



Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia



Commission of Architectural Review

3. COA-155372-2024	Final Review Meeting Date: 10/22/2024
Applicant/Petitioner	Ashleigh Brewer, Johannes Design Group
Project Description	Construct a new single-family dwelling.
Project Location	
Address: 2108.5 East Broad Street	
Historic District: St. John's Church	
<p>High-Level Details:</p> <p>The applicant proposes to construct a three-story, two bay single family building on a vacant lot. There will be a single car garage off the rear alley.</p> <p>The original building on the site was demolished in 1975, which was a two-story frame Italianate-Style building with a one-story full width covered front porch and decorative cornice.</p>	
Staff Recommendation	Approval with Conditions
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, alex.dandridge@rva.gov, (804) 646-6569
Previous Reviews	<p>The Commission conceptually reviewed this application at the September 2024 meeting. The Commission was in support of the project and offered the applicant a few recommendations. It was asked that the applicant consider adding more dimension to the cornice to ensure that it doesn't appear to be flat. Regarding materials, the Commission asked that the applicant consider the type of brick used for foundation as well as the dimension of the front porch brick piers, recommending an increase in width.</p> <p>The Commission conceptually reviewed this application in 2017, but the project was never brought back to the Commission for a final review.</p>
Staff Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff recommends that the face of the building align with the neighboring historic building, and that this alignment be clearly shown to the permit plans.

Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
Standards For New Construction, page 46	<p><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>	<p>The new building will fill a vacant lot between two existing dwellings. Both neighboring properties are frame dwellings in the Italianate-Style, featuring horizontal lap siding, wooden window hoods, and ornate cornices with brackets.</p> <p>The new building will feature horizontal lap siding, a simplified cornice, and a full width covered front porch.</p> <p>Staff finds that implementing these architectural elements protects the context of the surrounding historic district.</p> <p>The west elevation of the building will feature vertically aligned transom windows, and the east elevation will have an inset porch with contemporary windows and horizontal railings. The east and west elevations of the building will be minimally visible; however, the third story on the west elevation will be visible due to the height of the building and the incline of the hill.</p> <p>During the conceptual review, staff asked that the applicant demonstrate the visibility of the proposed third floor transom windows on the west elevation. The applicant has submitted information that indicate that the transoms will be minimally visible.</p>
Standards For New Construction: Siting, page 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.</i></p>	<p>The new building will respect the prevailing front and side yard setback patterns. Based on the site plan, it appears that the face of the building may sit slightly proud of the neighboring historic buildings. <u>Staff recommends that the face of the building align with the neighboring historic building, and that this alignment be clearly shown to the permit plans.</u></p>
Standards For New Construction: Form, page 46	<p><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>	<p>The new building will be two bays wide and on a raised foundation. Most residential dwellings in the district are two and three bays wide.</p> <p>The building will be approximately 64 feet long by 16 feet wide. The length of the building is longer, but comparable to the neighboring buildings. There will be narrow side yards which is common in the district. The side elevations of the building will be minimally visible from the public right-of-way.</p>

Standards For New Construction: Form, page 46	<p><i>2. New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic, residential construction in the district.</i></p>	<p>The proposed building will maintain the existing human scale of the block by incorporating a full-width front porch and front stairs that lead to the sidewalk.</p> <p>During the conceptual review, the front porch was proposed to be five feet in depth. Staff recommended that the front porch be increased to six feet in depth to create a more usable space. The applicant has responded by increasing the depth of the porch to six feet.</p>
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>	<p>The proposed building will be approximately 31 feet in height. The building to the west is approximately 26 feet in height and the building to the east is approximately 27 feet in height. Based on a context drawing, it appears that the proposed buildings max height will align with that of the building to the east. While it will be taller than the historic building to the west, the grade change on this portion of East Broad Street makes varying building heights common.</p> <p>During the conceptual review, the Commission asked that the applicant consider the width of the brick piers supporting the front porch. The applicant has increased the width of the piers to appear more substantial/proportional to the building.</p>
Standards for New Construction: Materials & Colors, page 47	<p><i>2. Materials used in new residential construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.</i></p>	<p>The proposed building will have composite trim, fiber cement siding, flat-lock metal roofing, fiber glass exterior doors, wooden steps, aluminum clad wood windows, brick foundation, and aluminum gutters and downspouts. Staff finds that these materials are visually in-keeping with the block and the historic district.</p> <p>The applicant is no longer planning to paint the brick foundation.</p>
Standards For New Construction: Doors and Windows, page 56	<p><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></p>	<p>The windows on the façade will have a two-over-two light configuration and will be vertically aligned. The side elevations will feature more contemporary single pane windows; however, these elevations should be mostly obscured from view.</p> <p>The rear of the building will be contemporary in design with large single pane ribbon windows and doors and horizontal cable railings on a multi-story rear porch. While the other dwellings on the subject block have rear elevations with a more traditional design, staff finds that the simple, contemporary design of the proposed building's rear elevation does not detract from the character of the alley.</p>

<p>Mechanical Equipment, HVAC Equipment, pg. 68</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>New units should be placed in side or rear yards so as to minimize their visual impact. Side yard units should be located as far away from the front of the building as possible.</i> 2. <i>Rooftop units should be located so that they are minimally visible from the public right-of-way, and screening should be considered.</i> 3. <i>HVAC equipment on the ground should be appropriately screened with fencing or vegetation.</i> 	<p>Exterior HVAC units will be placed on the rear portion of the roof and will likely not be visible from the public right-of-way.</p>
<p>New Construction, Residential Outbuildings, pg. 51</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Outbuildings, including garages, sheds, gazebos and other auxiliary structures, should be compatible with the design of the primary building on the site, including roof slope and materials selection.</i> 2. <i>Newly constructed outbuildings such as detached garages or tool sheds should respect the siting, massing, roof profiles, materials, and colors of existing outbuildings in the neighborhood.</i> 3. <i>New outbuildings should be smaller than the main residence and be located to the rear and/or side of the property to emphasize that they are secondary structures.</i> 	<p>A rear single car garage is being proposed as well. The garage will be one story and have a square form. It will be simple in design with low pitched shed roof and horizontal siding, a garage door facing the alley, and prefinished metal awning over the garage door. The material and simple design of the garage is compatible with the contemporary design of the rear.</p> <p>The new garage will be smaller than the primary building and located in the rear yard which emphasizes that it is a secondary structure.</p>

It is the assessment of staff that, with the conditions above, the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation and New Construction outlined in Section 30-930.7 (b) and (c) of the City Code, as well as with the Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines, specifically the pages cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.

Figures



Figure 1. Vacant lot at 2108.5 E. Broad St.



Figure 2. Context. Looking west down E. Broad St.



Figure 3. Context, Looking east down E. Broad St.



Figure 4. Other new construction on subject block.



Figure 5. Context. South side of 2100 Block E. Broad.



Figure 6. Historic photo showing 2108.5 in distance. 1955. *Valentine Museum, Digital Archives*, accessed 9/19/2024.

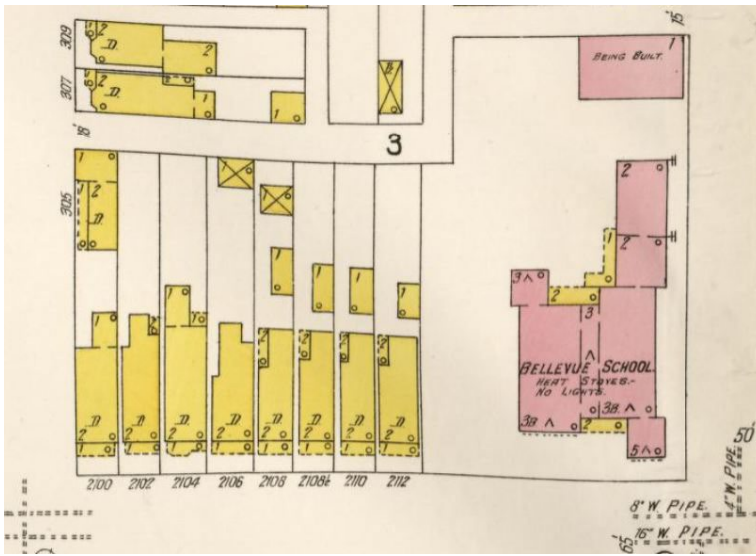


Figure 7. 1905 Sanborn Map.