



Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia



Commission of Architectural Review

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| 4. COA-111529-2022 | Final Review Meeting Date: 5/24/2022 |
| Applicant/Petitioner | Todd Dykshorn - ADO |
| Project Description | Construct a new 10-unit, 3-story, multi-family building on a vacant lot. |
| Project Location | |
| Address: 815-821 Mosby St. | |
| Historic District: Union Hill | |
| High-Level Details: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant proposes to construct a multi-family building on a vacant lot. • The proposed building consist of two main masses. A two-story mass, and a three-story mass, which are connected by a central stair tower. • The subject parcel sits much higher than the grade of the sidewalk. • The building will be contemporary in form, and traditional in material selection featuring brick and horizontal siding. • The building will feature recessed outdoor areas and patios for each unit. • A rear parking area will be provided. | |
| Staff Recommendation | Approval, with Conditions |
| Staff Contact | Alex Dandridge, alex.dandridge@rva.gov , 804-646-6569 |
| Previous Reviews | <p>In 2019, the Commission approved the demolition of a concrete retaining wall at this site. In August 2020, in accordance with Section 30-930.6(j) of the city code, the Building Commissioner authorized the demolition of a vacant 2-story frame building. The building was deemed a public hazard, due to significant water intrusion which deteriorated load bearing structural members.</p> <p>The Commission conceptually reviewed this application at the March 2022 meeting. The Commission suggested that the northern 2-story section facing Mosby Street be aligned with the southern 3-story section in order to be parallel with Mosby Street to maintain uniform street wall. The Commission also suggested that the applicant incorporate screen walls at the building's base in lieu of column structure to visually ground the</p> |

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| | <p>building as seen from Mosby St where its second level projects over the parking area. In addition, the applicant was asked to revise the 2-story brick section's balconies and parapet, from brick screen rails to open rails and roof in order to reduce the apparent weight of that section and unify the building's composition. There is a partial retaining wall on site; the Commission asked that the applicant consider extending that retaining wall the remainder of the way across the street front, breaking only at an opening with steps to the building's main entry. The commission didn't discuss fenestration in depth, but did ask that the applicant consider additional windows on the south elevation.</p> |
| <p>Conditions for Approval</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The metal railings match the dimension of historic railing designs found in the district, and that final material and design specifications for the railings and cornice be submitted for administrative review and approval. • Staff recommends the either box or half round gutters be used, specifications submitted for administrative review and approval • The applicant provide additional information on parking lot screening for administrative review and approval. • Staff recommends that a detailed site plan that includes dimensioned drawings of the new retaining wall and the location of new sidewalks, stairs, and parking areas, HVAC units, and trash receptacles be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval. |

Staff Analysis

| Guideline Reference | Reference Text | Analysis |
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| <p>Siting, pg. 46, #2-3</p> | <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>As part of the conceptual submittal of this application, the set back of the three-story section was similar to the neighboring buildings to the south, however, the two-story section was set back further and oriented to face more northwest.</p> <p>The Commission recommended that the two-story section of the building be oriented parallel with Mosby Street to reinforce the street wall of the existing buildings on the block, noting that the corner commercial store is an anomaly in the setback pattern of the block.</p> <p>The applicant has responded to this recommendation by aligning the two-story</p> |

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| | | <p>and three-story sections of the building to both be parallel to Mosby Street. Staff supports these revisions and believes it meets the guidelines for siting.</p> |
| <p>Form, pg. 46, #1-3</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district.</i> 2. <i>New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic residential construction in the district</i> 3. <i>New residential construction and additions should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps into their design.</i> | <p>For the two-story section:</p> <p>As part of the conceptual review of this application, the patio within the recessed bay on the ground floor unit was enclosed by a masonry wall. To better relate to the street, the Commission recommended that the masonry wall be replaced with a more transparent material or match the railing of the balcony above, noting that a change in material would also break up the expanse of brick used at the base of the building.</p> <p>The applicant has responded to this condition by replacing the previously proposed brick wall on the ground floor with a metal railing, matching the proposed railing for the second-story balcony. The applicant also addressed the Commission's comments by removing the brick cornice above the second-story balcony, and is now proposing a hardi-panel cornice feature.</p> <p>Staff believes that these revisions bring the project into compliance with the guidelines for form, increasing the human scale of the first level of the building and bringing the form visually closer to other historic buildings in the district by eliminating the heavy brick cornice feature over the front porch. Detailed information on the final design of the cornice of both sections of the building and the metal railings were not submitted with the application. <u>Staff recommends that the metal railing match the dimension of historic railing designs found in the district, and that final material and design specifications for the railings and cornice be submitted for administrative review and approval.</u></p> <p>For the three-story section:</p> <p>The three-story section of the building be three bays wide on the front façade, the center bay being recessed to create covered balconies. Staff finds that this form is in-keeping with the district.</p> <p>The rear will feature a cantilevered mass over a parking area.</p> |

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| <p>Height, Width, Proportion, & Massing, pg. 47, #1-3</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1. New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.</i> <i>2. New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in the surrounding historic districts.</i> <i>3. The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i> | <p>The new building will be a maximum of three-stories in height, which is compatible with the height of existing buildings on the block, as well as new, previously approved, not yet constructed buildings on the block.</p> |
| <p>New Construction, Doors and Windows, pg.49 #3</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>3. The size, proportion, and spacing patterns of doors and window openings on free standing, new construction should be compatible with patterns established in the district.</i> | <p>Doors and windows will be vertically aligned.</p> <p>Both the two-story and three-story sections of the building feature front entry points which is in-keeping with the district.</p> <p>During the conceptual review of this application, the commission asked that additional windows be added to the south elevation. The applicant has responded to this recommendation.</p> |
| <p>New Construction, Materials & Colors, pg. 53</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>2. Materials used in new construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the surrounding neighborhood.</i> <i>5. Rooftop mechanical equipment should be located as discretely as possible to limit visibility. In addition, appropriate screening should be provided to conceal equipment from view. When rooftop railings are required for seating areas or for safe access to mechanical equipment, the railings should be as unobtrusive as possible, in order to minimize their appearance and visual impact on the surrounding district.</i> | <p>The building will be clad in fiber cement lap siding, brick, and composite wood trim. Windows and doors will be metal clad. Balconies will have metal railings and wood decking. The roof will be TPO membrane. The rear parking area will be paved with asphalt.</p> <p>Staff finds that these material are in-keeping with the district</p> <p>No information was submitted regarding gutters and downspouts. <u>Staff recommends the either box or half round gutters be used. specifications submitted for administrative review and approval.</u></p> |
| <p>Mechanical Equipment, pg. 68</p> | <p><i>The visual impact of new mechanical equipment should be minimized to protect the historic character of the district.</i></p> | <p><u>Staff recommends that additional information of the location of all exterior mechanical equipment and trash enclosures be submitted for administrative review and approval.</u></p> |
| <p>Site Improvements, Sidewalks & Curbs, pg. 76</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>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</i> | <p>The site plan indicates that the applicant is proposing to install concrete sidewalks and stairs on-site. Staff finds concrete to be an appropriate material for the district.</p> |
| <p>Site Improvements,</p> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <i>1.Parking lots should be broken up as much as possible with interior landscaped</i> | <p>For the conceptual review of this application, the Applicant was proposing to have an open</p> |

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| <p>Parking Lots, pg. 77</p> | <p><i>islands and should be well screened from the public right-of-way and adjacent properties.</i></p> | <p>air parking area underneath the cantilevered rear projection. The Commission recommended that the southern side of the parking area be screened to better visually ground the rear project. The applicant has revised the plans based on the Commission's recommendation, now proposing a brick veneer wall on the southern side of the parking area. Staff finds that this is an appropriate solution.</p> <p>The applicant is proposing to create a rear parking lot. From the plans submitted, it appears that most of the parking area will be underneath a rear second-story projection and screened by a brick wall, however, <u>Staff believes that the parking area will be visible from O Street, and recommends that the applicant provide additional information on parking lot screening for administrative review and approval.</u></p> <p>The applicant proposes to expand an existing retaining wall. No detail was given on the new portion of the retaining wall. <u>Staff recommends that a detailed site plan that includes dimensioned drawings of the new retaining wall, and location of new sidewalks, stairs, and parking areas, HVAC units, and trash receptacles be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval.</u></p> |
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Figure 5. 805-807 Mosby Street



Figure 6. 809 Mosby Street