

City of Richmond

*City Hall
900 East Broad Street*



Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, February 28, 2023

3:30 PM

5th Floor Conference Room of City Hall

Commission of Architectural Review

[PDRPRES](#) Public Participation Instructions - Commission of Architectural Review
[2023.012](#)

Attachments: [Public Access and Participation Instructions -COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW](#)

Call to Order

This meeting was called to order at 3:30pm.

Alex Dandridge read the announcement for virtual public meetings.

Commission members are present in City Hall.

Staff in attendance: Planner Alex Dandridge, Planner Samantha Lewis, Planner Jackie Stephens

Roll Call

Present -- 8 - * Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., * Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, * Commissioner Andrew Moore, * Commissioner Sean Wheeler, * Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, * Commissioner Lawrence Pearson , * Commissioner John Grier and * Commissioner Mitch Danese

Absent -- 1 - * Commissioner Coleen Bulter Rodriguez

OTHER BUSINESS

Secretary’s Report

Planner Samantha Lewis has put together an educational one-pager for civic associations to provide to homeowners about CAR.

Administrative Approval Report

Secretary Dandridge shared the monthly administrative approval report with Commissioners.

Enforcement Report

Alex Dandridge provided updates on outstanding violations including:

An illegal driveway at 3909 Hermitage Road. The case also presents issues with city utilities since there is no curb cut and extends over a bike lane. It is a joint effort between departments to resolve this case;

A painting violation at 1642 W Grace Street where someone has painted a previously painted masonry dwelling;

An abated violation at 1600 Lombardy Street. This case previously came through in 2021 regarding the pergolas that were constructed on Monument Avenue at My Noodle & Bar. The owners have resubmitted plans that staff are reviewing;

A rehab at 1830 W Grace Street. This case previously came to CAR and was approved provided the applicants would replace the side and rear porch, however, the actual

construction does not align with the conditions of approval.

Staff are also working to improve enforcement processes including changing language in PMCE letters that inform the resident that they must obtain a COA prior to conducting any external work on a structure.

UDC - 2022 Review

Commissioner Danese, the Commission’s representative on the Urban Design Committee (UDC), presented a summary of 2022 UDC decisions.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent portion of the meeting began at 4:00pm.

Mr. Dandridge re-read the announcement for virtual public meetings.

Commission Chair Wheeler asked if the Commissioners wished to move any items from the Regular Agenda to the Consent Agenda or vice versa.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, to move 2210 E. Marshall Street to the consent agenda.

Johnson feels that the applicant has made the requested changes.

Wheeler has reservations on it. The structure is now taller.

Alex Dandridge said the building is 2 feet taller than before.

The applicant is comfortable with staff conditions.

The motion carried by the following vote:

- Aye – 7 – Morgan, Danese, Johnson, Pearson, Moore, Brewer, Grier
- No – 1 – Wheeler
- Excused – 1 – Rodriguez

A motion was made by Commissioner Pearson, seconded by Commission Chair Wheeler, to change the order of the items so the last item is moved up one space.

The motion carried by the following vote:

- Aye – 8 – Morgan, Wheeler, Danese, Johnson, Pearson, Moore, Brewer, Grier
- Excused – 1 – Rodriguez

A motion was made by Commissioner Pearson, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, to move 612 N. 27th Street to the consent agenda.

The motion carried by the following vote:

- Aye – 8 – Morgan, Wheeler, Danese, Johnson, Pearson, Moore, Brewer, Grier
- Excused – 1 – Rodriguez

A motion was made by Vice Chair Moore, seconded by Commissioner Pearson, to move 12 N. Arthur Ashe Boulevard to the consent agenda.

Moore said there seems to be clear documentation that the original material was slate and not tile.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye – 8 – Morgan, Wheeler, Danese, Johnson, Pearson, Moore, Brewer, Grier
Excused – 1 – Rodriguez

Commission Chair Wheeler opened the floor for public comment.

Nancy Lambert spoke virtually regarding 2210 E. Marshall Street. She suggests that the Commission review the way that a property stares down a stepped street and not just a sloped angle of the front façade of a structure.

A motion was made by Commission Chair Wheeler, seconded by Commissioner Morgan to approve the consent agenda as amended.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Andrew Moore, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson, Commissioner John Grier and Commissioner Mitch Danese

1. [COA-123392-2023](#) 2210 E Marshall Street - Construct a new three-story attached dwelling.

Attachments: [Application & Plans](#)
[Staff Report](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: The building be painted a more neutral color; final materials and color specifications to be submitted for administrative review and approval; final window schedule be submitted for administrative approval; HVAC equipment be screened from the public right-of-way.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 7 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Andrew Moore, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson, Commissioner John Grier and Commissioner Mitch Danese

No -- 1 - Commissioner Sean Wheeler

5. [COA-125156-2023](#) 612 N 27th Street - Alterations to the rear façade including the enclosure of a two-story rear porch and new openings; construct a rear accessory building.

Attachments: [Application & Plans](#)
[Staff Report](#)

A motion was made by Commissioner Pearson, seconded by Commissioner

Morgan, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Andrew Moore, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson, Commissioner John Grier and Commissioner Mitch Danese

2. [COA-121995-2022](#) 12 N Arthur Ashe Boulevard - Replace a barrel tile roof with faux slate.

Attachments: [Application & Plans](#)
[Staff Report](#)

A motion was made by Vice Chair Moore, seconded by Commissioner Pearson, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Andrew Moore, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson, Commissioner John Grier and Commissioner Mitch Danese

REGULAR AGENDA

3. [COA-125150-2023](#) 3315 E Marshall Street - Replace existing original and non-original windows with vinyl windows.

Attachments: [Application & Plans](#)
[Staff Report](#)

Samantha Lewis presented this application.

The applicant, Chris Stone, indicated that he has worked extensively as an engineer focused on sustainability. Concerns about electric bills prompted the applicant to investigate energy efficiency improvements including window replacements. Staff found images from 2011 which indicated that the rear windows are not original to the home and are fine for replacement. The front façade windows were never intended to be vinyl windows and only the side windows will be vinyl. The rear is not visible within the public right-of-way. Stone has already paid for the installation of the side and rear custom windows.

Commissioner Morgan asked if there has been any official approval for window replacement.

Stone said he was told by staff he could receive a COA with administrative approval, so he paid for the installation before finding out staff denied the replacement of windows F3, F4, and F5. The house has previously been infested with spiders and Stone has detected traces of coal dust, possibly coming in from outside.

Commissioner Johnson asked if the window replacement will mitigate the coal dust.

Stone said he believes so, yes. He cited citywide energy efficiency objectives as listed in

the Climate Equity Action Plan 2030, recently passed by City Council.

Commissioner Pearson noted that storm windows can have equivalent sustainability impacts and could be considered instead of replacing windows entirely.

Stone noted that modern-day vinyl windows are much more sustainable, economical, and recyclable.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Danese, to accept the application with staff recommendations.

Johnson thinks accepting this project would set a bad precedent for the Commission with accepting vinyl windows. However, the windows on the rear will not be particularly visible.

Danese doesn't want to set a precedent purely because of some misunderstandings with staff review but he understands that there was confusion about the installation of the front windows and thinks it creates an issue. The applicant has already paid for the rear windows even though work has not been done.

Commissioner Chair Wheeler noted that vinyl windows are strongly discouraged in the CAR Guidelines. However, at this point, damage hasn't been done.

Pearson is open to a deferral to see if the applicant has room to negotiate with the window company and see if the company can swap out specifications.

Commissioner Morgan wants to know exactly which muntin profile is being proposed.

Commission Chair Wheeler opened the floor for public comment.

There was none.

Morgan suggested that since the side windows are not visible in the public right-of-way, they could be removed from the application and approval is not needed.

Commissioners agree.

A motion was made by Commissioner Pearson, seconded by Commissioner Danese, to deny the replacement of the front façade, second-story windows (F3, F4, and F5) and defer the replacement of rear and west side windows (R1 - R6) to allow the applicant time to identify a compatible replacement window material as well as provide detailed specifications on replacement window design including window dimensions, depth, and muntin width and profile.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Andrew Moore, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson, Commissioner John Grier and Commissioner Mitch Danese

4. [COA-125155-2023](#) 610 N 27th Street - Various exterior alterations.

Attachments: [Application & Plans](#)
[Staff Report](#)

Morgan left at 4:45pm.

Alex Dandridge presented this application.

The applicant, Brad Olmstead, has concerns about restoration and then finding out replacement is needed afterwards.

Commissioner Chair Wheeler said that the contractor should be able to complete repairs without needing to replace anything.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Danese, to partially approve the application. Specifically, the Commission denied the following: Replacement of the front three second-story windows; and the aluminum wrapping of existing window frames. Specifically, the Commission approved the following: North Elevation: The infilling of the second-story and first-story double-hung windows; and the new transom window; South Elevation: The infilling of four windows; the replacement of three double-hung vinyl windows with new wood double hung windows; and the installation of a new second-story, double-hung window; Rear Elevation: The replacement of two rear vinyl windows with new double-hung wood windows; Front Façade: Reinstallation of missing corbels with the condition that the corbels be replaced to match the remaining corbels in design and dimension, and that final design details and replication method be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval; Siding: Staff recommends approval of the replacement of the siding on the north and south elevations with fiber cement siding with the condition that the siding be smooth, un-beaded, and does not feature a faux wood grain; Front façade wood siding be repaired and replaced in-kind as needed.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 7 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Andrew Moore, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson, Commissioner John Grier and Commissioner Mitch Danese

Excused -- 1 - Commissioner Kathleen Morgan

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

7. [COA-125158-2023](#) 2202 Jefferson Avenue - Expand the footprint of an existing building; implement site improvements.

Attachments: [Application & Plans](#)
[Staff Report](#)

Alex Dandridge presented this application.

The architect, Evan McKenzie, wants to complement the structure's history as a fueling station with the design. The site is constrained in terms of setbacks adjacent to the R-63 zone. The addition is an attempt to add service space and not public space. He is welcome to feedback about the structure's massing.

Commissioner Danese remembers the building previously coming to the Commission. He asked if, in this design, the front structure will be going away with the new design.

McKenzie said yes and that any seating or public space is not in the scope of this

design.

Commission Chair Wheeler opened the floor for public comment.

There was none.

Commissioner Johnson thinks the contemporary look fits with typical BBQ restaurants and what they are trying to achieve.

Commissioner Pearson asked if there are any historic photos on file.

Mr. Dandridge said there is one from an old assessor's card.

Pearson doesn't like metal siding and doesn't feel that it is the most appropriate material for the structure. The applicant could look to older photos and glass features from when the structure was a service station for inspiration.

Wheeler thinks the front view with the slope is nice but falls apart form-wise looking at the back due to the different heights. The form should be primary along the front and the clean slope of the building will be maintained.

This Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness was conceptually reviewed

6. [COA-125152-2023](#) 210 W Marshall Street - Construct a new four-story mixed-use building.

Attachments: [Application & Plans](#)
[Staff Report](#)

Alex Dandridge presented this application.

Pearson left at 5:15pm.

The applicant, Dave McNelly, noted that the existing warehouse onsite will be demolished. The building will feature a ground-floor commercial space such as an art gallery with apartments above. The design was informed by the Richmond 300 land use and node designations for the area. Metal siding is not intended to be the final material and they are open to feedback.

Vice Chair Moore asked about the east and west elevations of the building.

McNelly said the east side will be solid.

Commissioner Chair Wheeler opened the floor for public comment.

A representative from the Historic Jackson Ward Association approached the podium. The Association doesn't think the proposed building is compatible in scale and materiality with the neighboring buildings. The height of the entrance and commercial floor should be raised to align with the warehouse on the east side rather than the residential roofs on the west. Neighboring homes would also receive less natural light and be overshadowed. New construction should follow historical standards in scale in size and design social needs for families and small businesses.

Jean Burton approached the podium. She owns the warehouse next to the building. The construction of this structure will force her to move utility units off the side of her building.

A four-story building is too tall for the area.

Janice Allen, Board President of the Historic Jackson Ward Association, briefly spoke in support of the comments expressed by previous speakers.

A resident in the area expressed concerns about parking.

Wheeler thinks the façade could be flipped so the massing is heavier on the existing warehouse side to give some relief on the neighboring front porches. Since demolition is involved, the burden is on the applicant to provide documentation to staff and the Commission to ensure that the demolition meets all guidelines and checklists. He isn't sure about the height but setting back the 4th floor does help. He applauds the fact that the structure is brick in the front but thinks that there are better ways to articulate the brick to ensure it appears new. The side elevations could be a concern.

Vice Chair Moore agrees with flipping the façade. Softening the corner to the townhouses could be a good move. The current design emphasizes the poor relationship of the current warehouse to the neighboring buildings. He wants to know what the side elevations look like in context, particularly from the street. The minimalist design is also too severe. Sills would help. The first-floor terrace could be corrected with a railing or additional architecture. He is on the fence about the height.

Commissioner Grier understands that the Richmond 300 plan is used as a guide, but he thinks that the neighborhood has a better sense of the defining features of their neighborhoods. The general sense of residents is that the area is predominantly small scale, townhomes and the height may be too much.

Commissioner Johnson thinks the height is the biggest issue. There should be a bridge between the smaller structures and larger structures in the neighborhood. The project needs to act as a transitional piece.

Commissioner Brewer agrees with other Commissioners. The project must respect the neighboring, traditional houses. The Commission does not have purview over issues such as parking and utilities.

Commissioner Danese thinks the interaction with the street as compared with the neighboring porches doesn't improve from the existing warehouse. The current design also doesn't invite walkability.

This Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness was conceptually reviewed

Adjournment

This meeting was adjourned at 5:56pm.