



Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia



Commission of Architectural Review

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| 9.COA-153783-2024 | Conceptual Review | Meeting Date: 9/24/2024 |
| Applicant/Petitioner | Jeffrey Sadler | |
| Project Description | Construct a new three-story multi-family building. | |
| Project Location | | |
| Address: 401 W Marshall Street | | |
| Historic District: Jackson Ward | | |
| <p>High-Level Details:</p> <p>The applicant proposes to subdivide the lot at 401 W. Marshall Street and construct a new three-story multifamily building. Currently, there is a frame, Greek Revival Style dwelling dating to the mid-19th century located on the eastern half of the parcel.</p> <p>The new building will have a projecting western bay on the façade, as well as a three-story front porch. It will be clad in horizontal composite siding and panels.</p> <p>This project will require a Special Use Permit.</p> | | |
| Staff Recommendation | Conceptual Review | |
| Staff Contact | Alex Dandridge, alex.dandridge@rva.gov, (804) 646-6569 | |
| Previous Reviews | None. | |
| Staff Recommendations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff recommends that the building be pushed farther back on the lot, or the front projection be decreased in depth so that it does not sit as proud of the neighboring historic buildings or interrupt the existing street wall. • Staff recommends that the applicant submit the cornice height of the new building and the cornice height of 405 W. Marshall Street with the final review. • Staff recommends that the roof of the porch be dropped lower than the top of the building, and below a cornice line that follows the top of the building and follows the roof line of the projecting bay. • Staff recommends that the porch roof on the third story be differentiated from the cornice line of building and have a simple roof profile and crown. • Staff recommends that the dimensions of the windows be similar to the large windows found on the neighboring property at 405 W. Marshall Street, and other buildings within the district. Staff recommends that window materials and dimensions be submitted with the final review. | |

Staff Analysis

| Guideline Reference | Reference Text | Analysis |
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| Standards For New Construction, page 46 | <i>All new residential and commercial construction, whether in the form of additions or entire buildings, should be compatible with the historic features that characterize the 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 buildings in its setting.</i> | Buildings within the Jackson Ward City Old and Historic District are characterized by full-width front porches and large windows. Depending on the style, some buildings have ornate cornices and highly decorative cast iron work. Some buildings are less ornate, but still feature a cornice element and porches that address the street. Most buildings have similar setbacks and are two stories tall, with some three-story buildings. |
| Standards For New Construction: Siting, page 46 | <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> | The front setback will be 15 feet, which is the prevailing front setback on the block, and typical of the district. The side yard setbacks will be five or six feet which is comparable to existing side yard setbacks in the district. The building will face the most prominent street, West Marshall Street. |
| Standards For New Construction: Form, page 46 | <i>1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district. Building form refers to the specific combination of massing, size, symmetry, proportions, projections, and roof shapes that lend identity to a building.</i> | The new building will be three stories tall. The subject block has a mix of two- and three-story buildings. Adjacent to the new building there is a two-story frame building to the east (401 West Marshall Street) and a three-story masonry building to the west (405 West Marshall Street). Staff finds that a three-story building is appropriate in this location. The new building will feature a front projecting bay. While not specifically labeled, it appears that the bay will project approximately 6 to 7 feet from the face of the building. While projecting bays are common within the City's OHD's, they often do not project far past the face of the building. While the face of the building aligns with the faces of the neighboring buildings, the projection aligns more with the depth of the porches. Porches are more transparent than the proposed projection, and staff has concerns that the projection will interrupt the street wall and should not sit so proud of the neighboring historic buildings. <u>Staff recommends that the building be pushed farther back on the lot, or the front projection be decreased in depth so that it does not sit as proud of the neighboring historic buildings or interrupt the existing street wall.</u> |
| Standards For New Construction: Form, page 46 | <i>2. New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic, residential construction in the district.</i> | The new building will maintain the existing human-scale of the block, having a multi-story front covered porch that addresses the street. |

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| <p>Standards for New Construction: Height, Width, Proportion & Massing, page 47</p> | <p>1. <i>New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.</i></p> <p>2. <i>New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in surrounding historic districts. New designs that call for wide massing should look to the project's local district for precedent. For example, full-block- long row house compositions are rare in Richmond. New residential buildings that occupy more than one third of a block's face should still employ bays as an organizational device, but the new building should read as a single piece of architecture.</i></p> <p>3. <i>The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i></p> | <p>The windows and doors will be vertically aligned.</p> <p>Based on the renderings provided by the applicant, it appears that the third-story cornice of the new building will generally align with the third-story cornice of 405 West Marshall Street. To have a better understanding of the height of the new building as compared to the neighboring buildings, <u>Staff recommends that the applicant submit the cornice height of the new building and the cornice height of 405 W. Marshall Street with the final review.</u></p> <p>As designed, the roof over the third-story porch features a cornice detail that ties into the top of the façade's projecting bay, creating a continuous cornice across the front of the building. A seamless cornice bridging the face of the building and a porch is not a common feature in the district. <u>Staff recommends that the roof of the porch be dropped lower than the top of the building, and below a cornice line that follows the top of the building and follows the roof line of the projecting bay.</u></p> <p><u>Staff recommends that the porch roof on the third story be differentiated from the cornice line of building and have a simple roof profile and crown.</u></p> |
| <p>Standards for New Construction: Materials & Colors, page 47</p> | <p>2. <i>Materials used in new residential construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.</i></p> | <p>Exterior materials will include a brick foundation and horizontal siding. The fiber cement siding is proposed to be a gray color, while the trim will be white. The less visible rear and side elevations will be clad in Hardi-board rather than the horizontal lap siding. Staff finds that these materials are compatible with the brick and horizontal siding found throughout the district.</p> |
| <p>Standards For New Construction: Doors and Windows, page 56</p> | <p>2. <i>The size, proportion and spacing patterns of door and window openings on free-standing new construction should be compatible with patterns established in the district.</i></p> | <p>The drawings submitted by the applicant indicate that the windows and doors will be vertically aligned.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends that the dimensions of the window be similar to the large windows found on the neighboring property at 405 W. Marshall Street, and other buildings within the district. Staff recommends that window materials and dimensions be submitted with the final review.</u></p> |

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 (next page)

Figure 1. 401 W. Marshall Street façade.



Figure 2. 401 W. Marshall Street side and rear elevations.



Figure 3. Context. North side of W. Marshall Street.



Figure 4. Context. South side of W. Marshall Street.



Figure 5. Looking south across W. Marshall Street at vacant portion of lot.

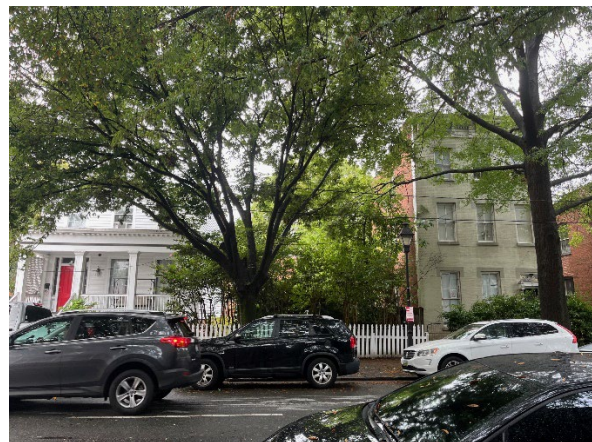


Figure 6. 405 W. Marshall Street façade.



Figure 7. 1905 Sanborn Map.

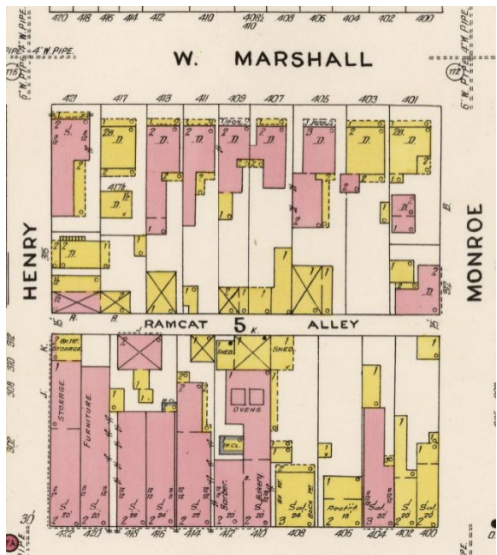


Figure 8. Historic photo showing 401-405 W. Marshall Street. 1950s. *Valentine Museum Digital Archives*, accessed 9/19/2024.

