



Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia



Commission of Architectural Review

4. COA-134300-2023	Final Review	Meeting Date: 8/22/2023
Applicant/Petitioner	Amanda Seibert	
Project Description	Construct a new single family, two story detached house on a vacant lot.	
Project Location		
Address: 1014 Russell Street		
Historic District: Union Hill		
High-Level Details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Applicant proposes to construct a two-story, single-family detached residence on a vacant lot. The new construction will feature a steeply pitched roof with a lower cross gable, a partial front porch, and a projecting bay with a bay window that features a shed roof. The building will be mostly clad in horizontal lap siding, but will have a board and batten material in the front façade gable face. 		
Staff Recommendation	Approval with Conditions	
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, alex.dandridge@rva.gov , (804) 646-6569	
Previous Reviews	<p>The Commission reviewed and deferred this application at their May 2023 meeting. The application was deferred to allow the applicant time to address the Commission's concerns regarding the compatibility of the proposed dwelling to the surrounding district. Specifically, the Commission had concerns regarding the south elevation's roof form and the overall ornateness of the design. It was stated that a design more similar to the dwelling proposed at 1016 Russell Street would be preferable, as that design featured a massing and overall form that was simple enough to not detract from the historic character of the Union Hill Old and Historic District.</p> <p>The Commission conceptually reviewed this application at the March 28, 2023 meeting. The Commission was not supportive of the design during the conceptual review, finding that the varying roof forms and double front facing gables were not in-keeping with the modest design of dwellings typically found in the district or with the new construction around the subject site. Specifically, the Commission found that the roofline on the south elevation was problematic. The Commission also</p>	

	recommended simplifying the cladding selection and reducing the amount of ornamentation on the front façade.
Staff Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The two front façade, second-story window canopies be removed from the design. • A final window schedule be submitted for administrative review and approval. • Any side yard hardscaping be submitted on a site plan for administrative review and approval.

Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
New Construction, Residential, Siting, pg. 46, #2-3	<i>2. New residential infill construction should respect the prevailing front and side yard setback patterns of the surrounding block. The minimum setbacks evident in most districts reinforce the traditional street wall.</i>	From the drawings submitted to staff, it appears that the two dwellings 1014 and 1016 Russell Street will have similar setbacks. No specific setback measurement was provided in the final application.
New Construction, Residential, Form, pg. 46, #1-3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district.</i> <i>2. New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic residential construction in the district</i> <i>3. New residential construction and additions should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps into their design.</i> 	<p>The new construction has a form that is generally compatible with adjacent new construction; however is not common in the more intact areas of the Union Hill City Old and Historic District.</p> <p>1014 Russell Street is located in an area at the northern edge of the Union Hill Old and Historic District which has very little historic fabric left to serve as context for new construction.</p> <p>During the conceptual review, and the May 2023 review, of this application, the Commission was particularly concerned about the profile created by the asymmetrical roof form on the building's south façade. In 2021 & 2022, the Commission approved several new construction projects near 1014 Russell including: 2309 & 2311 Carrington, 2307 Carrington, also 967, 965, & 961 Pink Street. While the previously approved new construction projects mentioned above are new traditional in style, they all feature a certain level of symmetry and simple roof forms.</p> <p>Traditional architecture in Union Hill has regular ground-plans with few extensions that allow for simple roof forms, while the house at 1014 Russell features an irregular ground-plan with extensions that creates a more complex roof form not common in the district.</p> <p>After the May 2023 review of this application, the Commission asked that a simplified plan be used that eliminates the irregular, asymmetrical roof form on the south façade of the building, and that a form similar to that of</p>

		<p>the recently approved 1016 Russell Street would be more appropriate.</p> <p>The applicant has responded to the Commission by proposing a new plan with a simplified roof form and minimal projections.</p> <p>The new proposal features a two-story dwelling with a front projecting bay with a front facing gable and projecting lower bay window. There will be a partial, one-story, covered front porch.</p> <p>The new design of 1014 Russell Street will feature two second story windows on the front façade that will have canopies connected to the main roof form with asphalt shingles. The application explains the canopies reference others found in the district, specifically calling out 2426 Venable Street, a frame, Greek Revival dwelling ca. 1872. This dwelling has metal awnings on its windows.</p> <p>Metal awnings found within Union Hill likely date to the 1950's and 1960's when metal awnings became increasingly available to homeowners. Some are fixed in place, while others are retractable. These awnings represent a mid-20th century alteration that does not contribute to the historic integrity of 19th century architecture of Union Hill.</p> <p>Staff finds that the inclusion of window canopies as an architectural feature of new construction is inappropriate. Basing new construction off of elements that are not original and are removable is not advisable.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends that the two front façade, second-story window canopies be removed from the design.</u></p> <p>The new construction will feature a partial front porch and a front sidewalk leading to the street.</p> <p>Contemporary dwellings have been approved in this area of Union Hill; however they feature traditional forms and symmetry.</p> <p>Staff is supportive of the simple canopies proposed for the rear and side entrances, as it is more common the residential buildings feature canopies/awnings in these locations.</p>
<p>New Construction, Residential, Height, Width, Proportion, & Massing, pg. 47, #1-3</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.</i> <i>2. New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in the surrounding historic districts.</i> 	<p>The roof peak of the dwelling will be approximately 37' 9". This is taller than many historic dwellings in the area which are generally around 30' in height. The new construction is similar in height to other new construction in the area. The dwelling at 2317 Carrington Street to the rear is a new construction and about 32.5' tall.</p>

	3. <i>The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i>	1016 Russell Street, approved by the Commission in May 2023 (not yet constructed) has a height of 37'1". Staff finds the height of the two dwellings compatible.
New Construction, Residential,, Doors and Windows, pg.49 #3	3. <i>The size, proportion, and spacing patterns of doors and window openings on free standing, new construction should be compatible with patterns established in the district.</i>	<p>Windows and doors will be vertically aligned.</p> <p>No window dimensions were submitted with the application. <u>Staff recommends that a final window schedule be submitted for review and approval.</u></p> <p>While no window dimensions were submitted with this application, windows appear consistent in size on each elevation. Smaller, vertically aligned windows are proposed for the north elevation, however will be minimally visible from the right-of-way upon construction of 1016 Russell Street to the north.</p>
New Construction, Materials & Colors, pg. 53, #2, #5	<p>2. <i>Materials used in new construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the surrounding neighborhood.</i></p> <p>5. <i>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.</i></p>	<p>During the conceptual review of this application, the Commission had concerns about the proposed faux wood shingle cladding material and asked that a cladding material more compatible with the district be used. The applicant responded to this request by removing the faux shingles, with the exception of the gable faces for the May 2023 submission.</p> <p>As proposed in the current submission, the dwelling will be clad in horizontal siding. The gable faces on the front and rear elevations will feature limited decorative paneling, and the front façade projecting bay will be clad in board and batten siding.</p> <p>The dwelling will have an asphalt shingle roof with a metal roof over the front porch, north elevation canopy, and the front façade projecting bay.</p> <p>Exterior HVAC and trash receptacles will be located on a secondary elevation and minimally visible from the public Right Of Way.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends that any side yard hardscaping be submitted on a site plan for administrative review and approval.</u></p>
New Construction, Residential, pg. 46	3. New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site.	The building will face the most prominent street, Russell Street.

Figures

Figure 1. 1924-1925 Sanborn Map

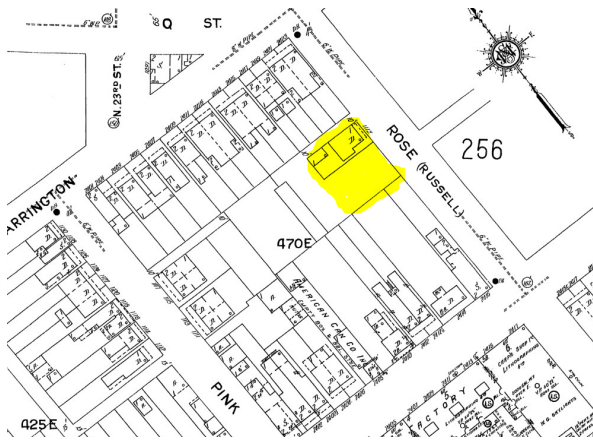


Figure 3. View north on Pink St.



Figure 2. Russell Street looking north.



Figure 4. View south on Pink St.



Figure 5. 967 Pink Street, new construction



Figure 6. 2426 Venable Street. Canopy example provided by the applicant.



Figure 7. Several examples on new constrction in the immediate area. Carrington & Pink Streets.

