

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
June 26, 2018 Meeting**

12. **COA-036154-2018** (B. Robinson)

**1901-1903 O Street
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

Project Description:

Construct a new duplex.

Staff Contact:

C. Jeffries

Proposal: The applicant requests conceptual review and comment on the construction of a duplex on a vacant lot in the Union Hill Old and Historic District.

The applicant is proposing to construct a two-story frame duplex with a 5-bay façade and a recessed sixth bay. The structure will have a 1-story 3-bay entry porch and a 2-story inset porch on the recessed bay. The structure will have a minimally sloped roof and an Italianate-inspired cornice. The windows will be vertically aligned, 4/4, double hung windows. The applicant is proposing a small 1-story storage area with a shed roof at the rear of the structure.

Surrounding Context: Due to widespread demolition in this area no structures remain that address O Street on the subject block. A two-story six-bay brick double house remains at the intersection of Carrington and O Streets. The house is vacant and in disrepair. The residential character of the east side of Mosby Street, directly west of the parcel, consists of 2 to 2 ½ story structures in a mix of Greek Revival, Italianate and Late Victorian architectural styles. The structures are frame and brick, 3-bay structures with full façade porches. Structures on 21st Street, south of the subject block, are primarily 2-story brick structures on a raised basement. O Street represents the boundary of the Union Hill Old and Historic District, and the parcels on the north side of O Street are not within the District. These parcels have been developed with multifamily housing that have undulating elevations, are 2 stories in height, and are clad with siding and brick. The subject lot was previously developed with a 2-story 4-bay frame double house.

The applicant is seeking **Conceptual Review** for this project. Conceptual review is covered under Sec. 30-930.6(d) of the City Code: The commission shall review and discuss the proposal with the applicant and make any necessary recommendations. Such Conceptual Review shall be advisory only. 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

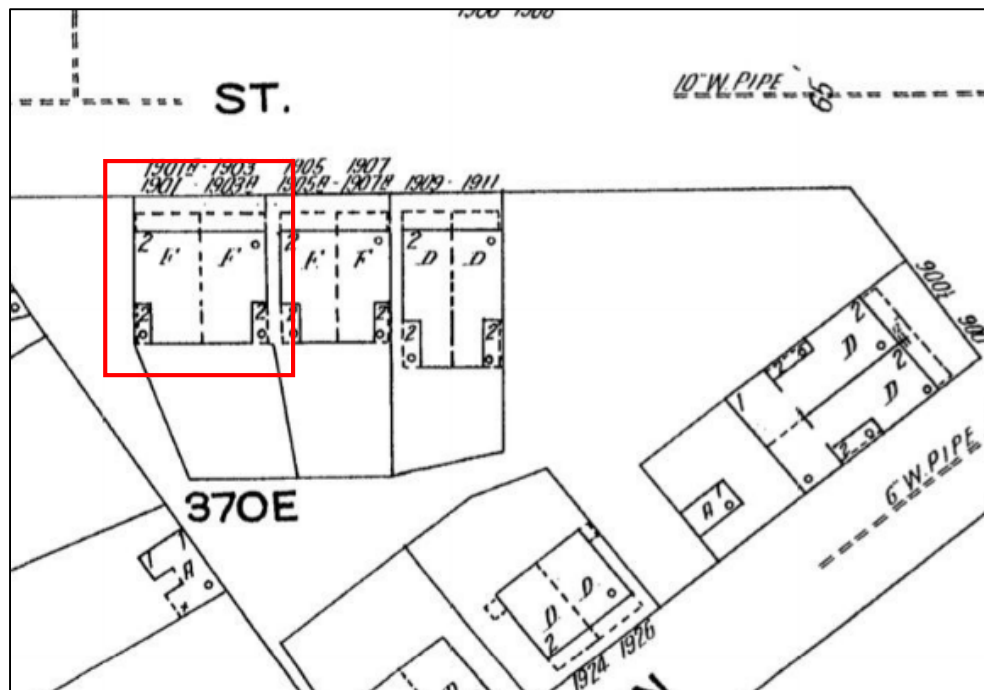
S **D** **NA**

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

There are no adjacent buildings to the proposed structure and the applicant has not provided a site plan showing the proposed setback.

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

There are no adjacent buildings to the proposed structure on the subject block. The historic pattern for the block is shown below.



1925 Sanborn Map of the 1900 block of O Street

New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site

The structure addresses O 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 utilizes elements found on structures nearby including a symmetrical façade, shed roof, front porch, and 2-story height. Staff finds that the proposed roof structure over the 2-story front porch is not a building form found in the district. Staff recommends that the porch roof design be modified to be consistent with porch roofs found in the district.

Staff also has concerns that the distance between the top of the 2nd story windows and the cornice is not consistent with the proportions found in the historic structures in the district.

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

The proposed project incorporates human-scale elements including front porches, front steps and a cornice. Staff has concerns that the proposed structure attempts to use design elements inspired by varying styles of architecture. For this reason, staff recommends a simplified cornice rather than the proposed Italianate cornice.

New construction should respect the typical height of surrounding buildings

The typical heights of the surrounding buildings are 2 stories. The proposed structure is also two stories.

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

The proposed project is similar in width to double houses in the surrounding area. The project façade also maintains the vertical alignment and symmetry of surrounding buildings.

The size, proportion, and spacing patterns of doors and window openings should be compatible with patterns established in the district.

The proposed windows are vertically aligned and symmetrically placed which is consistent with patterns in the district.

Porch and cornice heights should be compatible with adjacent buildings

A context elevation was not provided as part of this application, however the proposed structure will not be adjacent to any existing 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 submitted plans do not include details on materials other than the indication that a brick foundation and metal roof are proposed. Details of the proposed materials will need to be submitted for final review.

The following items will need to be included for final review:

1. Vertical dimensions on the elevations to include the window head and sill heights
2. List of all windows and doors, including size, material, and design
3. Details of the proposed cornice
4. Details on all proposed materials
5. Site plan
6. A detailed statement of how the project conforms to the *Guidelines*.