

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW  
STAFF REPORT  
June 27, 2017, Meeting**

10. COA-018242-2017 (P. Tarsovich)

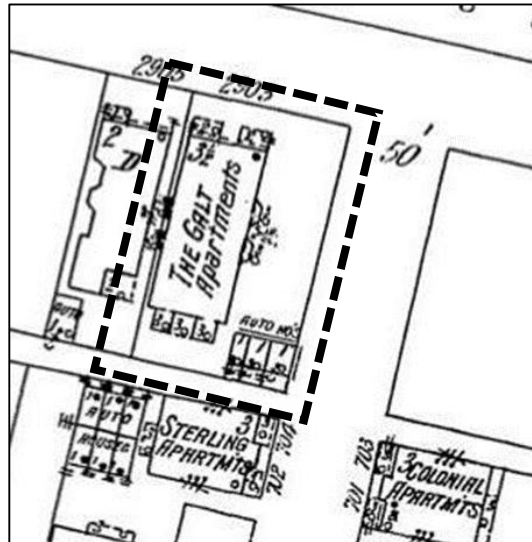
**2901 Monument Avenue  
Monument Avenue Old and Historic District**

**Project Description: Construct three new attached single family dwellings.**

**Staff Contact:**

**M. Pitts**

The applicant requests approval to construct three attached single family dwellings on a vacant lot at the corner of Monument and North Colonial Avenues in the Monument Avenue Old and Historic District. The residential character of this segment of Monument Avenue consists of three to four story multifamily brick buildings in a variety of styles with two and three story porches and large scale brick single family dwellings. The properties along North Colonial Avenue are developed with three story Tudor Revival buildings with stuccoed facades and three story porches. Currently, the vacant lot is surrounded by a low brick knee wall. From the Sanborn maps dating back to 1919, the property was only developed with parking in the rear associated with the adjacent apartment building.



Sanborn Map from 1919

The applicant is proposing to construct three attached single family dwellings in a three story building with a rooftop deck and penthouses. The first unit will address Monument Avenue and be clad in brick, and the remaining two units will address North Colonial Avenue and have a stucco finish. The applicant came before the Commission for conceptual review and comment on April 25, 2017. The Commission had the following comments about the project:

- Commissioners had varying opinions about the mix of materials on the structure.

- The Commissioners liked the recessed sections on the side elevations that were shown in the floor plans as it allowed for more substantial balconies rather than the proposed Juliet balconies.
- The entrances on Colonial Avenue should be emphasized and read as true front entries to units.
- A larger shared garage off the alley should be used rather than garage entrances into units off of Colonial Avenue.
- The column configuration and number on the façade should be consistent on each story.

In response to the Commission’s concerns and concerns regarding the fenestration on the side elevation raised in the staff report, the applicant has altered the plans as follows:

- On the Monument Avenue elevation, the number and alignment of columns on each story is consistent. The openings on the first story align with the openings above.
- On the Colonial Avenue elevation, the Juliet balconies were removed and the window placement has been altered to provide a symmetrical, regular rhythm. The entries to units have been emphasized by being recessed and including side lites and transoms.

The applicant is seeking **Final Review** for this project. 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* 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 building is setback to align with the adjacent structure, and the side yard setback is consistent with that of 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 building is located on the corner with only one adjoining building.

**New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site**

The structure addresses Monument Avenue which is the primary street at this intersection.

- 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.**

The project is of a similar scale to the multifamily buildings in the area. The applicant has incorporated the multi-story porches that characterize the neighboring development. The proposed flat roof form and symmetry of the façade is characteristic as well.

- New construction should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps.**

The primary elevation of the proposed project incorporates human-scale elements including porches with cornices and front steps. The Guidelines encourage human scale elements to be included on the secondary, corner elevation for corner properties. The applicant has included two pedestrian entrances and two vehicular entrances on the North Colonial elevation.

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

The typical heights of the surrounding multifamily buildings are 3 to 4 stories. The proposed building is consistent with this development pattern.

- New construction should respect the typical width, organization of bays, vertical alignment and symmetry of surrounding buildings.**

The project is of similar width to the single family homes on the block. The proposed project does maintain the vertical alignment and the symmetry of the surrounding buildings on both the Monument and Colonial Avenue elevations.

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

The typical fenestration pattern in the area includes ranked windows of similar size which the Monument Avenue elevation of the proposed project includes. The Commission's Guidelines for Corner Properties note that windows and doors on the corner elevations should be organized following the principals of the primary elevation to include being aligned vertically. The applicant has revised the fenestration on the Colonial Avenue elevation to provide a regular rhythm of windows and doors regarding both placement and size.

Staff has concerns that the presence of vehicular doors into the front of residential units is not a building form found in the district. Additionally, staff has concerns that vehicular doors are not appropriate on visible side elevations per the Commission's corner property guidelines. Staff recommends the garage doors be replaced with windows to align with the openings above and vehicular doors be limited to the alley elevation.

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

Per the context elevation provided, the proposed porch and cornice heights are compatible with the adjacent structure.

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

The proposed construction will use brick and stucco cladding, aluminum clad wood windows with simulated divided lites, cast stone or PVC columns, PVC or fiber cement trim, and powder coated aluminum railing. Staff supports the mix brick and stucco as both materials are found in the district and several buildings incorporate both materials in the same structure.

**Staff recommends approval of the project with conditions.** The proposed infill project appears generally to be in keeping with the Standards for New Construction outlined in the *Guidelines* as the project is largely compatible with the historic features that characterizes its setting and context. The applicant has modified the building design to address Commission's and staff's concerns with the column number and placement of the façade, the fenestration on the side elevation, and the prominence of the side entries. Staff's remaining concern is in regard to the vehicular entrances into the front of a unit and on a visible side elevation. With staff's recommended condition to remove these entrances from the side elevation, staff believes the project will be compatible with the Monument Avenue Old and Historic District.

It is the assessment of staff that, with the acceptance of the stated condition, the application is consistent with the Standards for New Construction outlined in Section 30.930.7(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 code.