



Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia



Commission of Architectural Review

6. COA-125152-2023	Conceptual Review Meeting Date: 2/28/2023
Applicant/Petitioner	Danny MacNelly
Project Description	Construct a new four-story mixed-use building.
Project Location	
Address: Construct a new four-story mixed-use building.	
Historic District: Jackson Ward	
<p>High-Level Details:</p> <p>The applicant proposes to construct a four-story, 8-unit apartment building with ground floor commercial. The existing one-story, masonry warehouse building ca. 1970 will be demolished in order to construct the new building.</p> <p>Original two-story masonry building was demolished in 1970. Warehouse constructed in 1970 as a printing office.</p>	
Staff Recommendation	Conceptual Review
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, alex.dandridge@rva.gov , (804) 646-6569
Previous Reviews	None.
Staff Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size of the storefront window and height of the first floor be reduced. • Applicant consider additional ways to decrease the height of the proposed building. • Window and door dimensions be submitted with final review, and the dimensions of the storefront windows and residential windows align more closely to historic window dimensions found in the district • Applicant remove vertical metal siding from the design and include a more compatible material such as horizontal siding, or solid panels. • Location of HVAC equipment be submitted with the final review, and that exterior HVAC equipment be located so that it is not visible from the public right-of-way. • Applicant consider decreasing the width of the area above the store front by using a more transparent roof terrace

	<p>railing that is differentiated in material from the ground-floor front façade.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Details on trash receptacles and screening be submitted with the final review.
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Staff Analysis

Guideline/Code Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
<p>Richmond City Code, Sec. 30-930.7(d)</p>	<p><i>The Commission of Architectural Review shall not issue a certificate of appropriateness for demolition of any building or structure within an old and historic district, unless the applicant can show that there are no feasible alternatives to demolition. The demolition of historic buildings and elements in old and historic districts is strongly discouraged. The demolition of any building deemed by the Commission to be not a part of the historic character of an old and historic district shall be permitted. The demolition of any building that has deteriorated beyond the point of being feasibly rehabilitated is permissible, where the applicant can satisfy the Commission as to the infeasibility of rehabilitation. The Commission may adopt additional demolition standards for the review of certificates of appropriateness applications to supplement these standards.</i></p>	<p>In order to construct the new mixed-use building, the existing, one-story, masonry warehouse will need to be demolished. When describing the character of Jackson Ward, the <i>Guidelines</i> state that, “Jackson Ward remains one of the least altered residential neighborhoods in the City. There are excellent examples of Federal, Greek Revival, Italianate and Queen Anne style houses throughout the District.” The existing warehouse was constructed in 1970, and its mid-century industrial style doesn’t relate to the overall historic character of the district. In fact, the original dwelling on the site, a two-story, masonry, Italianate dwelling with a single-bay one-story front porch was demolished in 1970. The warehouse is not original to the site and was not built to resemble the charter of the district of the sites original dwelling.</p> <p>Information was not submitted on the overall condition of the building, however the City of Richmond Assessor’s Office lists the building’s condition as being “normal for its age”.</p> <p>The new building that would replace the warehouse would not only provide a new commercial use, but would also provide more density and dwelling units to this area. Staff believes that a new mixed-use building on this site would be a better use of the property.</p>
<p>Standards for New Construction: Commercial, Siting, pg. 52</p>	<p><i>2. New commercial infill construction should respect the prevailing front and side yard development patterns of the surrounding block. The minimum setbacks evident in most districts reinforce the traditional street wall. In</i></p>	<p>The proposed new construction will feature ground-floor commercial. The commercial portion of the building will be proud of the neighboring residential building but will have a similar set-back to the existing warehouse to the east. It is not uncommon in Jackson</p>

	<p><i>cases where the adjoining buildings have different setbacks, the setback for the new building should be based on the historical pattern for the block.</i></p> <p><i>3. New commercial buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site.</i></p>	<p>Ward for commercial spaces to have been built onto the front of existing residential buildings, resulting on projecting commercial spaces.</p> <p>The ground-floor commercial will face W. Marshall Street which is the most prominent street.</p>
<p>Standards for New Construction: Commercial, Form, pg. 52</p>	<p><i>1. New commercial construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the immediate area. Building form refers to the specific combination of massing, size, symmetry, proportions, projections and roof shapes that lend identity to a building. Building form is greatly influenced by the architectural style of a given structure.</i></p> <p><i>2. New commercial construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic commercial buildings in the district.</i></p> <p><i>3. New commercial construction should incorporate human-scale elements at the pedestrian level.</i></p>	<p>The proposed new construction will have a similar width to existing buildings on the block, but the overall form will be atypical. In order to reduce visibility of the upper floors, there will be a series of step backs with each successive floor. This form is uncommon in the district.</p> <p>While specific dimensions were not provided for the conceptual review of this application, the overall proportions of the building including the commercial façade, and the residential facades appear to be larger than historic storefronts and residential facades in the district.</p> <p>The building will have flat roofs which is a common roof form found in the district.</p>
<p>Standards for New Construction, Storefront Facades, pg. 55</p>	<p><i>1. Historically, storefronts were defined by simple piers, large storefront windows, a cornice, and a signboard and/or attached signage.</i></p> <p><i>2. Street-level commercial facades should not have blank walls. Commercial activity at the ground-floor level enhances the streetscape by providing visual interest to passersby.</i></p>	<p>The proposed storefront features large windows, however doesn't incorporate traditional elements historically found on the districts historic storefronts such as piers, cornice, and a signboard. Since the overall design of the building is more contemporary than traditional, staff supports the modern storefront.</p> <p>The front façade of the proposed building does not have blank walls.</p>
<p>Standards for New Construction: Commercial, Height, Width, Proportion & Massing, pg. 53</p>	<p><i>1. New commercial construction should respect the typical height of surrounding buildings, both residential and commercial.</i></p> <p><i>2. New commercial construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of commercial buildings in Richmond's historic districts. New designs that call for wide massing should look to the project's local district for precedent.</i></p> <p><i>3. The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i></p>	<p>The new proposed building is taller than the existing residential and industrial buildings found on either side of it, however it is similar in height to the large apartment building located on the south side of W. Marshall Street.</p> <p>The ground floor appears to be taller than the other floors on the building. Staff finds that the scale of the storefront window is too large, and the overall height of the building may be decreased if the ground floor was the same height as the other floors. <u>Staff recommends that the size of the storefront</u></p>

		<p><u>window and height of the first floor be reduced.</u></p> <p>W. Marshall Street features a mixture of 2 & 3 story residences, some on raised foundations. Staff supports additional height in this location, however believes that four stories is atypical of the district. While there is a larger, taller apartment building to the south of the site, staff notes that the height and scale of that building is not typical of the Jackson Ward COHD. <u>Staff recommends the applicant consider additional ways to decrease the height of the proposed building.</u></p> <p>There is not a traditional cornice element proposed for the building, however the</p>
<p>Standards for New Construction, Doors and Windows, pg. 56</p>	<p><i>1. The size, proportion and spacing patterns of door and window openings on a new addition should follow patterns established by the original structure. Windows on most commercial properties throughout Old and Historic Districts have a vertical orientation. Wide, horizontal so-called “picture windows” on new additions are strongly discouraged.</i></p> <p><i>2. The size, proportion, and spacing patterns of door and window openings on free standing new construction should be compatible with patterns established within the district.</i></p>	<p>While specific widow and door dimensions were not provided for conceptual review, it appears from the renderings that both the storefront windows, and the residential apartment windows will be larger than what is historically found in the district. <u>Staff recommends that window and door dimensions be submitted with final review, and the dimensions of the storefront windows and residential windows align more closely to historic window dimensions found in the district.</u></p>
<p>Standards for New Construction: Commercial, Materials & Colors, pg. 53</p>	<p><i>2. Materials used in new construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the surrounding neighborhood.</i></p> <p><i>3. Paint colors used should be similar to the historically appropriate colors already found in the immediate neighborhood and throughout the larger district (see Painting Section starting on page 60).</i></p> <p><i>4. Vinyl, asphalt, and aluminum siding are not permitted for use in City Old and Historic Districts. Other synthetic siding materials with a smooth, untextured finish may be allowed in limited cases, but approval by the Commission is always required.</i></p>	<p>The new construction will be clad in brick and vertical metal siding. Brick is a common material found within the district; however, vertical metal siding is not. <u>Staff recommends that the applicant remove vertical metal siding from the design and include a more compatible material such as horizontal siding, or solid panels.</u></p> <p><u>Staff recommends that the location of HVAC equipment be submitted with the final review, and that exterior HVAC equipment be located so that it is not visible from the public right-of-way.</u></p> <p>There will be a roof terrace above the projecting portion of the ground floor commercial space. It appears from the rendering that a brick parapet wall will serve</p>

	<p>5. Rooftop mechanical equipment should be located as discretely as possible to limit visibility. In addition, appropriate screening should be provided to conceal equipment from view. When rooftop railings are required for seating areas or for safe access to mechanical equipment, the railings should be as unobtrusive as possible, in order to minimize their appearance and visual impact on the surrounding district.</p> <p>6. For larger-scale projects that involve communal garbage collection (such as dumpsters or other large collection device), these garbage receptacles should be located away from the primary elevation or elevations of the building (preferably to the rear) and screened from view.</p>	<p>as the railing around that space. Having the brick parapet wall as an extension of the brick on the front façade gives the appearance of additional building height. <u>Staff recommends decreasing the visual width of the area above the store front by using a more transparent roof terrace railing that is differentiated in material from the ground-floor front façade.</u></p> <p><u>Staff recommends details on trash receptacles and screening be submitted with the final review.</u></p>
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Figures

Figure 1. Existing masonry warehouse, 210 W. Marshall Street.



Figure 2. Sanborn Map, 1924

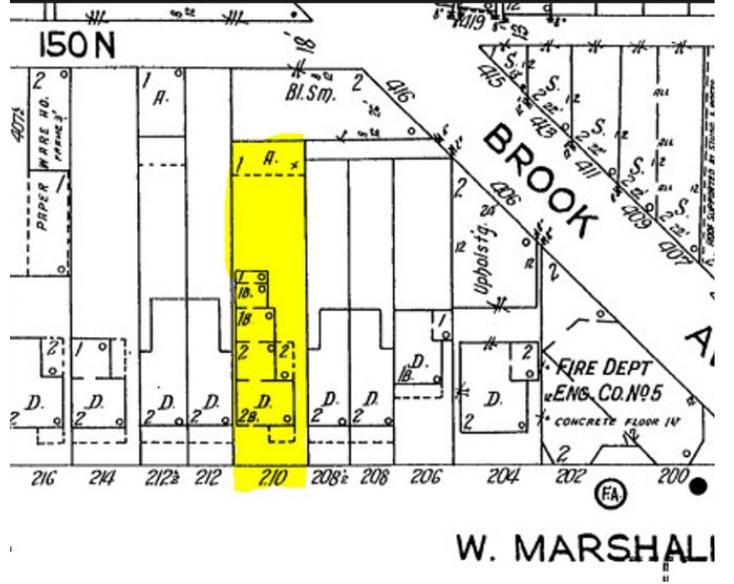


Figure 3. W. Marshall Street, varying building heights



Figure 4. W. Marshall Street, varying building heights



Figure 3. Subject Block



Figure 4. Subject Block



Figure 7. View from rear alley.

