




Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia



Commission of Architectural Review

2. COA-112855-2022	Final Review	Meeting Date: 7/26/2022
Applicant/Petitioner	Mark Baker	
Project Description	Construct a rear addition onto 3 attached dwellings.	
Project Location		
Address: 2511-2515 E. Franklin St.		
Historic District: St. John's Church		
High-Level Details:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none">The applicant requests permission to construct three rear additions on to three masonry row homes circa 1880.The rear additions will be frame, and clad in horizontal cementitious siding.Windows on the rear addition will be vertically aligned 1/1 aluminum clad wood.Rear facade of new addition will have sets of French doors with large single pane windows.The additions will be approximately 24' in length, three stories tall, and will add about 1,000 square feet to each dwelling.No alley exists behind the property, however a public staircase is adjacent to the property. Staff believes that the additions will be visible from this public right-of-way. The rear additions may also be visible from E. Main Street.		
Staff Recommendation	Approval, with Conditions	
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, alex.dandridge@rva.gov , (804) 646-6569	
Previous Reviews		
<p>This application was deferred by the Commission at the June 28th, 2022 Meeting. The Commission deferred the application for the reasons below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">During the review of this application, a substantial number of public comment letters were received which expressed concern in regards to a large tree straddling the property line between 2515 & 2517 E. Franklin St. While CAR has limited purview over trees, it was determined that per the City Code Sec. 30-930.6(b), the Commission is required to review “major plantings”, which includes trees, if located on the subject property and visible from the public right-of-way. No information on existing trees was submitted with the initial application, however the applicant did provide images of the		

<p>site, and the neighbor at 2517 E. Franklin provided an arborists report. The Commission requested that the applicant submit a site plan with the subsequent application which labeled all large existing trees on the site. The applicant has included additional information on existing trees on-site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The applicant was not in agreement with the initial Staff conditions to revise the rear fenestration pattern to eliminate the French Doors. The Commission didn't show concern in regards to the French Doors, and the applicant is planning to move forward with as originally presented. • The applicant was not in agreement with the initial Staff conditions to and to use Richmond Rail with no exposed hardware. The applicant has not revised the plans to reflect Richmond Rail, and it requesting to move forward with nailed-up pickets. 	
<p>Conditions for Approval</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applicant submit additional information on the exterior rehabilitation of the existing dwellings in a subsequent COA application to Staff for administrative review and approval. • Staff recommends that the rear decks feature Richmond Rail with a finished appearance with no exposed hardware, or a simple contemporary railing rather than nailed-up pickets. • All original windows on the property that will not be removed to accommodate the new additions be repaired and retained. • Exterior of any original, existing chimneys be retained. • Half round or box gutters be utilized on the rear additions, final specifications submitted to staff for review and approval. • HVAC not be visible from the public right-of-way, location submitted to staff for administrative review.

Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
Standards for Rehabilitation pg. 59	<p><i>2. Retain original wood features such as cornices, brackets, window and doorway surrounds, sashes and doors. Maintain the historic reveal or exposure of the siding and trim, as it is an important character-defining feature.</i></p> <p><i>7. Repair damaged elements instead of replacing them. Use materials that</i></p>	<p>While this application focuses on the construction of three new rear additions, on a site visit, Staff noticed that the overall condition of the dwellings is poor, and many repairs are needed to the windows, front porches, and other wooden architectural elements. Staff believes that most of these repairs can be approved administratively.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends that applicant submit additional information on the exterior</u></p>

	<i>match the original in type, or use physically and chemically compatible substitute materials that convey the same appearance as the surviving elements or sections. Use available documentation when reconstructing missing elements. Pictorial, historical or physical documentation can be helpful.</i>	<u>rehabilitation of the existing dwelling in a subsequent COA application to Staff for administrative review and approval.</u>
<u>Standards for Rehabilitation #5, pg. 59</u>	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.	<u>Staff recommends that all original windows on the property that will not be removed to accommodate the new additions be repaired and retained.</u>
Standards for New Construction, Form #1, pg. 46	<i>1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district. Building form refers to the specific combination of massing, size, symmetry, proportions, projections and roof shapes that lend identity to a building. Form is greatly influenced by the architectural style of a given structure.</i>	The proposed rear additions will have a building form that is similar to others in the district, having a rectangular form, and inset from the sides of 2511 and 2515 E. Franklin Street. The roof of the new additions will be attached the rear of the existing dwelling beneath the roof line. The south side of E. Franklin Street feature another masonry building that has a large, multiple-story rear projection with covered porches. The center rear addition proposed for
Standards for New Construction,	<i>1. Additions should not obscure or destroy original architectural elements.</i>	The rear additions will obscure the original rear windows and doors. The first level of the dwellings feature 2 small breezeway elements that connect the rear and front yards on the first level. The additions will be built around this element to maintain a functioning breezeway.
Standards for New Construction, Siting, pg. 46	1. 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.	The existing attached dwelling feature approximately 4,896 square feet of living area. The new additions will add 1,000 square feet to each unit, adding an additional 3,000 square feet to the units. Based on square footage, the new additions will be subordinate in size to the existing dwellings. The existing dwellings are approximately 34' in length, the rear additions will extend back 30', 6' being rear, covered decks. Since the initial review of this application, the applicant has reduced the length of the center rear addition proposed for 2513 E. Franklin Street to meet lot coverage requirements.

<p>Standards for New Construction, Materials & Colors, pg. 47</p>	<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 for new additions should complement the historically</i></p>	<p>The proposed rear additions will feature horizontal, hardi plank, lap siding, parged masonry foundation, aluminum clad wood windows, aluminum gutter and downspouts, TPO Membrane roofing, solid wood doors, hardi trim, wooden decking.</p> <p>Gutters and downspouts will be aluminum. <u>Staff recommends that either half round or box getters be utilized on the rear additions. final specifications submitted to staff for review and approval.</u></p> <p>The applicant is requesting permission to install nailed-up-pickets on the rear handrails of the proposed additions' decks. There is not a precedent for approving nailed-up-pickets within City Old and Historic Districts, and they are not compatible with historic railing designs throughout the district. <u>Staff recommends that the rear decks feature Richmond Rail and a finished appearance with no exposed hardware or a simple contemporary railing rather than nailed-up pickets.</u></p>
<p>Standards for New Construction, Doors and Windows, pg. 49</p>	<p><i>1. The size, proportion and spacing patterns of door and window openings on a new addition should follow patterns established by the original building. Windows on most commercial and residential properties throughout Old and Historic Districts have a vertical orientation.</i></p> <p><i>2. The architectural appearance of original windows should be used as models for new windows.</i></p> <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>The three rear additions will feature sets of French doors with large single pane glass windows on the rear elevations. The additions constructed onto 2511 & 2515 E. Franklin will have vertically aligned, 1/1 windows.</p> <p>The existing dwelling's rear elevations feature single windows and single, wood and glass doors. The rear of other properties on the block also feature similar fenestration patterns.</p> <p>During the initial review of this application, Staff recommended that the rear elevations of the new additions feature a combination of single doors and single windows that are vertically aligned rather than the proposed French Doors and that the final design be submitted for Chair and Vice Chair approval. However, the Commission did not express concern over this fenestration pattern.</p> <p>Staff notes that there is limited visibility of the rear of the dwellings, as there is not a rear public alley, however the dwellings sit atop a tall hillside, and the rear of the properties are visible from E. Main Street during the winter</p>

		months when the trees do not provide screening.
Roofs, Removal of elements, pg. 66	<i>10. Original chimneys, skylights and light wells that contribute to the style and character of the building should be retained, as their removal could alter the overall character of the structure.</i>	Staff did not receive any information on the existing chimneys on the three dwellings, however <u>recommends that the exterior of any original, existing chimneys be retained.</u>
HVAC Equipment, pg. 68	<p><i>1. New units should be placed in side or rear yards so as to minimize their visual impact. Side yard units should be located as far away from the front of the building as possible.</i></p> <p><i>2. Rooftop units should be located so that they are minimally visible from the public right-of-way, and screening should be considered.</i></p>	The location of exterior HVAC equipment was not included with this application. <u>Staff recommends that new HVAC not be visible from the public right-of-way, location submitted to staff for administrative review.</u>
Standards for Site Improvements; pg. 77	5. Mature trees contribute to the character of Old and Historic Districts, provide visual interest, reduce the negative impacts of parking areas and ease the effects of temperature and wind conditions. Every effort should be made to preserve and maintain them.	<p>During the initial review of this application at the June 2022 meeting, Staff received numerous letters of opposition about the proposal, stating that a large tree on located in the rear yard of 2517 E. Franklin would be impacted by the rear additions, and would ultimately be killed due to root damage. This prompted discussion on the extent that CAR is required to review trees. It was determined that per the City Code Sec. 30-930.6(b), CAR may be required to consider the removal of “major plantings” which includes trees, specifically if they are located on the subject property, or are visible from the public ROW.</p> <p>The initial application did not include detail on the impact to existing “major plantings” and as an element of the deferral, the Commission Requested that the applicant include a site plan and additional information on the location of any “major plantings”.</p> <p>In the current submission, the applicant has included a site plan than demonstrates that the tree located in the rear yard of 2517 E. Franklin is located on the edge of the property line, however is not located on the subject property. Information obtained in an arborist report state that the tree is a Silver Maple and is approximately 40-60 years old with an expected life span of 100 years in the wild, and a much shorter lifespan in urban settings. Silver Maples are known to be quick growers with a weak structure. In an additional arborist report, it was determined</p>

		<p>that the tree had reached maturity level and is expected to decline rather than increase in size.</p> <p>In addition to the tree located at 2517 E. Franklin Street, the applicant has identified one other large tree behind 2511 E. Franklin Street. The property owner is planning to remove the tree.</p> <p>Staff recommends that the applicant make every effort to preserve and maintain existing healthy trees, and consider how the new rear additions could impact their canopies and root systems.</p> <p>The property owner has agreed to this condition, and notes in the application that no heavy machinery will be used in the construction of the rear additions, and that the foundations will be hand-dug.</p>
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Figures



Figure 1. Façade photo

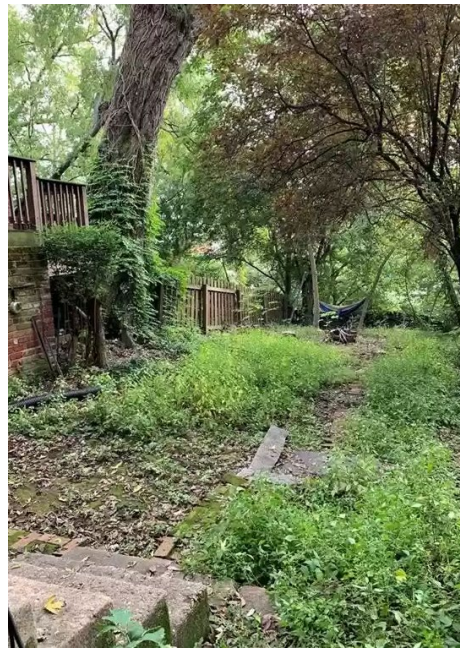


Figure 2. Rear, mature tree on property line of 2515 and 2517 E. Franklin.



Figure 3. Visibility from 26th and E. Main Street, Winter, google street view



Figure 4. Original rear porch design at attached 2509 E. Franklin Street. Simple design with slim square posts and Richmond Rail.

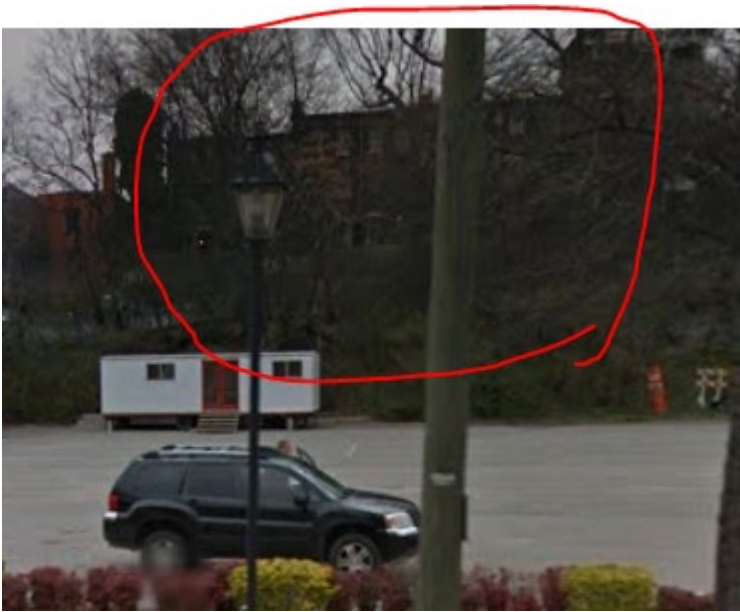


Figure 5. Visibility from E. Main Street, Winter, google street view.



Figure 6. Silver Maple tree located at the rear of 2517 E. Franklin Street



Figure 7. Trees in rear yard of subject property.



Figure 8. Trees in rear yard of subject property.



Figure 9. Panoramic view of rear yard and existing trees.