



Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia



Commission of Architectural Review

8. COA-109608-2022	Final Review Meeting Date: 4/26/2022
Applicant/Petitioner	Dan Ensminger
Project Description	Increase the height of an existing, rear brick wall and construct a free-standing fireplace.
Project Location	
Address: 2019 Monument Ave.	
Historic District: Monument Avenue	
High-Level Details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant requests permission to increase the height of an existing rear brick wall of a 1926 Colonial Revival Dwelling. The existing rear brick wall is 4' tall, and is proposed to be increased by approximately 2.5' using a new brick. The applicant proposes to construct a rear, free standing fireplace and chimney at the rear of the property. The fire place and chimney will be approximately 16' tall and will be clad in stucco. 	
Staff Recommendation	Approval, with Conditions
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, alex.dandridge@rva.gov , (804) 646-6569
Previous Reviews	None.
Conditions for Approval	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the new brick placed on top of the existing brick wall use a different brick bond or brick finish, as approved by the CAR, final material and/or bond pattern submitted to staff for administrative review and approval. the chimney be clad in brick, and be more rectangular in form.

Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
Standards for Site Improvements, Fences and Walls, pg. 51	<i>1. Original fences and walls should be retained and maintained whenever possible</i>	The existing, rear, brick wall will remain in place, as the applicant is proposing to construct on top of the existing rear brick wall.
New Construction, Fences and Walls pg. 51, #s 1-2	<p><i>1. Fence, wall, and gate designs should reflect the scale of the historic structures they surround, as well as the character of nearby fences, walls, and gates.</i></p> <p><i>2. Fence, wall, or gate materials should relate to building materials commonly found in the neighborhood.</i></p>	<p>There are examples of existing brick walls throughout the District. The increase in height will be accomplished using brick. Staff finds increasing the height of the wall with brick to be in-keeping with the district.</p> <p>To better reference to original height of the brick wall, <u>Staff recommends that the new brick placed on top of the existing brick wall use a different brick bond or brick finish, as approved by the CAR, final material and/or bond pattern submitted to staff for administrative review and approval.</u></p>
Walls & Fences Administrative Approval Guidelines	<p><i>4. Masonry Walls</i></p> <p><i>Because of the permanent architectural nature of masonry walls administrative approval of masonry walls shall be restricted to modifications to existing walls as follows:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• The installation or modification new openings in a masonry wall not to exceed 4 feet in width.</i> <i>• The modification of any existing opening in a masonry wall not to exceed 20% of the size of the existing opening.</i> <i>• The expansion of an existing wall by less than 10% of the total length of that wall for screening of HVAC equipment or other functional elements.</i> 	While the Commission has adopted administrative approval guidelines for walls and fences, the adopted guidelines do not authorize staff to administratively approve the increase in height of an existing masonry wall, therefore this proposal must be heard by the Commission of Architectural Review.
Outbuildings pg. 51, #'s 1-3	<i>1. Outbuildings should be compatible with the design of the primary building on the site.</i>	The <i>Guidelines</i> offer little guidance about auxiliary structures such as free standing fireplaces. Therefore staff has used the

	<p><i>2. Newly constructed outbuildings should respect the siting, massing, roof profiles, materials and colors of existing outbuildings in the neighborhood.</i></p> <p><i>3. New outbuildings should be smaller than the main residence and be located to the rear and/or side of the property.</i></p>	<p>Guidelines for Outbuildings to analyze the proposed fireplace.</p> <p>The proposed free-standing fireplace will be 16 feet tall, topped by a terracotta chimney flute, and the entire structure will be clad in stucco. The chimney will be wider at the base and narrower towards the top, giving the structure a “tapered” form. Staff believes that the chimney is Spanish revival in style, being clad in stucco, having a terracotta flute, and rounded edges, which is not in-keeping with the main dwelling, which is a 1920s, brick, colonial revival style.</p> <p>To be more in-keeping with the main dwelling, <u>Staff recommends that the chimney clad in brick, and be more rectangular in form.</u></p>
--	---	---

Figures



Figure 1. Location of rear brick wall that will be increased in height. New free-standing chimney will project above this portion of the wall.