



Commission of Architectural Review

2. COA-169014-2025	Final Review	Meeting Date: 7/22/2025
Applicant/Petitioner	Chris Pollock	
Project Description	Demolish existing building on parcel and construct two new single-family attached buildings.	
Project Location		
Address: 2228 Cedar Street		
Historic District: Union Hill		
<p>High-Level Details:</p> <p>The applicant requests final review to construct a new duplex in place of an 1840s Greek Revival building that has been declared an unsafe structure by the City's Building Commissioner, requiring its eventual demolition.</p> <p>The extant building is Greek Revival in style and is currently configured to be a single-family home; however, was historically constructed as a double house.</p> <p>The primary portion of the building is a two story, four bay, frame house with a raised brick foundation and a box cornice. The shed roofed porch has square posts on concrete piers and a box cornice with a deep entablature. There is a rear one-story projection that was construction sometime in the 1920s.</p> <p>The proposed new construction's design is heavily based on the existing building but will have a larger footprint.</p>		
Staff Recommendation	Approval, with Conditions	
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, Alex.Dandridge@RVA.gov, (804)646-6569	
Previous Reviews	The commission conceptually reviewed this application at the May 2025 meeting. The commission supported the design of the new construction. There were comments on revising the east elevation's roof profile. The commission expressed the need to have the gable roof portion be more prominent. It was suggested that the third story portion off the rear be reduced to 2 1/2 stories, connecting to the front	

	mass of the building below the ridge line of the gable. One commissioner stated that they would like to see the extant building reconstructed to its exact size and footprint.
Staff Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiber cement siding be unbeaded and smooth. • All porch decking boards be tongue and groove and installed perpendicularly to the face of the building (front and side porches). • A standing seam metal roof be used on the front, primary mass of the building. • Applicant salvage the engaged post on the right side of the porch, incorporating it into the design of the new building. • Any historic hardscaping material such as brick and granite be reincorporated into the site. • As many historic bricks removed from the site during demolition be reincorporated into the proposed building as a veneer – to be used in elements such as the faux chimney, front foundation, or paved area beneath the front porch. • The applicant work with staff during the salvage process of any materials, informing staff on the amount of material being salvaged and where it will be incorporated. • All exterior doors be wood and glass. • A more detailed drawing of the front porch be submitted to staff that demonstrates that the detailing on the proposed porch matches that of the existing exactly. • Windows be wood or aluminum clad wood with simulated divided lights (SDLs).

Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
Standards for New Construction- Residential, 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><i>4. If setback waivers or any other waivers are needed, the applicant may petition the Commission to support a Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) waiver.</i></p>	<p>The new building will face the most prominent street, Cedar Street. It will be highly visible from Jessamine and N. 23rd Street as well.</p> <p>The front of the building will be setback approximately 5 ½ feet from the property line.</p> <p>There is not a prominent street wall in this location, given the vacant lots to the east and west.</p>

<p>Standards for New Construction-Residential, Form, pg. 46</p>	<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. Form is greatly influenced by the architectural style of a given structure.</i></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. In Richmond, porches were historically an integral part of residential design and provide much of the street-level architectural character of Richmond's historic districts.</i></p>	<p>The proposed building will have an irregular form, conforming to the irregular shape of the lot.</p> <p>There will be a primary, rectangular mass which will be four bays wide across the front, and two bays wide on the sides, referencing the extant building's form. The rear mass will be more irregular, having step backs along the property line.</p> <p>It will be three stories tall; the height being reduced by an English basement at the first floor.</p> <p>English Basements are a common form found in the Union Hill City Old and Historic District.</p> <p>Overall, the building will be symmetrical with vertically aligned windows and doors.</p> <p>During the conceptual review of the application, the design of the building featured a gable roof on the primary, front mass of the building, which transitioned to a shed roof on the rear.</p> <p>The Commission agreed that because the proposed building's design is attempting to reference that of the existing, the primary massing of the building with the gable roof should be more prominent. To respect the prominence of the gable roof form and better reference the massing of the extant building, the commission recommended that the rear projection be reduced from three stories to two and a half stories, and the roof be a gable that connects to the front mass below its ridge line.</p> <p>The applicant has made these revisions to the plans. Staff finds that the revisions meet the Commission's recommendations, giving prominence to the front massing of the building.</p> <p>There will be a raised, covered front porch that will reference the design details of the extant building. Raised porches are common in Union Hill, and one of the unique characteristics of the district. There will also be a two-story covered porch on the west elevation.</p> <p>The application states that the new porch will be based on the design and detailing of the extant building's front porch. This porch is Greek Revival in style and one of the building's character defining features. The drawings submitted of the proposed building do not include the same level of trim detail as the extant building. <u>Staff recommends that a more detailed drawing of the front porch be submitted to staff that demonstrates that the detailing on the proposed porch matches that of the existing exactly.</u></p>
<p>Standards for New Construction-Height, Width, Proportion & Massing, pg. 47</p>	<p><i>1. New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.</i></p>	<p>The proposed building will be two-stories above an English basement. This is a common height in the district. Overall, it will be shorter than the new residential construction directly behind it, but a bit</p>

	<p><i>2. New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in surrounding historic districts.</i></p> <p><i>3. The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i></p>	<p>larger than historic buildings in the district given the increased ceiling heights of each floor.</p>
<p>Standards for New Construction-Materials & 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><i>3. Paint colors for new additions should complement the historically appropriate colors used on the primary structure. Paint colors used should be similar to the historically appropriate colors already found in the district (see Painting Section starting on page 60).</i></p> <p><i>4. Vinyl, asphalt, and aluminum siding are not permitted for use in City Old and Historic Districts. Other synthetic siding materials with a smooth, untextured finish may be allowed in limited cases, but approval by the Commission is always required.</i></p> <p><i>5. Rooftop mechanical equipment should be located as discretely as possible to limit visibility.</i></p>	<p>The proposed building will feature an asphalt shingle roof on the front, primary mass, which will transition to a white membrane roof on the rear. The front porch will be a flat lock metal roof. The exterior will be clad in horizontal fiber cement siding and trim. Railings and banisters will be wooden. Gutters are proposed to be half round with rounded downspouts. The foundation will be clad in brick and the front porch will be supported by brick piers.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends that the fiber cement siding be unbeaded and smooth.</u></p> <p><u>Staff recommends that all porch decking boards be tongue and groove and installed perpendicularly to the face of the building (front and side porches).</u></p> <p>While the extant building does feature asphalt shingles, <u>staff recommends using a standing seam metal roof on the front and rear of the gable roof on the primary mass of the building, to better refence historic roofing materials found in the district. Final metal roofing materials be submitted for administrative approval.</u></p> <p>The application states that the extant front door assembly will be salvaged and installed on the proposed building. <u>Staff recommends that the applicant document this process and work with staff to ensure that the work is carried out in-keeping with the plans.</u></p> <p>There is one original engaged post on the face of the budling, right side of the existing porch. The application states that the porch posts design on the new building will be based on the design of this engaged post. <u>Staff recommends that the applicant salvage the engaged post on the right side of the porch, incorporating it into the design of the new building.</u> Adding wood to the base of this engaged post to make up for the increased ceiling height of the new porch is acceptable.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends that any historic hardscaping material such as brick and granite be reincorporated into the site.</u></p> <p><u>Staff recommends that as many historic bricks removed from the site during demolition be incorporated into the proposed building as a veneer – to be used in elements such as the faux chimney, front foundation, or paved area beneath the front</u></p>

		<p><u>porch. The applicant should work with staff during the salvage process, informing staff on the amount of material being salvaged and where it should be incorporated.</u></p>
<p>Standards for New Construction-Materials & Colors, pg. 49</p>	<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. Windows on most commercial and residential properties throughout Old and Historic Districts have a vertical orientation. Wide, horizontal so-called "picture windows" on new additions are strongly discouraged.</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. New glass should be clear without reflective coatings, to be compatible with original glass.</i></p> <p><i>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.</i></p>	<p>Windows will be vertically aligned with nine-over-nine pane configurations on the first story, and six-over-six on the second story. Staff finds this hierarchy of window dimesons from floor to floor appropriate.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends that the windows be wood or aluminum clad wood with simulated divided lights (SDLs).</u></p> <p>The front door is a wooden, four paneled door salvaged from the extant building, while the doors on the side porch will be half lite.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends that that all exterior doors be wood and glass.</u></p> <p>The conceptual review application included two smaller transom windows on the third story of the east elevation. These windows were highly visible and not common window dimensions found in the district.</p> <p>The commission recommended that the third story transom windows on the east elevation be removed or be full-sized. The applicant has revised the application to replace the transom windows with full-sized windows to match the fenestration on the rest of the building.</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. 2228 Cedar Street facade



Figure 2. 2228 Cedar Street historic photograph



Figure 3. 2228 Cedar Street west elevation.



Figure 4. 2228 Cedar Street east elevation.