



Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia



Commission of Architectural Review

13. COA-164398-2025	Conceptual Review	Meeting Date: 4/22/2025
Applicant/Petitioner	Jean Carlos	
Project Description	Construct a new three-story single-Family home	
Project Location		
Address: 1924 Princess Anne Ave, Richmond, VA 23223		
Historic District: Union Hill		
<p>High-Level Details:</p> <p>The application proposes an infill construction of a new three-and-a-half story single-family dwelling on a vacant parcel located between 1922 and 1926 Princess Anne Street. The proposed structure features full-length front and rear porches, with a second-story front balcony.</p> <p>The design incorporates a mansard roof on the main elevation and a pitched gable roof on the rear elevation, as well as red and tan brick veneer, aluminum-clad windows with cast stone and brick detailing, and Tuscan columns supporting the porch.</p>		
Staff Recommendation	Conceptual Review	
Staff Contact	Yara Iwaz, Yara.Iwaz@RVA.gov, (804)646-6031	
Previous Reviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • N/A 	
Staff Recommendations	<p>Staff finds the proposed design for 1924 Princess Anne Street to be generally compatible with the character of the Union Hill Old and Historic District. However, a number of inconsistencies and missing details in the submittal must be addressed in future submissions. Staff recommends the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain the alignment with adjacent structures. • Reduce the height of the building to 2½ stories to better align with the surrounding contributing buildings. • Provide a complete roof plan, including pitch directions and intersections. • Submit revised and coordinated elevation drawings for all sides, and ensuring rear elevations reflect realistic massing and projections. • Revise the floor plans, to provide a consistent and functional layout. • Specify the location and screening of HVAC units and other mechanical elements. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide contextual street elevation drawings including neighboring buildings at 1922 and 1926 Princess Anne. • Reconfigure the window placement on the primary façade to reflect the symmetrical and equidistant spacing found on contributing building on the block. • Include additional historic reference elements, such as transom windows, sidelights and dormers, to align more closely with the streetscape. • Adopt a design that reflects the proportions of porches found on contributing structures in the district; this includes attention to the visual weight, level of ornament, height, and relationship with the entry façade. • Provide detailed drawings and dimensions for the proposed railings.
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Staff Analysis

Surrounding Context		
<p>The subject property is located towards the end of the block on Princess Anne Avenue, with Mosby Street to the east. In the Union Hill Historic District. This portion of the street consists almost entirely of two- and two-and-a-half-story frame dwellings, primarily in the Colonial Revival and Queen Anne. Most buildings feature front porches, transoms, brick foundations, and ornamented cornices, establishing a uniform streetscape rhythm. The immediate block is fully built out, with closely spaced dwellings on narrow lots and minimal yard setbacks. The block conveys a cohesive and well-preserved historic character typical of Union Hill.</p>		
Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
New Construction: Siting, p.46	<i>2. New residential infill construction should respect the prevailing front and side yard setback patterns of the surrounding block.</i>	<p>The proposed home sits between two existing dwellings and appears to respect the block's setbacks and spacing.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends maintaining the alignment with adjacent structures.</u></p>
Standards for New Construction: Height, Width, Proportions & Massing, p.47	<i>1. New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.</i>	<p>The Princess Anne streetscape features almost entirely of 2½-story buildings, typically with dormers set within sloped rooflines. The proposed building rises to 3½ stories, which significantly exceeds the height of adjacent residential buildings and creates a vertical mass out of scale with the immediate context.</p> <p><u>Staff Recommends reducing the height of the building to 2½ stories to better align with the surrounding contributing buildings.</u> The upper floor can be integrated into a sloped roof form with dormers if additional living space is needed, as is typical throughout the district.</p>
Standards for New Construction: Form, p.46	<i>1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district. Building form refers to the specific combination of massing, size, symmetry, proportions, projections and roof shapes that lend identity to a building. Form</i>	<p>The gable roof form and overall massing, while not in keeping with the adjacent structures that feature a stepped roof and parapet, can be found elsewhere in the district.</p>

	<i>is greatly influenced by the architectural style of a given structure.</i>	<p>However, the lack of a roof plan prevents a full review; elevation drawings suggest intersecting slopes would create valleys.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends providing a complete roof plan, including pitch directions and intersections.</u></p>
Standards For New Construction: Doors and Windows, p.56	<i>2. The size, proportion and spacing patterns of door and window openings on free-standing new construction should be compatible with patterns established in the district</i>	<p>Elevation drawings are inconsistent, particularly with dormers and rear elevation elements (dormers are shown in a side elevation but not on the main one).</p> <p>In addition, staff observed inconsistencies in the interior floor plans, specifically that the kitchen does not appear to have access from the dining room.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends submitting revised and coordinated elevation drawings for all sides, and ensuring rear elevations reflect realistic massing and projections.</u></p> <p><u>In addition, staff recommends revising the floor plans, to provide a consistent and functional layout.</u></p>
Mechanical Equipment, HVAC Equipment, P.68	<i>1. New units should be placed in side or rear yards so as to minimize their visual impact. Side yard units should be located as far away from the front of the building as possible. 2. Rooftop units should be located so that they are minimally visible from the public right-of-way, and screening should be considered.</i>	<p>The drawings do not show a parapet, and no further information is provided on HVAC placement or screening.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends specifying the location and screening of HVAC units and other mechanical elements.</u></p>
New Construction: Form, p.46	<i>1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district. Building form refers to the specific combination of massing, size, symmetry, proportions, projections and roof shapes that lend identity to a building. Form is greatly influenced by the architectural style of a given structure.</i>	<p>The submittal lacks contextual information. Without it, it is difficult to evaluate scale and rhythm compatibility.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends providing contextual street elevation drawings including neighboring buildings at 1922 and 1926 Princess Anne.</u></p>
Standards For New Construction: Doors and Windows, p.56	<i>2. The size, proportion and spacing patterns of door and window openings on free-standing new construction should be compatible with patterns established in the district</i>	<p>The proposed south-facing primary façade includes two windows placed closely together near the center of the elevation, appearing as a cluster. This configuration departs significantly from the established fenestration rhythm along Princess Anne Street, where windows are typically evenly spaced across the façade, and framed by a consistent amount of wall surface. Historic dwellings in the district (including those in the Colonial Revival style) exhibit symmetrical, regularly spaced window arrangements, contributing to their balanced appearance.</p> <p>Additionally, as the south-facing façade receives the most sunlight, the design presents a missed opportunity to maximize</p>

		<p>light into the interior through a more expansive and evenly distributed window arrangement. The current clustered design emphasizes blank wall space on either side, which disrupts the visual balance expected of buildings in this block.</p> <p><u>Staff Recommends reconfiguring the window placement on the primary façade to reflect the symmetrical and equidistant spacing found on contributing buildings in the district.</u></p> <p>The revised design should provide a more typical window-to-wall ratio, with equidistant openings distributed across the façade and even spacing between openings, appropriate scale relative to the wall area.</p>
<p>Standards for New Construction: Form, page 46</p>	<p><i>3. New residential construction and additions should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps into their design. In Richmond, porches were historically an integral part of residential design and provide much of the street-level architectural character of Richmond's historic districts.</i></p>	<p>The Street features a consistent rhythm of human-scaled elements, including transom windows above doors, sidelights, dormers, articulated cornices, and traditional window proportions. These elements contribute to the visual richness and architectural continuity of the street. While the proposed building includes some traditional detailing, such as Tuscan columns and a full-length porch, several typical elements are either missing or not clearly illustrated.</p> <p><u>Staff Recommends including additional historic reference elements, such as transom windows, sidelights and dormers, to align more closely with the streetscape.</u> Drawings should clearly indicate the presence and scale of these features to reinforce contextual compatibility and enhance pedestrian scale.</p>
<p>New Construction: Porches and Porch Details, p.46</p>	<p><i>1. Porch railings and balustrades are important character-defining features of historic buildings. The proportions of these railings are a significant contributing feature to the appearance of both the individual structure and the character of the entire neighborhood.</i></p>	<p>The proposed full-width front porch is a welcome and appropriate element within the context of Princess Anne Street. With a depth of approximately 6 feet (as seen on Figure 4), it offers a functional and livable outdoor space, aligning with the district's standards. This depth also contributes positively to the pedestrian experience and helps reinforce the building's residential identity.</p> <p>However, the porch design is minimally detailed in the submission. On this block, porches are defining architectural features, typically exhibiting turned balusters, decorative posts, or distinct railings, which together express the building's scale and style. While the proposed porch has the potential to contribute meaningfully to the streetscape, its lack of visible detailing makes it difficult to evaluate compatibility.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends adopting a design that reflects the proportions of porches found on contributing structures in the district; this</u></p>

		<p><u>includes attention to the visual weight, level of ornament, height, and relationship with the entry façade.</u></p> <p>Additionally, railings are a highly visible and character-defining element along Princess Anne Street. They vary in style (turned wooden balusters, Richmond railings) but maintain a consistent scale and rhythm. The proposed design includes a pressure-treated railing but does not specify the railing's height or detailed profile.</p> <p><u>Staff Recommends providing detailed drawings and dimensions for the proposed railings.</u></p>
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It is the assessment of staff that, with the conditions above, the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation and New Construction outlined in Section 30-930.7 (b) and (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 the code.

Figures



Figure 1

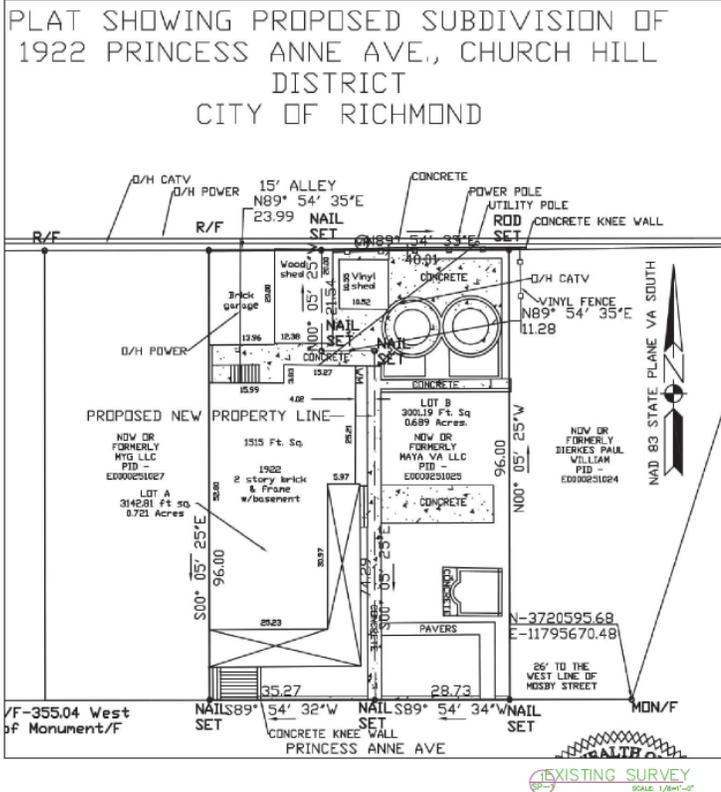
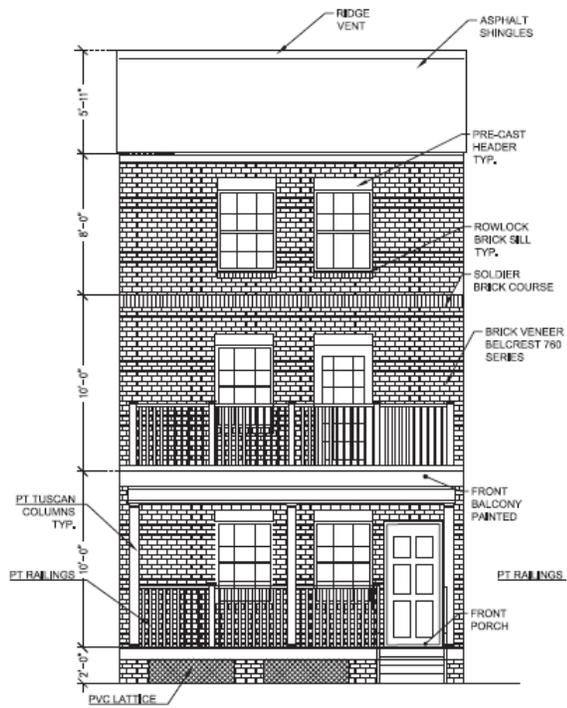
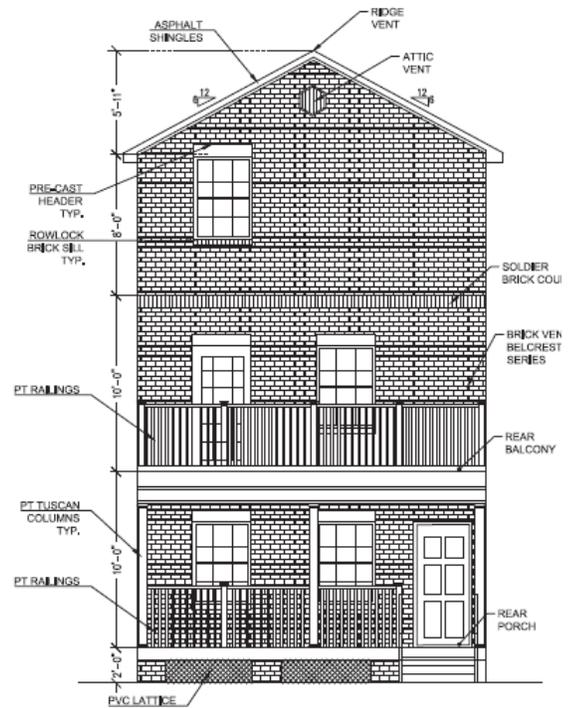


Figure 2



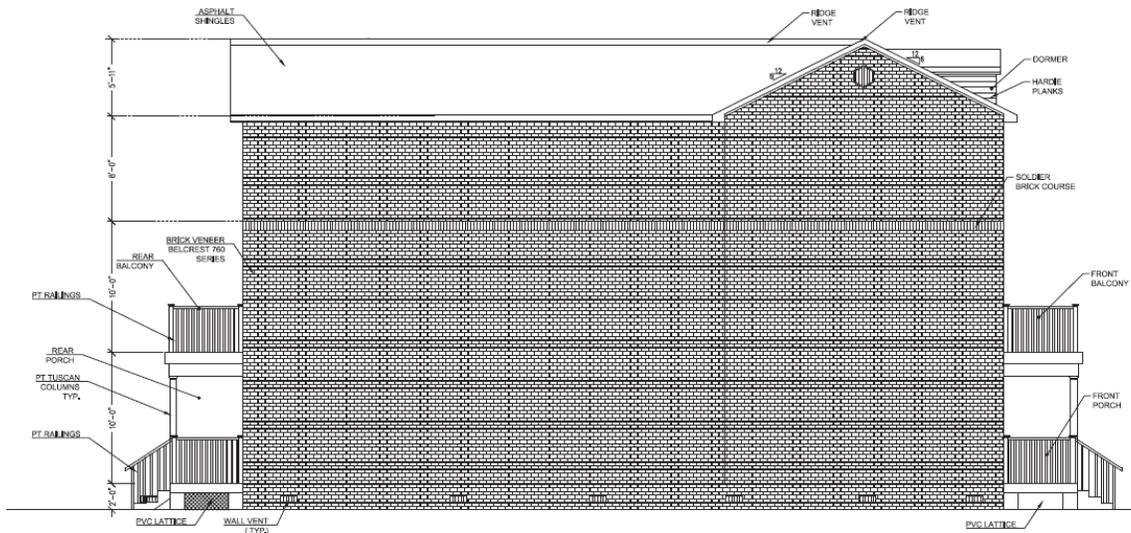
1 FRONT ELEVATION
A-2 SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"

Figure 5



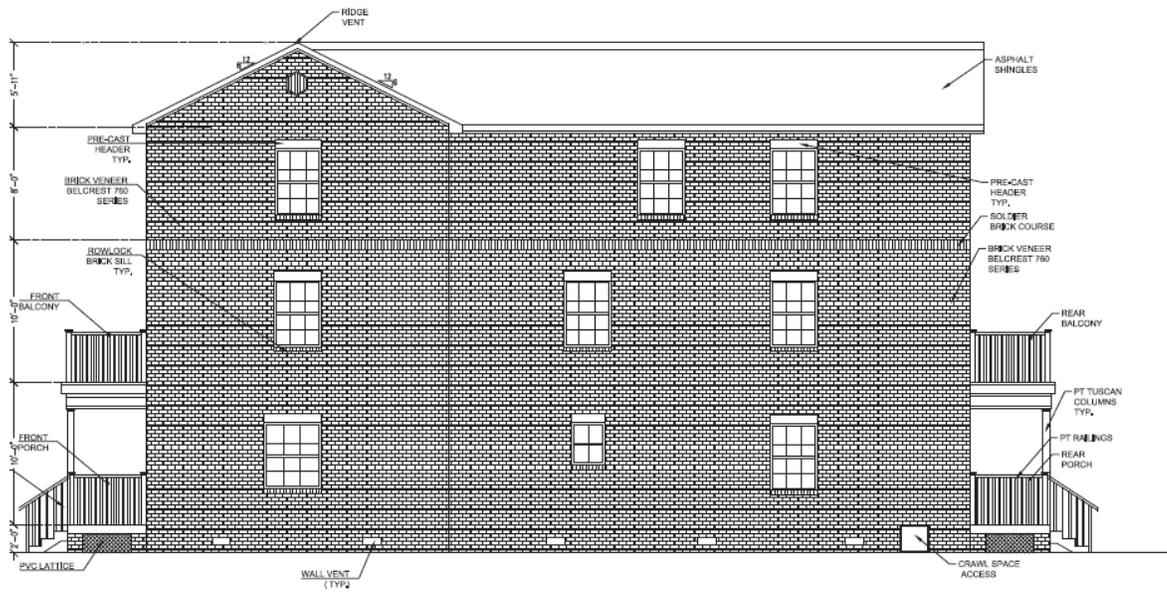
1 REAR ELEVATION
A-3 SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"

Figure 6



2 LEFT ELEVATION
A-5 SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"

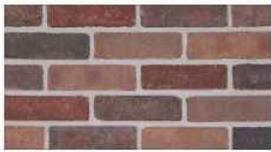
Figure 7



2 RIGHT ELEVATION
A-2 SCALE: 1/4"=1'-0"

Figure 8

Belcrest 760



Manufacturer

The Belden Brick Company

DESCRIPTION

Range of dark red, dusty tan, and black with cross sets in a sandmold texture

Figure 9