



Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia



Commission of Architectural Review

2. COA-119351-2022	Final Review	Meeting Date: 10/25/2022
Applicant/Petitioner	Greg Shron, Center Creek Homes	
Project Description	Construct a new two-story detached dwelling on a vacant lot.	
Project Location		
Address: 535 Mosby Street		
Historic District: Union Hill		
<p>High-Level Details:</p> <p>The applicant proposes to construct a new, two-story, single-family dwelling on a vacant lot.</p> <p>The dwelling will be irregularly shaped, responding to the lot shape, and will be a contemporary design clad in horizontal fiber cement siding.</p>		
Staff Recommendation	Approval, with Conditions	
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, alex.dandridge@rva.gov , (804) 646-6569	
Previous Reviews	<p>This application was conceptually reviewed by the Commission at the September 2022 Meeting. Specifically, the Commission expressed concerns over the previously proposed second-story front façade projection, stating that it appeared visually heavy. The setback of the building was also discussed; the Commission advising the applicant to have a staggered setback to mimic the established setback pattern of the block. The Commission believed that the material selection could be simplified, and that horizontal siding with a similar reveal to historic siding in the district should be utilized rather than having the previously proposed 2 foot reveal.</p>	
Conditions for Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The stair handrails be simplified; the final design submitted to staff for review. • Windows either be wood or aluminum clad wood, and a final widow schedule be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dimensioned drawing of the proposed retaining wall, including details on material and how it will connect to the existing retaining walls on either side of the parcel, be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval.
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Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
<p>Siting, pg. 46, #s 2-3</p>	<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.</i></p> <p><i>3. New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site.</i></p>	<p>In the conceptual submittal, the proposed dwelling’s front setback was aligned with the existing historic dwelling located at 537 Mosby Street on the first level, but was proud of it on the second level.</p> <p>The Commission advised that the dwelling have a staggered setback to mimic the established setback pattern of the block.</p> <p>The applicant has revised the plans so that the dwelling will be proud of 537 Mosby, but set further back from 533 Mosby. Staff supports the proposed setback, finding that it reinforces the block’s established setback pattern.</p> <p>The dwelling will face the most prominent street, Mosby Street.</p>
<p>Form, pg. 46 #s1-3</p>	<p><i>1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district.</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.</i></p>	<p>The new dwelling will be irregular in shape, responding to the irregular shape of the lot, however a majority of the building form will not be visible from Mosby Street. The primary elevation on Mosby street will be about 9 feet wide. The city assessors card for the property indicates that the original dwelling on-site was narrow as well, being 15’ wide.</p> <p>The primary façade will feature a simple cornice detail, large, paired, single-pane windows and a contemporary canopy supported by cables over the primary entrance.</p> <p>The proposed dwelling will feature pedestrian scale elements, including a front porch with stairs leading to the sidewalk. The stair’s hand rails leading up to the front porch will be contemporary with horizontal pickets. <u>Staff recommends that the stair handrails be simplified; the final design submitted to staff for review.</u></p>

<p>Height, Width, Proportion, & Massing, pg. 47, #s 1-3</p>	<p><i>1. New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.</i></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>The proposed dwelling will respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.</p> <p>The proposed dwelling will respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in the surrounding historic districts.</p> <p>The proposed dwelling will generally respect the cornice heights of the neighboring buildings, however, given the contemporary design, the proposed dwelling doesn't have a prominent cornice feature.</p>
<p>Materials and Colors, pg. 47, #2</p>	<p><i>2. Materials used in new residential construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.</i></p>	<p>The proposed dwelling will feature fiber cement horizontal and panel siding, wood and glass exterior doors, a parged masonry foundation, composite trim, TPO roofing, and metal porch and stair railings. Staff finds that these materials are appropriate and consistent with new construction within City Old and Historic Districts.</p> <p>Window material was not included and dimensions were not listed on floor plans as indicated by the exterior finish schedule. <u>Staff recommends that the windows either be wood or aluminum clad wood, and that a final window schedule be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval.</u></p>
<p>New Construction, Doors and Windows, pg. 49 #3</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>The windows on the front façade appear to be a bit taller than the windows on other existing dwellings in the district, however will likely be closer in size to the windows at 533 Mosby, which is a newer, contemporary dwelling.</p>
<p>Mechanical Equipment, pg. 68</p>	<p><i>The visual impact of new mechanical equipment should be minimized to protect the historic character of the district.</i></p>	<p>It appears that exterior HVAC equipment will be located adjacent to secondary elevations, and screened from view.</p>
<p>Site Improvements, Sidewalks & Curbs, pg. 76</p>	<p><i>7. Sidewalks and curbs should be built of common building materials found throughout the District. Generally, simple paving designs are more compatible with the diverse building styles and better unify the various elements found on streets throughout Old and Historic Districts. The use of more than two paving materials within an area is discouraged.</i></p>	<p>A new retaining wall will need to be constructed along the sidewalk. <u>Staff recommends that a dimensioned drawing of the proposed retaining wall, including details on material and how it will connect to the existing retaining walls on either side of the parcel, be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval.</u></p>

Figures



Figure 1. Existing vacant lot at 535 Mosby Street



Figure 2. Original dwelling located at 535 Mosby Street. Demolished between 1997-1998.



Figure 3. 531-533 Mosby Street 1980



Figure 4. Vacant lot as seen from the east side of Mosby Street. Varying setbacks of dwellings.

