



Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia



Commission of Architectural Review

COA-100313-2021	Final Review	Meeting Date: 3/22/2022
Applicant/Petitioner	William Russell Jones III	
Project Description	Revise a previously approved COA to include a change in footprint and a rear garage.	
Project Location		
Address: 309 N. 28 th St.		
Historic District: St. John's Church		
High-Level Details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant proposes to construct a new two-story single-family detached residence with a partial, set-back third-story and a basement on a vacant lot. The proposed residence will be two stories in height, three bays wide and generally rectangular in form. The building will have a partial third-story section with a rooftop deck. The second story roof will have a low pitch flat roof, while the third story section will have a low pitched a-frame roof with side facing gables. On the façade the applicant proposes vertically aligned windows and a one-story, full-width, covered front porch On the alley side elevation, the applicant proposes single, vertically aligned one-over-one windows and an open rear deck off of the main floor. Applicant proposes to construct a rear, one-story garage with a flat roof form and parapet walls. 		
Staff Recommendation	Approval, with Conditions	
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, alex.dandridge@rva.gov , (804) 646-6569	
	<p>This application was conceptually reviewed at the May 2021 meeting and given approval with the following conditions at the October 2021 meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a horizontal cladding be utilized on the partial 3rd floor massing the applicant provide a labeled drawing specifying the location of all exterior doors the applicant submit specifications on the location of all mechanical equipment and the applicant submit additional information on the proposed rear garage in a later, or separate, COA application. 	

	<p>The applicant has addressed all of the conditions of approval from the previous review, however is returning before the Commission as the width of the new construction has been reduced by 2 feet to allow greater distance from the property line. In addition, the applicant has included final plans for a rear, one-story garage.</p>
Conditions for Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The decorative cornice brackets align with the outer edges of the second-story, front façade windows and edges of the front façade. • The body of the dwelling be clad in either horizontal siding or brick, and that final material specifications be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval. • A final window and door survey be submitted for administrative review and approval. • Applicant submit specifications on the location of all mechanical equipment for staff review. • The garage be clad in the same material as the main house, and if the cladding is hardiplank, it be smooth and unbeaded; final material specification submitted to staff for review and approval. • Rear garage use a simple garage door design that does not incorporate faux hardware. Final design to be submitted to staff for review and approval.

Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
Siting, pg. 46, #s2-3	<p><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></p> <p><i>3. New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site.</i></p>	<p>The proposed new construction will generally have a front setback similar to the existing residences located at 307 and 311 N. 28th Street. Staff notes that front setbacks vary slightly on this block.</p> <p>The new construction will face the most prominent street, N. 28th Street.</p>
Form, pg. 46 #s1-3	<p><i>1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district.</i></p> <p><i>2. New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic residential construction in the district.</i></p> <p><i>3. New residential construction and additions should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps into their design.</i></p>	<p>The building's main massing is compatible with other residential construction found within the district.</p> <p>The applicant proposes a three bay house with a partial third story that is generally in keeping with the residential scale of the district.</p> <p>A line-of-sight drawing indicates that the partial third floor will not be visible from N. 28th Street.</p>
Height, Width, Proportion, and Massing, pg. 47, #s1-3	<p><i>1. New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.</i></p> <p><i>2. New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in surrounding historic districts.</i></p> <p><i>3. The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i></p>	<p>The new residential construction will have a partial third story area that is not typical for the district, however has been previously approved on other new construction within the district. Staff notes that the partial third floor will not be visible from N. 28th Street.</p> <p>The applicant proposes a three bay building with vertically aligned openings on the façade and rear elevation, which is common for the subject block and district.</p>

		<p>The new construction will feature a decorative cornice line. Staff notes that the original approved design featured a simple cornice with minimal detailing. The new design of the cornice will have decorative brackets which are not aligned with the outer edges of the second story windows. Historically, cornice brackets are aligned with the outer edges of the second-story windows. <u>Staff recommends that the decorative cornice brackets align with the outer edges of the second-story, front façade windows and edges of the front façade.</u> See figure 5 in staff report for historic precedent photo.</p>
Materials and Colors, pg. 47, #s2-4	<p><i>2. Materials used in new residential construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.</i></p> <p><i>3. Paint colors used should be similar to the historically appropriate colors already found in the district.</i></p> <p><i>4. Vinyl, asphalt, and aluminum siding are not permitted for use in City Old and Historic Districts. Other synthetic siding materials with a smooth, untextured finish may be allowed in limited cases, but approval by the Commission is always required.</i></p>	<p>The applicant has listed several options for exterior cladding in their application, including masonry and stucco options for the main body of the new construction, and fiber cement or metal for the partial third floor mass. At the October 2021 Meeting, the Commission stated that a brick or horizontal siding be selected for the exterior cladding, recommended against stucco. <u>Staff recommends that the body of the dwelling be clad in either horizontal siding or brick, and that final material specifications be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval.</u></p> <p>Staff notes that based on the Sanborn Maps, the original building on this site was masonry.</p> <p>The applicant has addressed the Commission's conditions of approval from the previous review, changing the vertical cladding on the partial third-floor to horizontal siding. Staff recommends approval of this change.</p>
New Construction, Doors and Windows, pg. 49 #3	<p><i>3. 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>All doors and windows will be vertically aligned one-over-one, which is in keeping with the established fenestration pattern of the neighborhood.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends that a final window and door survey be submitted for administrative review and approval.</u></p>
New Construction, Doors and Windows, pg. 56, #5	<p><i>5. With larger buildings, applicants are encouraged to develop multiple entry points (doors), in keeping with historic precedent for the building type in question. Single entry points - such as a single garage entrance accompanied by single pedestrian entrances are not in keeping with historic precedent, which demonstrates that most large buildings had multiple pedestrian entry points.</i></p>	<p>The proposed new construction has one front entry point, which is in keeping with the surrounding block and district.</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 did not submit any information on the locations of any mechanical equipment. <u>Staff recommends</u></p>

		that the applicant submit specifications on the location of all mechanical equipment for staff review.
Residential Outbuildings, 51, #1-3	<p><i>1. Outbuildings, including garages, sheds, gazebos and other auxiliary structures, should be compatible with the design of the primary building on the site, including roof slope and materials selection.</i></p> <p>2. Newly constructed outbuildings such as detached garages or tool sheds should respect the siting, massing, roof profiles, materials and colors of existing outbuildings in the neighborhood.</p> <p>3. New outbuildings should be smaller than the main residence and be located to the rear and/or side of the property to emphasize that they are secondary structures.</p>	<p>The applicant has included plans for a one-story rear garage featuring a low-pitch shed roof, parapet walls, and two garage doors.</p> <p>The garage will be clad in horizontal hard plank boards. The material of the main house was not specifically mentioned in the application. <u>Staff recommends that the garage be clad in the same material as the main dwelling, and if the cladding is hardiplank, it be smooth and unbeaded; final material specification submitted to staff for review and approval.</u></p> <p><u>The garage should also use a simple garage door design that does not incorporate faux hardware. Final design to be submitted to staff for review and approval.</u></p> <p>Due to the slope of the site, the rear garage will be taller on the alley facing elevation than on the rear yard facing elevation. While there are not many examples of rear garages on this block, staff notes that the alley facing elevation appears to be taller than existing rear garages in the district. The main roof will be 11'9" above grade on the alley elevation. Staff was able to work with the applicant to lower the roof nearly two feet than what was originally presented to Staff.</p> <p>The proposed rear garage will be subordinate in size to the main house, and will appear as a secondary structure.</p>

Figures

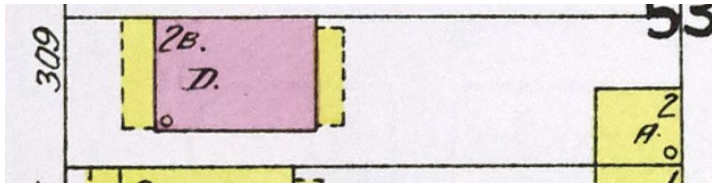


Figure 1. 1924-1925 Sanborn Map showing rear structure



Figure 1. Existing vacant lot. View from N. 28th Street



Figure 2. Surrounding Block context



Figure 3. Surrounding block context.



Figure 4. Example of traditional configuration of cornice brackets in relation to windows.



Figure 5. Example of rear structure on subject block



Figure 7. Steep grade of alley demonstrated



Figure 6. Example of a rear garage in district similar to the one being proposed.