

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
May 24, 2016 Meeting**

26. **CAR No. 16-084** (C. Dykshorn) **125 North 25th Street**
St. John's Church Old and Historic District

Project Description: **Construct a rear addition**

Staff Contact: **K. Chen**

The applicant requests approval to construct a two-story addition on the rear of a dwelling located in the St. John's Church Old and Historic District. The existing dwelling was constructed in two phases. The two-story side-gable portion fronting on 25th Street was constructed in 1849 and a two-story shed roof addition was added to the east (rear) elevation ca. 1890. A small, one-story mud room addition was constructed on the rear elevation in 2007.

The 1849 portion of the house is two-stories in height with a gable roof and approximately 32' by 16'. The ca. 1890 shed-roofed addition is also two stories in height and approximately 14' by 25'. It is located on the east (rear) elevation of the 1849 dwelling and set approximately 7' north of the south edge of the earlier dwelling. The proposed addition is located on the east (rear) elevation of the existing building to the south of the 2007 vestibule where it will be visible from 25th Street and across an adjacent alley and parking lot. The footprint for the addition will be 18' by 18' with a flat roof set below the height of the ridge on the 1849 portion of the house. The connector between the addition and the dwelling will be treated as a glazed bridge. Two renderings of the addition were provided one that is a transparent cube and a second where the south facing side wall is solid.

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* and the resulting comments follow.

Staff Findings based on Commission of Architectural Review Guidelines

STANDARDS FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION

All new residential and commercial construction, whether in the form of additions or entire buildings, should be compatible with the historic features that

characterize their setting and context. To protect the context of the surrounding historic district, new construction should reference the materials, features, size, scale, proportions, and massing of the existing historic building or buildings in its setting. However, compatibility does not mean duplicating the existing buildings or environment. In order to avoid creating a false sense of history, new construction should also be discernible from the old. Perhaps the best way to think about a compatible new building (or addition) is that it should be a good neighbor; one that enhances the character of the existing district and respects its historic context, rather than being an exact (and misleading) reproduction of another building.

Staff found in general that the proposed addition meets the *Guidelines*. The proposed addition is subordinate in size to the historic dwelling and does not result in the loss of or obscures historic fabric. The simplicity of the design is compatible with the simplicity and lack of ornamentation of the 1849 dwelling. It is clearly differentiated but compatible with the historic features that characterize its setting and context.

Staff has not reviewed the conceptual design with Zoning for compliance.

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

- 1) Dimensioned elevations, details, and material selections.