

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
May 23, 2017, Meeting**

12. **COA-016788-2017** (D. Kleyman)

**2310-2310 ½ Venable Street
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

Project Description:

Construct a new duplex.

Staff Contact:

M. Pitts

The applicant requests approval to construct a duplex on a vacant mid-block lot in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. The residential character of the north side of Venable Street is primarily 2-story three bay brick Italianate structures set on raised foundations with full façade front porches. The south side of Venable Street is developed with two large 2-story brick structures of attached single family dwellings. Each single family home has three bays, many with a 2 bay front porch, and seven of the homes have false mansard roofs.

The applicant came before the Commission for Conceptual Review of this project on April 25, 2017. The Commission had concerns about the presence of two doors in the outer bay as that is not a building form found in the district, and the low height of the front of the structure. The applicant has removed the second entry door and added an additional 8" to the porch foundation to increase the height at the front of the structure in response to the Commission's concerns.

The applicant is proposing to construct an Italianate inspired duplex of frame construction. The structure will be approximately 25'-4" in height and 20' in width and will be clad in fiber cement lap siding. The façade is organized in three bays. The applicant is proposing a full façade front porch with a hipped membrane roof and fiberglass Doric columns. The structure will have a bracketed cornice and a shed roof clad in membrane. The applicant is proposing to install PVC windows with simulated divided lites, and all visible windows will have a 2/2 configuration. At the rear of the structure, the applicant is proposing a two story porch constructed of wood.

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

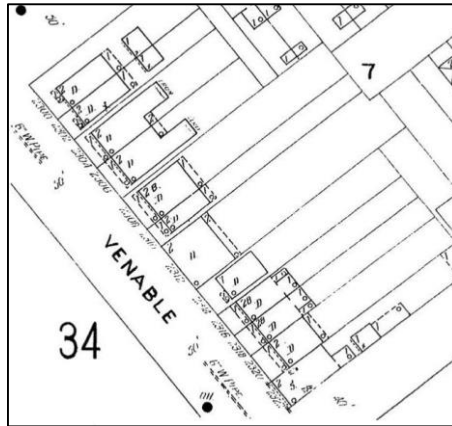
S **D** **NA**

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

The applicant is proposing to align the structure with the property to the west. This setback is consistent with the setback pattern prevalent in the district.

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

The setback of the building to the west is consistent with the historical pattern for the block. The proposed structure matches this setback.



1905 Sanborn Map for the Subject Block

- New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site**

The structure addresses Venable 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.**

The project is of a similar scale to the single family homes in the area. The applicant has incorporated the full façade porch, the shed roof with a bracketed cornice, and the three bay organization of the façade that characterize the neighboring development.

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

The new construction incorporates human-scale elements including a cornice and front porch.

- New construction should respect the typical height of surrounding buildings**

The heights of structures on the subject block vary from 20 to 30 feet. The proposed structure is consistent in height with the two story structures on the south side of the street.

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

The project is of similar width to single family homes on the block. The applicant has removed the second front door which has resulted in a symmetrical façade similar to the Italianate structures on the block and throughout 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 are of typical size, proportion, and spacing patterns found in the district. Though transom windows are not a typical window form found in the district, the proposed windows will not be visible from the public right of way. The applicant has removed the second front door which has resulted in a spacing pattern for the façade more compatible with patterns found in the district.

- Porch and cornice heights should be compatible with adjacent buildings**

While the proposed porch and cornice heights do not align with the adjacent structures, the heights are consistent with those of the structures across the street and are compatible with the development in the block which varies in height

- 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 smooth, unbeaded fiber cement siding; fiberglass doors; PVC windows with simulated divided lites; and membrane roofing. Though the subject block is predominantly brick, staff finds the proposed lap siding is appropriate as there are structures clad in siding on the north side of the block, and the Commission recently approved structures clad in fiber cement siding a block to the west as a part of the development at 2230 Venable Street. Staff finds the materials are compatible with the frame structures found in the district with the following condition:

- The simulated divided lite windows include interior and exterior muntins and a spacer bar between the glass.

Staff recommends approval of the project with a condition. 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 characterize its setting and context. The applicant has modified the application to respond to the Commission's limited concerns.

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