

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

11. **COA-016783-2017** (D. Kleyman)

**821 North 24<sup>th</sup> Street  
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

**Project Description:**

**Construct a new duplex.**

**Staff Contact:**

**M. Pitts**

The applicant requests approval to construction a duplex on a vacant lot in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. The residential character of the east side of the subject block consists of 2 story structures in a mix of Greek Revival, Italianate and Late Victorian single family and double houses. The structure to the north of the property is a 2-story, 4-bay, brick, Italianate mixed use building and to the south is a 2-story, 4-bay, frame, Greek Revival double house with a cross gable roof. The structures on the west side of the street are primarily 2 to 2 ½ story new single family homes constructed prior to the establishment of the District and a row of three Late Victorian, 2-story, brick houses.

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 proposed false mansard roof form. The Commission encouraged the applicant to propose a different building style as the block included a diversity of building styles on which to draw inspiration. The applicant has removed the second entry door and is proposing an alternate roof form 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 24'-8" 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 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 proposing to install two parking spaces at the rear of the lot.

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 adjacent property.

    

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

The adjoining buildings have similar setbacks which the proposed project will match.

    

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

The structure addresses North 24<sup>th</sup> 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 front door and front porch.

    

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

The typical heights of the surrounding buildings are 2 stories. The proposed structure is two stories and minimally taller than the nearest surrounding buildings.

    

**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**

The porch and cornice heights appear to be compatible though dimensions have not been provided on the context elevation for the adjacent structures.

**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. The proposed siding color is a cream color. Staff finds the materials are compatible with the frame structures found in the district with the following conditions:

- 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. Though the applicant did not decide to take advantage of the Commission's suggestion to provide a unique design for this location, staff supports the use of the proposed Italianate inspired design as it is compatible with the Italianate structures found throughout the district.

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.