



Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia



Commission of Architectural Review

COA-103364-2021	Final Review	Meeting Date: 12/21/2021
Applicant/Petitioner	Chris Maka	
Project Description	Rehabilitate an existing residence; reconstruct a front porch and construct a new rear addition.	
Project Location		
Address: 2318 Venable St.		
Historic District: Union Hill		
High-Level Details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant proposes to rehabilitate a two-story, ca. 1910 brick Italianate residence, including the construction of a rear, double deck, the construction of a small rear addition, and the demolition of the rear wall of the property. The applicant proposes to reconstruct the front porch. Staff notes that a rear projection has been completely demolished without review and approval by the Commission 		
Staff Recommendation	Approval, with Conditions	
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, alex.dandridge@RVA.gov , 804-646-6569	
Previous Reviews	<p>Under previous ownership, a similar application was approved by CAR in August 2019. The scope of work in that application included the demolition of a 1958, CMU, second story rear addition, the demolition of a deteriorated masonry wall on the eastern façade of the rear, and the construction of a new second story and side addition on the rear. However, the property was transferred to a new owner in 2021 prior to the work being completed. Under new ownership, the entirety of the rear projection was demolished rather than the portions that were specified in the original approved COA for the property. Staff was informed of the illegal demolition and has worked with the applicant to generate up to date plans that accurately reflect the existing conditions of the building and the new scope of work that include a rebuild of the entire rear.</p>	
Conditions for Approval	<p>Staff recommends the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The existing cornice be repaired and repainted, and paint colors be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval. Approval of the front porch reconstruction, with the condition that the design match historic photographs, to include brick piers and turned posts. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final front door specifications be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval. • The basement-level door be replaced with a solid wood four-panel door, to match the existing design, specification submitted to staff for administrative review and approval. • That new and replacement windows match the historic light configuration and have true or simulated divided lights with interior and exterior muntins and a spacer bar between the glass; window specifications submitted to staff for administrative review and approval. • That the rear doors be vertically aligned. • That the windows on the rear façade be consistent in height. • That the applicant update the building plans to reflect the existing conditions of the property and the extent of the new rear addition prior to applying for a building permit; plans to be submitted to staff for administrative approval. • That the porch roofs be a dark TPO membrane or flat lock metal; materials submitted to staff for administrative review and approval. • The lintels and sills not be repainted and any paint color for the brick be submitted for administrative approval. • Approval of the demolition of the rear of the building and the construction of a new rear addition. • Updated demolition plan be incorporated into the plans prior to applying for a building permit.
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Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
Standards for Rehabilitation, pg. 59 #1	<i>Retain original features and materials that define the building style, including but not limited to wood siding, shingles, stucco and masonry.</i>	Staff recommends that the <u>existing cornice be repaired and repainted, and paint colors be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval.</u>
Porches, Entrances & Doors, pg. 71 #5	<i>The entire porch should only be replaced if it is too deteriorated to repair or is completely missing; replacements should match the existing as much as possible.</i>	<p>Photographs indicate that the front porch was removed sometime prior to 2012. The applicant proposes to reconstruct a front porch that utilizes a shed roof, square posts, a contemporary metal banister with horizontal bands, and a simplified front porch cornice. Staff finds that this contemporary design does not resemble the original front porch.</p> <p>Based on a 1977 image of the front porch, the original porch resembled the front porch at 2316 Venable. <u>Staff recommends approval of the front porch reconstruction, with the condition that the design match historic photographs, to include brick piers and turned posts.</u></p>
Porches, Entrances & Doors, pg. 71 #1	<i>Elements that are damaged or loose should be repaired to match the detail of the existing original fabric.</i>	Photographic evidence indicates that the front door was originally a double door. The original CAR approval was conditioned with replacing the front door with a design that replicated the original. The applicant has not provided any information on the front door design and material. <u>Staff recommends that final front door specifications be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval.</u>

		The applicant did not submit any specification on the basement-level door in the front. <u>Staff recommends the basement-level door be replaced with a solid wood four-panel door, to match the existing design, specification submitted to staff for administrative review and approval.</u>
Standards for Rehabilitation, pg. 59 #5	<i>Retain original windows including both functional and decorative elements such as frames, sash, muntins, glazing, sills, hood molds, paneled or decorated jambs and moldings, shutters and exterior blinds.</i>	The applicant did not submit a window or door schedule, however, from photographic documentation and site visits, staff finds that many of the existing windows are either missing or deteriorated beyond repair.
Windows, pg. 69 #7	<i>Windows should only be replaced when they are missing or beyond repair. Any reconstruction should be based on physical evidence or photo documentation.</i>	The Guidelines recommend that new windows match the historic windows in terms of size, light configuration, and design. <u>Staff recommends that new and replacement windows match the historic light configuration. Staff recommends all windows have true or simulated divided lights with interior and exterior muntins and a spacer bar between the glass; window specifications submitted to staff for administrative review and approval.</u>
New Construction Doors and Windows, pg. 49 #1	<i>The size, proportion and spacing patterns of door and window openings on a new addition should follow patterns established by the original building.</i>	The doors on the rear wall of the addition are not vertically aligned. <u>Staff recommends that the doors be vertically aligned.</u> The windows on the rear wall of the addition are vertically aligned but are not consistent in height. <u>Staff recommends that the windows on the rear façade be consistent in height.</u>
Standards for New Construction, Siting, pg. 46 #1	<i>Additions should be subordinate in size to their main buildings and as inconspicuous as possible. Locating additions at the rear or on the least visible side of a building is preferred.</i>	Staff notes that there are discrepancies between the addition site plan on page G-100 of the submitted plans and the existing conditions of the property. The plans indicate that there is an existing rear projection, and a new addition will be added to its eastern façade. That rear projection has been completely demolished, and the applicant is requesting permission to rebuild the rear of the property in its entirety. This rebuild would include the footprint of the original rear projection and the addition proposed on page G-100 in the application. <u>Staff recommends that the applicant update the building plans to reflect the existing conditions of the property and the extent of the new rear addition prior to applying for a building permit; plans to be submitted to staff for administrative approval.</u>
Standards for New Construction, Materials, pg. 47 #2	<i>Materials used in new residential construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.</i>	The front and rear porches will feature contemporary, metal, horizontal railings and vertical posts. Staff recommends approval of this design on the rear double porch, as the rear is minimally visible and will be a new build, not original to the main building. Staff recommends against the use of this design on the reconstructed front porch.

New Construction, Decks, pg. 51 #2	<i>Decks should complement the architectural features of the main structure without creating a false historical appearance.</i>	The applicant is proposing a 2-story rear deck that will be a simple contemporary design and is consistent with building patterns found in the district.
New Construction, Porches, pg. 49 #5	<i>Porch roofs are encouraged to utilize standing- or flat-lock metal seam roofs that are hand-seamed, or closely approximate hand-seaming. Membrane roofs are acceptable substitutes for flat-lock seam roofs.</i>	The applicant did not submit any information on the proposed porch roof materials. <u>Staff recommends that the porch roofs be a dark TPO membrane or flat lock metal; materials submitted to staff for administrative review and approval.</u>
Maintenance and Repair, Roofs, pg. 96	<i>Asphalt shingles are made of felt impregnated with asphalt and covered with colored ceramic or stone granules. This modern roofing material is an inappropriate choice for the majority of historic structures.</i>	While materials were not submitted with the application, staff recommends against the use of asphalt shingles as a roofing material.
Paint, pg. 64	<i>Existing unpainted brick and stone must remain unpainted per the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.</i>	Staff has observed that though some of the stone lintels and sills on the front façade were previously painted, the paint has greatly deteriorated. If the existing condition allows, <u>staff recommends the lintels and sills not be repainted and any paint color for the brick be submitted for administrative approval.</u>
Standards for Demolition, pg. 82	<p><i>Under the provisions of Sec.32-930.7., the Commission shall approve requests for demolition when:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1) There are no feasible alternatives to the proposed demolition.</i> <i>2) A building or structure is deemed not to be a contributing part of the historic character of an Old and Historic District.</i> <p><i>The Commission deems that a building or structure deteriorated beyond the point of feasible rehabilitation.</i></p>	<p>The applicant has demolished masonry walls at the rear of the building due to structural deficiencies. Research has indicated that the small addition on the original second story of the rear section was added in 1958. Physical and photographic evidence supports this information as the addition was constructed of CMU block. The applicant has indicated that the walls were in severe disrepair and were structurally compromised.</p> <p>Staff finds that the original rear projection was demolished so completely, that any attempt to rebuild to match the original foot print and then adding additional square footage would likely not contribute to the historic integrity the building and not replicate the original massing adequately. <u>Staff recommends approval of the demolition of the rear of the building and the construction of a new rear addition.</u></p>

Figures



Figure 1. Current façade photo



Figure 2. 1924-1925 Sanborn map



Figure 3. Photo from before August 2021 showing the poor condition of the rear wall before demolition



Figure 4. Photo from August 2021 showing the post-demolition rear wall



Figure 5. Historic Photo



Figure 6. Historic Photo