches, lighting related to that on the primary elevation, and other similar treatments that treat the secondary corner elevation as an architecturally important elevation.

Figures

Figure 1. View looking northeast on Venable Street.



Figure 2. Religious building at the corner of N. 21st Street and Venable Street.



Figure 3. Looking north on Venable Street at the corner of N. 22nd Street.

Figure 4. Vacant lot between Venable Street and Burton Street.



Figure 5. Vacant lot at the intersection of N. 22nd. Street and Burton Street.



Figure 6. View looking southeast from the intersection of N. 22nd Street and Burton Street.



Figure 7. 1905 Sanborn Map. 2111-2119 Venable Street features mostly frame, two story buildings with front porches. All were demolished between the 1970's-1990's. As of 1905, there were not any buildings on the corner of Burton Street and 22nd Street that fronted on Burton Street.

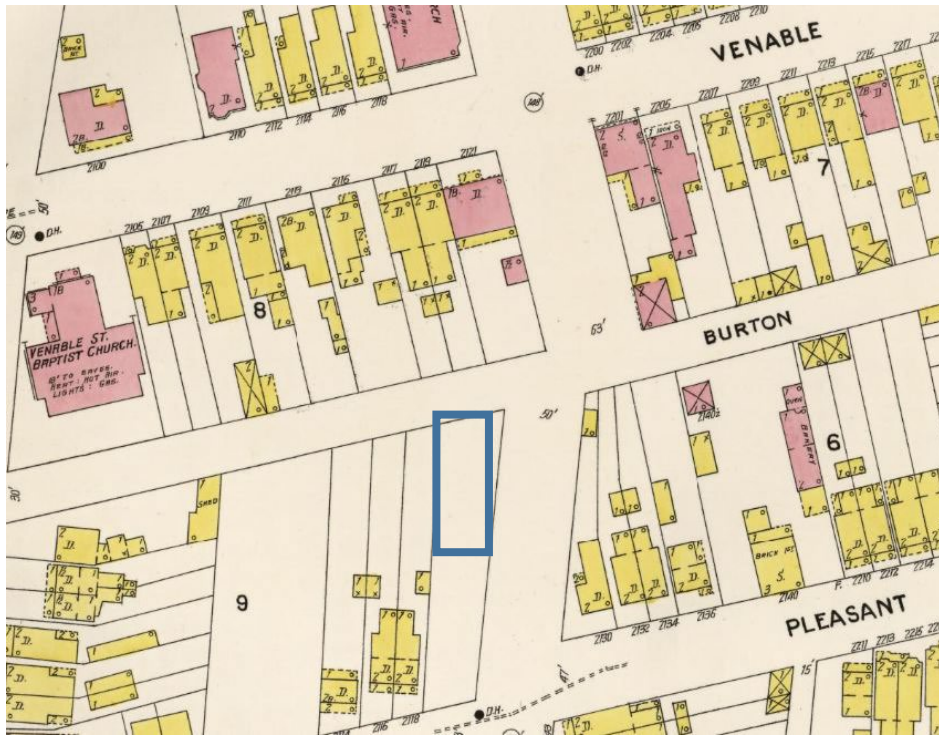


Figure 8. Subject block (2111-2119 Venable) in historic configuration, built-out. Photographs -1955-1977. 2115 Venable picture below may not be the original building on that site.



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