

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW  
STAFF REPORT  
October 25, 2016 Meeting**

12. **CAR No. 16-154** (M. Jarreau)

**3005-3007 East Franklin Street  
St. John's Church Old and Historic District**

**Project Description:**

**Rehabilitate a multifamily building  
and construct new multifamily buildings.**

**Staff Contact:**

**M. Pitts**

The applicant requests final review to rehabilitated an existing 2-story, gable-roofed concrete block apartment building and construct two, new structures at the front and rear of a lot in the in the St. John's Church Old and Historic District.

The existing apartment building is listed as a non-contributing structure in the National Registered-listed St. John's Church Historic District. The applicant proposes to clad the structure with cementitious siding with an 8" exposure in Night Gray which is similar to Classic French Gray, #6 on the Commission's paint palette. The applicant proposes to install new aluminum clad windows in the existing openings some of which will be altered to lower the sill heights. The applicant proposes to remove the rear porches and construct 2 story porches to face the interior of the lot. The applicant proposes to clad the north end of the existing building in brick veneer and introduce new doors, windows, and porches that address Franklin Street.

In addition to the rehabilitation, the applicant proposes to construct two, 2-story brick structures with flat roofs on the property. One structure is at the front of the property and the other is at the rear. Both structures will be 25' by 40'-8" and 25' tall.

The proposed project is located on the south side of Franklin Street between the intersection of N. 29th Street to the west and N. 31st Street to the east. The street slopes steeply down to the east. With the exception of a free standing, Late-Victorian, frame, two-story, three-bay dwelling on the north side of Franklin Street and the subject two-story concrete block apartment building and a similar two-story concrete block apartment building to the east on the south side of Franklin, the area is sparsely developed. Further to the east, facing N. 31st Street are two rows of frame Late-Victorian dwellings. To the west facing 29th Street are densely developed blocks of predominately three-bay brick dwellings built in the mid to late nineteenth century that are two to four stories in height. Across the street from the subject property, the Commission has approved several new three-story buildings including two attached frame single family homes which are currently under construction.

This proposal was conceptually reviewed by the Commission at the July 26, 2016 meeting. The Commission generally agreed with staffs concerns regarding the fact that the proposed project did not address East Franklin and the fenestration of the East Franklin façade was not consistent with the District as it included horizontally oriented windows and windows which spanned two stories.

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**  
     

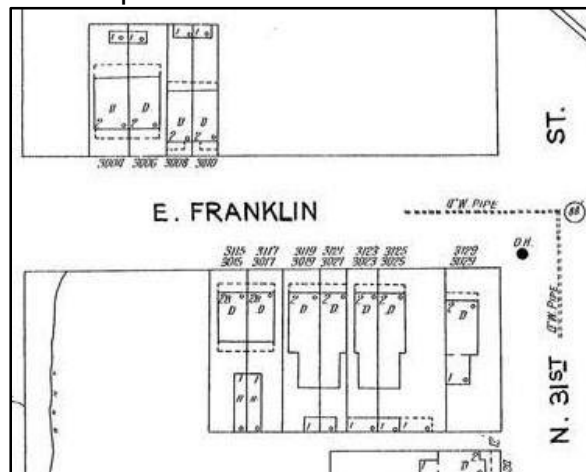
**New infill construction should respect the prevailing front and side yard setback patterns in the surrounding district**

The surrounding area is sparsely developed, but the proposed new construction is setback 15 feet which is consistent with the proposed new development across the street.

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

The subject block has been altered through the years, as seen in the Sanborn Map below. The proposed new construction restores a building presence closer to the sidewalk as was the historical pattern for the block.



Richmond 1924-1925 vol. 2, 1925 Sanborn Map

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

The applicant has modified the plans since conceptual review to allow for both the new construction and the existing building to better address East Franklin Street. The proposal includes porches and doors with direct access to East Franklin 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.**

Staff finds the massing, size, and roof shape are compatible with that found elsewhere in the district. The applicant has modified the plans to include fenestration of consistent vertical orientation of windows and a limited range of window sizes which are both more characteristic of the district. Additionally, the applicant is proposing to clad the front of the existing structure with a more typical brick façade rather than the previously proposed screening wall which was not a building form found in the district.

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

The proposed project has been revised to include cornices, porches, and front steps which address East Franklin.

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

The proposed new construction is consistent with the height of the existing structure.

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

The proposed project respects the typical three bay pattern with the façade of the existing building and the center element of the façade of the new construction. The fenestration of the facades respects the symmetry and vertical alignment which characterize the district. Staff has a concern regarding the asymmetrical placement of the porch columns on the façade of the new construction as the typical building form in the district includes even column placement. Staff recommends the column placement be revised to be even and to include a column at the end of the railing.

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

The windows on structures in the district are typically of similar size, regularly placed, and ranked. The applicant is proposing ranked windows, and has revised the plans to limit the sizes of the new windows and to vertically orient all windows.

- Porch and cornice heights should be compatible with adjacent buildings**

The porch and cornice heights are compatible with buildings in the district.

- 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 utilizes brick, aluminum clad windows and cementitious siding. These materials are compatible with original materials in the district. The applicant has revised the plans to move the garbage collection from the front of the building to the rear of the parking lot.

**Staff recommends approval of this project with a condition.** Staff finds the proposed project with the noted condition regarding the column placement meets the Commission's *Guidelines*.

It is the assessment of staff that the application, with the noted conditions, 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.