

15. COA-086174-2021

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

February 23, 2021

PROPERTY ADDRESS

3420 East Broad Street

DISTRICT

Chimborazo Park

APPLICANT

Obsidian, Inc.

STAFF CONTACT

C. Jones

Commission of
Architectural Review

STAFF REPORT



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Construct new rear stairs and rooftop patio, enlarge basement windows, and install solar panels.

PROJECT DETAILS

- The applicant proposes exterior alterations to the side elevation windows, rear elevation porch, and roof of a ca. 1890 free-standing residence.
- The applicant proposes to replace the existing stairs on the rear elevation.
- On the east side elevation, the applicant proposes to enlarge the existing windows in the basement level and convert a door to a window on the first level.
- The applicant also proposes to install a new set of stairs to the roof and a rooftop deck and railing, and add solar panels on the rear roof slope.



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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS

PREVIOUS REVIEWS

The Commission has not previously reviewed this application.

STAFF RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

- the east elevation basement level window sills be lowered to maintain the original height, and the new windows fit within the existing jambs
- the east elevation first-floor-level existing transom opening be maintained, the new window be a one-over-one to maintain the open appearance, the infill masonry be recessed, and the new window fit within the existing jambs to maintain the original width
- the new rear stair railing be a Richmond Rail, not the nailed-up pockets shown on the elevations; and the railings be painted or stained a neutral color found on the Commission palette
- the rooftop deck railing be painted a dark color found on the Commission palette
- the roof slope remain intact with the installation of the solar panels

STAFF ANALYSIS

Windows, pg. 69

8. The number, location, size or glazing pattern of windows should not be changed by cutting new openings, blocking out windows or by installing replacement sash that do not fit the original window. Changes to existing windows or the addition of new windows along a secondary elevation will be considered by the Commission on a case-by-case basis.

The applicant proposes to enlarge four openings in the east side elevation basement level. Staff finds that these openings are barely visible from the street and the alley, and recommends approval of the request with the condition that the window sills be lowered to maintain the original height, and the new windows fit within the existing jambs.

On the east elevation of the first floor level, the applicant proposes to convert an existing door to a window. Staff has concerns about removing the existing transom and changing the lite configuration as shown on the plans. Staff recommends approval with the conditions that the existing transom opening be maintained, the new window be a one-over-one to maintain the open appearance, the infill masonry be recessed, and the new window fit within the existing jambs to maintain the original width.

New Construction, Porches and Porch Details, pg. 49

2. When designing a new railing for a new infill building, or for an existing building which has lost its railing and for which no documentary or physical evidence survives, the balusters in the traditional Richmond rail are generally rectangular in section (with the narrow dimension facing the street) or square. The baluster is fitted into the recess in the top rail and a sloped bottom rail. Typical deck railings, consisting of nailed-up stock elements, are not approved as they are not based on a compatible historical model found in Richmond's Old and Historic Districts.

The applicant proposes to remove the existing exterior stair on the rear elevation and construct a new stairway. Staff finds that there has historically been a stair in this location and recommends approval of the new stair with the condition that the railing be a Richmond Rail, not the nailed-up pockets shown on the elevations. Staff also recommends that the railings be painted or stained a neutral color found on the Commission palette.

Standards for New Construction, Siting, pg. 46, #1

1. Additions should not obscure or destroy original architectural elements.

The applicant proposes to add a new rooftop deck towards the façade of the building. Staff finds that the majority of the rooftop deck will be screened by existing parapet walls and recommends approval of the new rooftop deck.

Standards for New Construction, Materials and Colors, pg. 47 # 5

5. ... 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.

The applicant proposes a metal railing for the rooftop deck. Staff finds the railing will be minimally visible from the right-of-way and recommends approval with the condition that the railing be painted a dark color found on the Commission palette.

Addition of Solar Panels,

11. The addition of solar panels should not require removing historic roofing material

The applicant proposes to install solar panels on the rear roof slope. Staff finds this is a

visible from the public right-of-way.

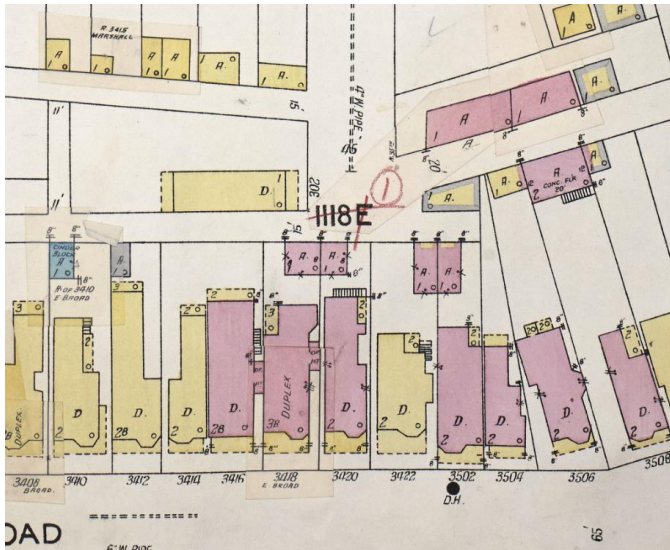
12. Solar panels should not alter historic roofing configurations such as dormers or chimneys.

13. Solar panels should be minimally visible from the public right-of-way. The installation method must be reversible and not compromise the historic integrity of the structure or the historic district.

minimally visible location and recommends approval with the condition that the roof slope remain intact.

It is the assessment of staff that, with the conditions above, the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation and New Construction outlined in Section 30-930.7 (b) and (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 the code.

FIGURES



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Figure 1. 1950 Sanborn map.

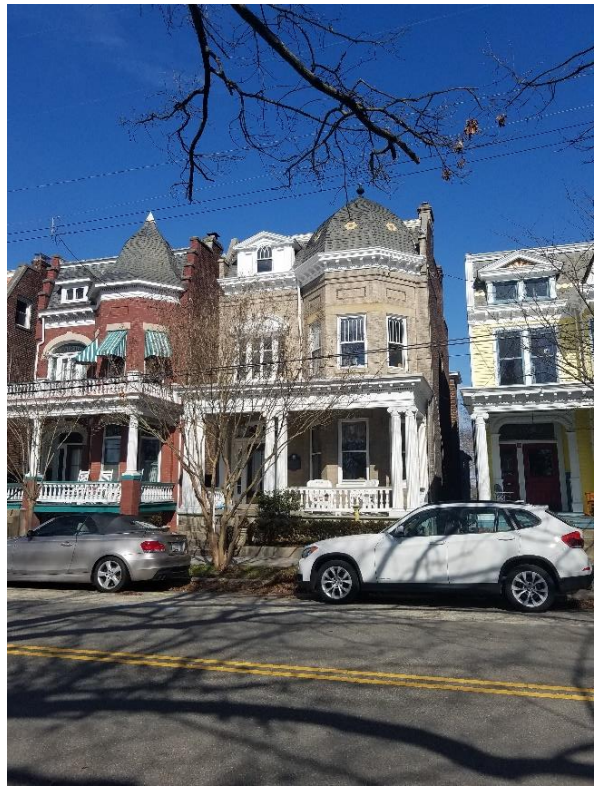


Figure 2. 3420 E. Broad Street, facade.



Figure 3. 3420 E. Broad Street, east elevation.



Figure 4. 3420 E. Broad Street, rear elevation.



Figure 5. 3420 E. Broad Street, facade and existing rear stairs.



Figure 6. 3420 E. Broad Street, roof visibility.