

# 11. COA-061566-2019

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

October 22, 2019

PROPERTY ADDRESS

524 N. 21<sup>st</sup> Street

DISTRICT

Union Hill

APPLICANT

Watney Ventures, LLC

STAFF CONTACT

C. Jones

# Commission of Architectural Review

## STAFF REPORT



### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

**Construct a new multi-family residence on a vacant lot.**

### PROJECT DETAILS

- The applicant proposes to construct a frame, two-family residence on a vacant lot.
- The proposed building is two stories in height, four bays wide, rectangular in form with a two-story full width porch on the façade and rear elevation.
- The side elevations will feature vertically and horizontally aligned 2/2 windows.
- Proposed materials for the building include 6" horizontal lap siding and a parged foundation. For the porches the applicant proposes architectural shingles for the roof, 6x6 wood columns, tongue & groove floorboards, and wood Richmond rail.



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## CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

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" on pages 44, and 46-56 of the Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines utilizing the Guidelines presented below.

### PREVIOUS REVIEWS

The Commission has not previously reviewed this application.

### SURROUNDING CONTEXT

The surrounding area is primarily residential in character. The majority of the houses on the block are either detached or semi-detached, architecturally cohesive buildings. The majority are 2 stories in height with a raised foundation, though a few are only 1-story. Common architectural elements include false mansards with shed roofs, gently sloped roofs, or side gable roofs, one-story, full-width porches, and detailed cornice lines. Exterior materials include either wood, brick, or replacement siding. Overall, there is little new construction in the surrounding area and the historic nature of the block remains mostly intact.

### STAFF COMMENTS

Staff recommends:

- the new construction be aligned with the adjacent dwellings

- the applicant utilize a 1-story, 1-bay porch to be more in keeping with the patterns found in the district
- the applicant update the windows schedule prior to resubmitting the application
- the applicant use a different roof form to be in keeping with the patterns found in the immediately surrounding area and in the district

Staff requests the applicant submit a fully dimensioned context elevation that indicates the height of the proposed building elements, including foundation, porch floor and roof, cornice, and top of the roof; and the same features on the neighboring properties for comparison. The context elevation should also account for the current elevation of the property and any proposed grading.

Staff further requests the applicant provide information about the proposed colors, location of the HVAC units and any screening, site improvements, including walkways, and any regrading to address the site conditions.

### STAFF ANALYSIS

Siting, pg. 46,  
#s2-3

*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.*

According to the site plan, the proposed building will be set back further from the street than the adjacent double house. It appears that the front of the porch will align with the face of the adjacent buildings. Historic photographs and Sanborn maps indicate that historically the former house on this site and the adjacent double house were aligned and had a deeper setback than other houses on the block. The proposed building is set back further than the former house on this site and what is typical for this urban area. Staff recommends that the new construction be aligned with the adjacent dwellings.

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

The new construction will face North 21<sup>st</sup>, the prominent street bordering the site.

Form, pg. 46  
#s1-3

*1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district.*

The proposed building is rectangular in shape and 2 stories in height, similar to other buildings in the historic district.

Staff notes that the applicant proposes a 4-bay composition and recommends the applicant consider the architectural elements, such as the raised foundation and 1-story, 1-bay entry porch found on the buildings at 521-527 N. 21<sup>th</sup> Street which also utilize a 4-bay composition or 517-519 N. 21<sup>st</sup> Street which is also a duplex.

*2. New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic residential construction in the district.*

The proposed building is 2 stories and has a front entry, porch, and windows on all elevations, which maintains the existing human scale of the historic district.

*3. New residential construction and additions should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps into their design.*

The applicant proposes one set of front stairs and covered, 2-story front and reach porches. Staff finds that 2-story, full-width front porches are not a feature found in the immediately surrounding area or in the district and recommends that since the applicant plans a more traditional design, they should utilize a 1-

		<p><u>story porch to be more in keeping with the patterns found in the district.</u></p> <p>Staff realizes this will create large, undecorated space between the second floor window heads and roof line and recommends <u>the applicant use a different roof form and reduce the depth of the trusses to be more in keeping with the surrounding properties.</u></p>
Height, Width, Proportion, & Massing, pg. 47, #s1-3	<p>1. <i>New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.</i></p>	<p>The applicant's plans indicate construction of a 2-story building; however, there is not an indication of the overall height of the building. Further, the applicant has not provided a dimensioned context elevation. <u>Staff requests the applicant submit a fully dimensioned context elevation that indicates the height of the proposed building elements, including foundation, porch floor and roof, cornice, and top of the roof and the same features on the neighboring properties for comparison.</u> The context elevation should also account for the current elevation of the property and any proposed grading.</p>
	<p>2. <i>New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in surrounding historic districts.</i></p>	<p>The applicant proposes a vertically and horizontally aligned fenestration pattern, in keeping with properties found in the surrounding historic district.</p>
	<p>3. <i>The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i></p>	<p>As mentioned above, the applicant has not provided a fully dimensioned context elevation to compare the cornice height of the proposed building with the adjacent historic buildings.</p>
Materials and Colors, pg. 47, #s2-4	<p>2. <i>Materials used in new residential construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.</i></p> <p>3. <i>Paint colors used should be similar to the historically appropriate colors already found in the district.</i></p>	<p>The proposed materials are mostly in keeping with the <i>Guidelines</i>; however, staff notes that the window schedule indicates vinyl 2/2 windows which are not approved for use in new construction. <u>Staff requests the applicant update the window schedule prior to submitting the application for final review.</u> The applicant has not indicated any proposed colors. <u>Staff requests the applicant update the application to include proposed colors.</u></p>
New Construction, Doors and Windows, pg. 49 #3	<p>3. <i>The size, proportion, and spacing patterns of doors and window openings on free standing, new construction should be compatible with patterns established within the district.</i></p>	<p>The applicant proposes a horizontally and vertically aligned fenestration pattern on the façade, side, and rear elevations.</p>
Mechanical Equipment, pg. 68	<p><i>The visual impact of new mechanical equipment should be minimized to protect the historic character of the district.</i></p>	<p>The applicant has not indicated the location of the HVAC equipment. <u>Staff requests this information, and any necessary screening, be provided in a subsequent application.</u></p>

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Standards for  
Site  
Improvements,  
pg. 76

*7. Sidewalks and curbs should be built of common building materials found throughout the District. Generally, simple paving designs are more compatible with the diverse building styles and better unify the various elements found on streets throughout Old and Historic Districts. The use of more than two paving materials within an area is discouraged.*

Staff notes that the neighboring properties have paved walkways leading from the front steps to sidewalk. Staff requests information about any proposed site improvements, including walkways.

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Building and  
Site  
Accessibility,  
pg. 79

*Regrading is any adjustment made to the slope or land leading up to any exterior entrance to a property.*

Staff notes the site is elevated with a slight rise and requests the applicant provide information about any proposed regrading to address the site conditions.

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FIGURES

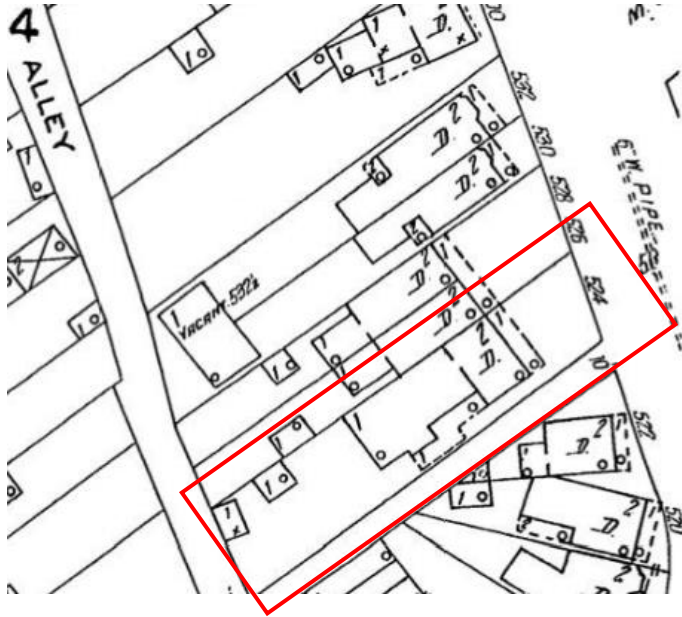


Figure 1. 1905 Sanborn map



Figure 2. 524 N. 21st Street



Figure 3. 500 block N. 21st Street, even side, looking south



Figure 4. 500 block N. 21st Street, even side, looking northeast



Figure 5. 521-527 N. 24th Street



Figure 6. 517-519 N. 21st Street