

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW  
STAFF REPORT  
January 24, 2017 Meeting**

19. **CAR No. 17-015** (C. Mullaney)

**533 Mosby Street  
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

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

**Staff Contact:** **M. Pitts**

The applicant requests approval to construct a small, two-story, single family dwelling on a narrow vacant lot in the Union Hill Old and Historic District.

The residential character of the east side of the subject block consists of 2 to 2 ½ story structures in a mix of Greek Revival, Italianate and Late Victorian architectural styles and structures constructed in the 1990s. The majority of the structures on the odd side of the block including the non-historic structures are frame, 3-bay structures with full façade porches. Mosby Street represents the boundary of the Union Hill Old and Historic District, and the parcels on the west side of Mosby Street are not within the District. These parcels have been developed with multifamily housing that have undulating elevations, are 3 to 4 stories in height, and are clad with fiber cement panels, metal panels, and brick.

The Commission conceptually reviewed this project on December 13, 2016. Unfortunately, the applicant was not in attendance; therefore, the Commission's comments were limited as the conceptual review process is intended to be an interactive conversation with the applicant. The Commission did express concerns with the compatibility of the proposed design and agreed with the concerns raised in the staff report which included the following:

- Though the structures on the subject block vary in roof form, a shed roof form oriented as proposed is not a building form found within the district on primary structures.
- The applicant is utilizing materials that are not typically found on historic structures in the district and are similar to the materials found on the multifamily buildings outside of the district.
- The transom window on the north elevation is not a window form found in the district.

In addition to the Commission and staff's comments, several neighbors expressed concerns with the compatibility of the proposed design as they felt the design took inspiration from the apartment buildings across Mosby Street and not the buildings within the Old and Historic District.

In response to the concerns raised during the conceptual review, the plan has been modified as follows:

- The proposed roof form is now a front gable. The roof will be clad in corrugated metal with solar panels located on the southern slope of the roof.
- The burnt wood siding has been replaced with cedar lap siding with a 6” reveal. The siding will be painted black. The applicant has limited the use of the Corten steel to the front and rear entry ways.
- The transom window has been removed on the north elevation.
- Details of the proposed garage have been provided. The 12’ by 20’ structure will have a standing seam metal shed roof and be clad in the cedar lap siding to match the primary structure. The applicant proposes carriage doors constructed of Corten steel panels with a cedar frame.

**Staff recommends approval of the application as submitted with the noted conditions.** Staff believes the proposed new construction is consistent with the Commission’s *Guidelines*. Though the proposed design does not mimic the historic architecture of the district, staff believes the applicant has successfully modified the design to be “a good neighbor” to the historic structures as is recommended by the *Guidelines* (pg. 44). The structure is at the same height of the nearest buildings and a similar setback. The applicant has modified the roof form to include a roof form that is found on primary structures in the district. Though the proposed roof form is compatible with the district, staff has concerns that the roof material, corrugated metal, is not a roofing material found on primary structures in the district. Staff recommends that the roof be standing seam metal and details of the roofing material be provided to staff for administrative review and approval. Additionally, as the *Guideline’s* note fence materials should relate to building materials commonly found in the neighborhood (pg. 48). Staff recommends the proposed privacy fence not be constructed of corrugated metal which is not a building material found in the district; and the applicant submit an alternative design to be administratively reviewed and approved. While the applicant has reduced the use of Corten steel panels and is proposing a lap siding which is consistent with the frame houses of the district, the proposed black paint color is not a color on the Commission’s palette intended for use on siding. Staff recommends the applicant submit an alternative paint color to be administratively reviewed and approved.

Staff recommends approval of the proposed garage as the structure conforms the Commission’s *Guidelines* for Outbuildings (pg. 48) as it is at the rear of the property, is small, uses a roofline consistent with outbuildings in the district, and uses materials found in the primary structure.

It is the assessment of staff that the application, with the noted conditions, is consistent with the Standards for New Construction outlined in Section 30.930.7(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 code.