

primarily of red brick set on a 1 ½ story base of limestone or limestone colored brick. The project includes 4 story balcony structures on the 5 story portion of the West Grace Street elevation. The Lombardy Street elevation incorporates an entrance centered on the elevation and minor undulations in the building wall and material changes to emphasize this entrance. The windows are primarily 2/2 single or paired windows which are vertically aligned. Parking will be provided underground and on the first floor and will be accessible only from the alley.

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 proposed construction through the lens of the “Standards for New Construction: Commercial” on pages 52-56 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’s report states the proposed setback will be 15’ to be consistent with the adjacent property. While the neighborhood context map indicates the structure will align with the adjacent structure, the site plan shows the proposed structure will be set behind the adjacent structure. Staff recommends that the applicant provide a dimensioned context site plan to review. Staff recommends the front yard setback be consistent with the adjacent structure.

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

The property is a corner lot with one adjacent structure.

New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site

As the property is a corner lot, the structure has been designed to address both West Grace and North Lombardy Streets. The applicant is proposing a large staircase to access the raised courtyard from West Grace Street. The plans also include a primary entrance from North Lombardy Street and undulations and material changes to emphasize this entrance.

Parking within the building is strongly encouraged with vehicle entry doors located on non-primary elevations

The proposed parking will be within the building and accessible from the alley.

- 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 proposed H-shape is appropriate and appreciates how the design breaks up the building massing. While the presence of a first story with a terrace above is not a building form found in the district, the applicant has modified the plans to include a grand staircase which is similar to the design of the staircase on the adjacent property which accesses the front courtyard.

Though the project incorporates multi-story porches along the West Grace Street elevation, the depth of the balconies is not known. As substantial multi-story porch structures of usable depth which extend to the upper story of apartment buildings are characteristic of the District, staff recommends the applicant confirm the depth of the porches on West Grace Street and extend the porch structures to the 5th floor.

As heavy cornices are found in the district, staff recommends the applicant incorporate a more substantial cornice.

- New construction should incorporate human-scale elements at the pedestrian level. Street level elevations should not have expanses of blank walls**

The applicant has provided pedestrian entrances and glazing on the West Grace Street and North Lombardy elevations.

- New storefronts should be compatible with historic storefronts within the district. Storefronts are traditionally defined by simple piers, large storefront windows, a cornice, a signboard and/or attached signage and awnings**

The applicant has incorporated storefront glazing on West Grace and North Lombardy Street.

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

Though the structure is taller than the structures on West Grace Street, the West Grace Street and adjacent Monument Avenue Old and Historic Districts are characterized by a diversity in heights with taller buildings often found on prominent corners. Staff finds the proposed building height provides an appropriate transition from the taller institutional and multifamily buildings on Monument Avenue and smaller scale row houses and apartment buildings on West Grace Street. The applicant has responded to the Commission's concerns by setting back the 6th story from West Grace Street.

- New construction should respect the typical width, organization of bays, vertical alignment and symmetry of surrounding buildings. For larger buildings, bays should be employed as an**

organizational device but the building should read as a single piece of architecture

Though the structure is wider than the apartment buildings on West Grace Street, the H-shape configuration breaks up the massing in a three part configuration which is consistent with numerous apartment buildings on West Grace Street. The applicant has also used variations in height and minor changes in setbacks to break up the massing on the North Lombardy Street elevation.

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

The applicant is proposing symmetrical, vertically aligned window placement on the primary elevations. Staff recommends the southernmost bay on the North Lombardy Street elevation be designed to match the adjacent bays. The 2/2 lite configuration is consistent with windows in the District.

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

A dimensioned context elevation along West Grace Street has not been provided. Staff encourages the applicant to incorporate substantial multi-story porch structures which extend to the upper story rather than applied balconies.

- Materials used in new construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district. Vinyl, asphalt, and aluminum siding are not permitted.**

As the district is characterized by brick construction, staff supports the use of the brick and limestone or limestone colored brick. Staff recommends the limestone base terminate at the window sill height as is characteristic of the district rather than the proposed height. Staff also recommends the proposed soldier course details line up with window head and sill heights.

The following items will need to be included for final review (please refer to the Commission's New Construction Checklist and Required Dimensions document for additional details):

1. Fully dimensioned elevations
2. Roof plan
3. List of windows and doors to include size, material, and design
4. Description of all materials (attach specification sheets if necessary)
5. Site plan to include parking, trash, and mechanical equipment locations and dimension of the porches.
6. Dimensioned context elevation and site plan