

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
April 25, 2017 Meeting**

11. COA-015426-2017 (M. Alexander)

**708 North 24th Street
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

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

Staff Contact: **M. Pitts**

The applicant requests final approval to construct a single family dwelling on a vacant lot in the Union Hill Old and Historic District.

The residential character of the subject block is a mix of architectural styles. The north side of the subject block includes 2-story 3-bay structures and the Gothic Revival style Cedar Street Baptist church. The structure immediately to the south of the subject lot is a two story structure with a false mansard roof and a full façade front porch. Prior to its demolition, a similar structure stood on the subject lot. The structure to the north of subject lot is a wider, 2 story, Colonial Revival structure with a hipped roof and full façade porch. The south side of the block includes several double houses in various architectural styles and Italianate and Greek Revival single family dwellings. The structures are two stories and contain vertically ranked windows on their façades.

The applicant is proposing to construct a 2 story frame structure with a false mansard roof. The mansard will be clad in synthetic slate tiles. The structure will be set back 15 feet. The façade will have a 3-bay organization and a full façade porch with a shed roof clad in membrane. The applicant is proposing turned composite columns for the porches. The windows will be 2/2 aluminum clad wood windows to be vertically aligned on all elevations. The applicant is proposes a covered porch at the rear of the structure to match the design of the front porch.

The proposed project came before the Commission on March 28, 2017 for Conceptual Review. The only feedback provided by the Commission was to confirm with the applicant that he can construct a truss as shown on the plans. To respond to this concern without increasing the height of the structure, the applicant has elongated the building by five feet to a total length of 70 feet.

The applicant is seeking **Final Review** for this project. Commission staff reviewed the project through the lens of the “Standards for New Construction: Residential” on pages 44 and 45 of the *Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* utilizing the checklist below.

S=satisfies

D=does not satisfy

NA=not applicable

S D NA

New infill construction should respect the prevailing front and side yard setback patterns in the surrounding district

The façade of the structure will be set back 15 feet to align with the façade of the dwelling to the south (706 N. 24th Street). The front porch will align with both adjacent front porches.

Where the adjoining buildings have different setbacks, the setback for the new building should be based on the historical pattern for the block

The building's setback is consistent with the historic setback of the block as the setback of 706 North 24th Street represents the historic pattern.

New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site

The structure addresses North 24th Street.

New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the district. Form refers to the combination of massing, size, symmetry, proportions, projections and roof shapes that lend identity to a building.

Though more narrow to meet modern zoning setback requirements, the project is of a similar scale to the single family homes on the block. The proposed roof form is similar to that of the historic adjacent structure and to the structure which once stood on the subject lot. The applicant has incorporated other elements that characterize development in the district including a 3-bay symmetrical façade composition and a full façade front porch.

New construction should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps.

The proposed project incorporates human-scale elements including cornice, full façade front porch, and front steps.

New construction should respect the typical height of surrounding buildings

The typical heights of the surrounding buildings are 2 to 2 ½ stories. The proposed 2-story, 26' tall, structure is compatible with the surrounding residential structures

New construction should respect the typical width, organization of bays, vertical alignment and symmetry of surrounding buildings.

Though more narrow to meet modern zoning setback requirements, the project is of a similar width to the single family homes on the block. The proposed 3-bay organization and vertical alignment is characteristic of the fenestration pattern found in the district.

The size, proportion, and spacing patterns of doors and window openings should be compatible with patterns established in the district.

The proposed windows on the façade are vertically aligned and symmetrically placed which is consistent with patterns in the district. The applicant has vertically aligned all visible openings and most other openings on the secondary elevations.

Porch and cornice heights should be compatible with adjacent buildings

The porch and cornice heights appear to be compatible with 706 North 24th Street though dimensions have not been provided on the context elevation.

Materials used in new construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district. Vinyl, asphalt, and aluminum siding are not permitted.

The proposed construction will use fiber cement siding, synthetic slate tiles, composite porch materials, aluminum clad wood windows, a brick foundation, and membrane porch roofs. Staff finds the materials are compatible with the frame structures found in the district.

- Siding be smooth and unbeaded.
- The windows be true divided lite or simulated divided lite to include interior and exterior muntins and a spacer bar. A window sample be provided for administrative review and approval.
- Details of the proposed fence be provided for administrative review and approval.
- Paint colors be provided for administrative review and approval.

Staff recommends approval of the project with conditions. The proposed infill project appears generally to be in keeping with the Standards for New Construction outlined in the Guidelines as the project is largely compatible with the historic features that characterizes its setting and context. The applicant has modified the application to respond to the Commission's limited concerns. By lengthening the building, the applicant is able to accommodate the desired truss without increasing the height of the structure or altering the proportions of the façade.

It is the assessment of staff that, with the acceptance of the stated conditions, the application 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.