

**10. COA-058275-2019**

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

August 27<sup>th</sup>, 2019

PROPERTY ADDRESS

420 North 26<sup>th</sup> Street

DISTRICT

Church Hill North

Commission of  
Architectural Review

STAFF REPORT



APPLICANT

K. Johnson

STAFF CONTACT

C. Jones

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

**Rehabilitate an existing one-story detached, single-family residence including partial demolition and construct a rear addition; construct a new detached, two-story single-family residence.**

**PROJECT DETAILS – 420 North 26<sup>th</sup> Street**

- The applicant proposes to demolish a ca. 1968 side addition and construct a new rear addition. The applicant also proposes to rehabilitate the existing building with new roofing, siding, doors, porch supports, and a new porch railing.

**PROJECT DETAILS – 418 North 26<sup>th</sup> Street**

The demolition of the side addition at 420 North 26<sup>th</sup> Street will allow the applicant to split the lot and create a new lot at 418 North 26<sup>th</sup> Street for new construction. This lot split and new construction will be subject to a special use permit (SUP). Details of the proposed new construction include:

- A single-family, detached residence, 2 ½ stories in height, 3 bays wide with a tall side-gable roof and a 1-story, full-width porch. Other details include two front gable dormer windows, a central doorway, and paired and single 2/2 windows and casement windows with transoms.
- Proposed materials include: a metal and TPO roof, lap siding, and a brick and CMU foundation.



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**CONCEPTUAL REVIEW**

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” on pages 44, and 46-56 of the Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines utilizing the Guidelines presented below.

**PREVIOUS REVIEWS**

The Commission has not previously reviewed this application.

**SURROUNDING CONTEXT**

The surrounding area is primarily residential in character. The majority of the residences are either free-standing single-family or semi-attached buildings. The majority of the residences use a common language of 3 bays in width, 2 stories in height, with a 1-story, full-width porch and a side-hall plan. Low-pitched, side-gable roofs are

common though there is a false mansard with shed roof configuration at 417-419 N. 26<sup>th</sup> Street. Another architectural outlier on the block is the adjacent house at 416 N. 26<sup>th</sup> Street which features a two-story projecting bay and a one-bay porch. The residential buildings on this block have varied setbacks and heights, though all are two-stories. Due to the slope of the street, a number are set back from the front lot line and sit on a rise. Materials in the surrounding area vary, though most residences are either brick or wood-frame with traditional details such as decorative columns and bracketed and paneled cornice lines.

#### STAFF COMMENTS

Staff recommends the following for the existing building:

- the applicant inset the rear addition from the existing building, the width of a corner-board
- the applicant use a material other than PVC for the decorative features, as PVC cannot accurately replicate historic materials
- the applicant consider a narrower column, as the 8x8 could be too wide for the porch height
- the applicant reinstate the original window sizes based on any physical evidence found during the demolition phase of the project
- the applicant install a wood Richmond rail, based on historic photos of the building

Staff recommends the following for the new construction:

- the applicant redesign the roof form to remove the dormers and to include a shallow side-gable with a rear shed roof so that it is in keeping with the roof forms found in the surrounding area
- the applicant reconsider the cornice line detail to create a more proportional façade
- simplify the material selection, and the window pattern, including the use of 1/1 windows to simplify the overall design
- the applicant use a more consistent window pattern and size on the visible elevations
- the applicant use a lower-profile gutter, such as a ½ round gutter and a round downspout
- the applicant use a door that is in keeping with surrounding architectural styles
- the metal roof be flat lock or a dark membrane

Staff recommends the applicant submit for final review:

- Door and window schedule
- A dimensioned context elevation for final review that includes the porch floor height, cornice line height and roof ridge height

#### STAFF ANALYSIS – 420 North 26<sup>th</sup> Street, Demolition, Addition, Rehabilitation

Standards for Demolition, Appendix

*According to Sec. 30-930.7(d) of the Historic Preservation Ordinance: The commission of architectural review shall not issue a certificate of appropriateness for demolition of any building or structure within an old and historic district unless the applicant can show that there are no feasible alternatives to demolition. The demolition of historic buildings and elements in old and historic districts is strongly discouraged. The demolition of any building deemed by the commission to not be a part of the historic character of an old and historic district shall be permitted. The demolition of any building that has deteriorated beyond the point of being feasibly rehabilitated is permissible, where the applicant can satisfy the commission as to the infeasibility of rehabilitation. The commission may adopt additional demolition standards for the review of*

The applicant proposes to demolish a ca. 1968, 14x16 feet (224 SF) addition on the building. Staff believes the addition does not contribute to the overall historic character of the building or of the surrounding district. Staff also finds the addition detracts from the historic form of the building, which was originally rectangular. As such, staff recommends approval of the request to demolish the side addition.

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*certificates of appropriateness applications to supplement these standards.*

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Standards for New Construction, Siting, pg. 46

*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.*

The applicant proposes to construct a new rear addition that will be 20 feet long and 20 feet wide (400 SF). The addition will be flush with the existing building on the left side and inset 3'-3" on the right side. Staff finds the proposed addition will be minimally visible as it is located at the rear and there is not an alley behind the existing building. Staff believes the left elevation will be visible and recommends that the applicant inset the addition the width of a corner-board.

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Standards for New Construction, Form, pg. 46

*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. Form is greatly influenced by the architectural style of a given structure.*

Staff finds the demolition of the side addition and the construction of a rear addition will convert the building from an L-shape to a mostly rectangular building. Staff finds a rectangular building is more in keeping with the original shape of the building and those found in the surrounding area.

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*2. New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic residential construction in the district.*

Staff finds the proposed one-story rear addition maintains the human scale of the existing building and surrounding area.

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Standards for New Construction, Height, Width, Proportion, and Massing, pg. 47

*1. New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.*

The proposed addition is one story in height, which is in keeping with the existing building and a story shorter than the surrounding buildings.

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*2. New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in surrounding historic districts.*

The proposed windows are horizontally aligned on all elevations.

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Standards for Rehabilitation, pg. 5

*6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. When the severity of deterioration requires replacement or a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical or pictorial evidence.*

The applicant proposes to use a black metal roof for the front slope and a white TPO membrane on the rear, non-visible slope, lap siding in pearl grey for the exterior of the building, and horizontal lattice between the brick piers. Other materials include 8x8 PVC columns, ½ lite fiberglass door, PVC crown moulding, aluminum clad 2/2 windows with SDLs, and composite decking and fascia boards. In general staff finds this is keeping with the Guidelines for Rehabilitation, though staff recommends against the use of PVC decorative features as the material cannot accurately replicate historic materials. Staff also recommends that the applicant consider a

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Standards for New Construction, Doors & Windows, pg. 49	<p><i>1. The size, proportion and spacing patterns of door and window openings on a new addition should follow patterns established by the original building.</i></p> <p><i>2. The architectural appearance of original windows should be used as models for new windows. Changes in the sash, depth or reveal, muntin configuration, frame or glazing is strongly discouraged.</i></p>	<p>narrower column as the 8x8 could be too wide for the porch height.</p> <p>The applicant proposes to use 2/2 windows on the front, side, and rear elevations. Staff was unable to find photographic documentation of 2/2 windows and recommends the applicant use a 1/1 window. Though a window schedule has not been provided, it appears the applicant proposes to increase the window size on the façade. Staff has found photographic evidence of larger windows and recommends approval of reinstating the original window sizes based on any physical evidence found during the demolition phase of the project. Staff also recommends the applicant submit a window and door schedule for final review.</p>
Porches and Porch Details, pg. 49	<p><i>2. When designing a new railing for a new infill building, or for an existing building which has lost its railing and for which no documentary or physical evidence survives, the balusters in the traditional Richmond rail are generally rectangular in section (with the narrow dimension facing the street) or square. The baluster is fitted into the recess in the top rail and a sloped bottom rail.</i></p>	<p>The applicant proposes to use aluminum or wood Richmond rail. Staff recommends the applicant utilize a wood Richmond rail based on historic photos of the building.</p>

**STAFF ANALYSIS – 418 North 26<sup>th</sup> Street (Proposed), New Construction**

Standards for New Construction, Siting, pg. 46	<p><i>2. New residential infill construction should respect the prevailing front and side yard setback patterns of the surrounding block. The minimum setbacks evident in most districts reinforce the traditional street wall. In cases where the adjoining buildings have different setbacks, the setback for the new building should be based on the historical pattern for the block.</i></p> <p><i>3. New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site.</i></p>	<p>The proposed front yard setback for the new construction is seven feet, a distance between the two adjacent buildings. Staff finds that the surrounding area has an inconsistent setback pattern.</p> <p>The proposed building faces North 26<sup>th</sup> Street, the prominent street for this property.</p>
Standards for New Construction, Form, pg. 46	<p><i>1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district.</i></p>	<p>The applicant proposes to construct a building that is generally rectangular in shape, and 2 ½-stories in height. Staff finds this is in keeping with the general building forms found in the surrounding area.</p> <p>The applicant proposes a gable roof with dormers on the façade and a long shed roof to the rear. The applicant has provided examples of properties with this roof form. However, staff has not located any examples of this in the</p>

		<p>immediately surrounding area. Staff finds the proposed roof form in not in scale with the existing building or those found in the immediate area. Staff recommends that the applicant redesign the roof form to remove the dormers and to include a shallow side-gable with a rear shed roof so that it is in keeping with those found in the surrounding area.</p>
	<p><i>2. New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic residential construction in the district.</i></p> <p><i>3. New residential construction and additions should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps into their design.</i></p>	<p>The applicant proposes human-scale elements including a 1-story, full-width porch, and a centered entrance. Staff finds these details are in keeping with the elements found in the surrounding area.</p>
<p>Standards for New Construction, Height, Width, Proportion, and Massing, pg. 47</p>	<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.</i></p>	<p>Based on the conceptual street view plan the proposed building will be approximately 32 feet in height, while the neighboring building is 28 feet in height. The conceptual street view indicates there is a slope to the street and the building height will generally be in keeping.</p>
	<p><i>3. The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i></p>	<p>The cornice height appears to be incompatible with that of the two-story building at 422 North 26<sup>th</sup> Street and likely the buildings at 412 and 414 North 26<sup>th</sup>. Staff also notes that these buildings have shallow-side gable roofs, not the large gable roof with dormers and rear shed roof the applicant proposes. Staff requests the applicant submit a dimensioned context elevation for final review that includes the porch floor height, cornice line height and roof ridge height. Staff further notes that the majority of the buildings in the immediately surrounding area have a pronounced cornice line which helps to balance the architectural composition of the facades. Staff recommends the applicant reconsider the cornice line detail to create a more proportional façade.</p>
<p>Standards for New Construction, Materials &amp; Colors, pg. 47</p>	<p><i>2. Materials used in new residential construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.</i></p>	<p>The applicant proposes asphalt shingles for the front roof slope, smooth and unbeaded lap siding for the exterior walls, and a parged CMU and brick foundation. Staff finds these materials are generally in keeping with the materials found in the surrounding area, except the asphalt shingles. Materials for decorative details include 2/2 aluminum clad wood windows with SDLs, square fiberglass columns, and metal roofing for the front porch and dormers. In general, staff finds the mix of</p>

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materials is not in keeping with the surrounding area and recommends the applicant simplify the material selection. Staff also recommends the applicant consider a simplified window pattern, including the use of 1/1 windows to simplify the overall design.

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Standards for New Construction, Doors & Windows, pg. 49

*3. The size, proportion, and spacing patterns of doors and window openings on free standing, new construction should be compatible with patterns established within the district.*

*5. When selecting new doors and door surrounds, keep in mind that leaded, beveled, or etched glass is rare in Richmond's Old and Historic Districts, and is strongly discouraged and rarely permitted. Similarly, stamped or molded faux paneled doors are inappropriate substitutes for door types found in Richmond's Old and Historic Districts.*

The applicant proposes horizontally aligned openings on the façade. On the side elevations there is an inconsistent window pattern. Staff finds the overall window pattern, including the mix of styles and sizes, to be inconsistent with patterns found in the surrounding area and recommends the applicant use a more consistent window pattern and size on the visible elevations. Staff also recommends the applicant consider additional windows on the visible bays of the right elevation and aligned windows on the visible bays on the left elevation.

The applicant proposes a 1/3 lite front door with divided lites. Staff recommends the applicant use a door that is in keeping with surrounding architectural styles.

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Standards for New Construction, Porch and Porch Details, pg. 49

*2. When designing a new railing for a new infill building, or for an existing building which has lost its railing and for which no documentary or physical evidence survives, the balusters in the traditional Richmond rail are generally rectangular in section (with the narrow dimension facing the street) or square. The baluster is fitted into the recess in the top rail and a sloped bottom rail.*

It appears that the applicant proposes to use Richmond rail for the front porch railing and handrails. Staff requests that the applicant specify this for final review.

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Guidelines for Administrative Approval of Gutter and Downspout Installation, Items that do not meet the Guidelines and will not be approved administratively or by the Commission

*3. The installation of suspended gutters of an inappropriate profile or material. Inappropriate materials include vinyl and synthetic materials. Inappropriate profiles are those that introduce a new, and incompatible element that detracts from the roof and/or cornice line, such as k-style gutters.*

Staff recommends the applicant use a lower-profile gutter, such as a ½ round gutter and a round downspout and that these elements be submitted for final review.

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**FIGURES**



Figure 1. 420 North 26th Street, façade.



Figure 2. 420 North 26th Street, side addition.



Figure 3. 420 North 26th Street, rear elevation. View from East Clay Street.



Figure 4. 420 North 26th Street, ca. 1960.



Figure 5. 1905 Sanborn map

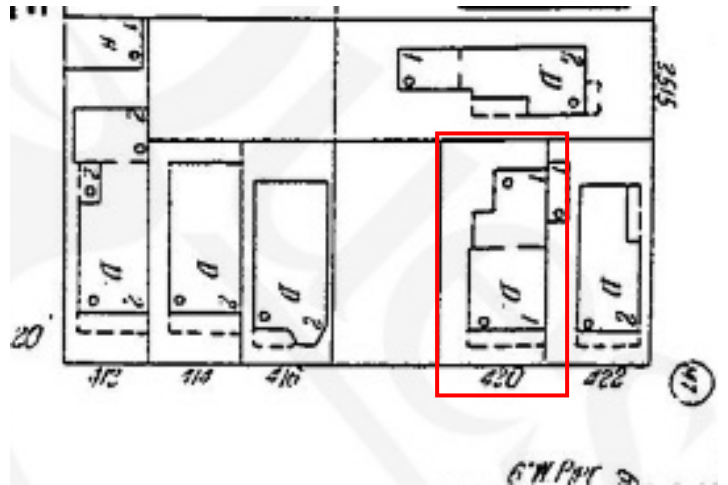


Figure 6. 1925 Sanborn map





Figure 7. 418 and 416 North 26th Street.



Figure 8. 422 North 26th Street.



Figure 9. 412 and 414 North 26th Street.



Figure 10. 425 and 427 North 26th Street.