

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
January 23, 2018 Meeting**

15. **COA-028570-2017** (M. Jarreau)

**2825 M Street
Church Hill North Old and Historic District**

Project Description:

Construct a duplex.

Staff Contact:

M. Pitts

Proposal: The applicant requests approval to construct two attached single-family dwellings in the Church Hill North Old and Historic District. The proposed structure will be located on a vacant corner lot at the intersection of North 29th Street and M Street. The applicant proposes to construct two attached 2 ½-story, 3-bay frame dwellings that are contemporary adaptations of the Greek and Colonial Revival dwellings found throughout the district. The structure will be set on a low, parged concrete foundation and will be clad in fiber cement siding. Each dwelling will have a 5-bay façade and covered front portico. The applicant is proposing a side gable roof to be clad in standing seam metal to be painted Black Fox (SW7020) on the front slope and architectural shingles on the rear slope. The applicant is proposing to include two, front gable dormers and a two-story rear porch with a shed roof on each dwelling. The windows are proposed to be primarily 2/2 composite windows.

Surrounding Context: The subject blocks of M Street and North 29th Streets have lost most of their historic structures. The remaining historic structure on the south side of the 2800 block of M Street is a single story, 3-bay Italianate structure, and the remainder of this side of the subject block has been infilled with new 2-story residential frame buildings. On the north side of M Street, there are a public park and water towers. The subject block of North 29th street is primarily developed with 2 to 2 ½ story, 2 and 3 bay, new single family and attached single family frame homes. The limited historic structures on the block include a 2-story Greek revival frame structure with a side gable roof. The structure immediately across North 29th Street is a 1945, 1 ½ story, brick, Cape Cod cottage. The structures in the immediate area have a variety of roof forms and bay configurations.

Previous Review: The Commission conceptually reviewed this application on December 19, 2017. The Commission recommended the applicant increase the number of bays on the façade to 4 bays which is more consistent with Colonial Revival homes or 5 bays which is similar to grand Greek Revival homes and recommended the dormers be located to align with the bays. The Commission also encouraged the applicant to increase the number of bays on the M Street elevation to 4. The Commission recommended the applicant include a projecting porch as the façade read as flat.

In response to the Commission's concerns, the applicant modified the plans as follows:

- The recessed front entry to each home has been replaced with a projecting front portico.
- Each home has a 5-bay composition. Previously, each home had 3 bays.
- On the side elevation, the applicant has modified the fenestration. The applicant is proposing 4 symmetrically placed windows on the 1st story and one window centered on the elevation on both the 2nd and 3rd stories.

The applicant is seeking **Final Review** for this project. Commission staff reviewed the project through the lens of the "Standards for New Construction: Residential" on pages 46-51 of the *Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* utilizing the checklist below.

S=satisfies

D=does not satisfy

NA=not applicable

S ☒ **D** ☐ **NA** ☐

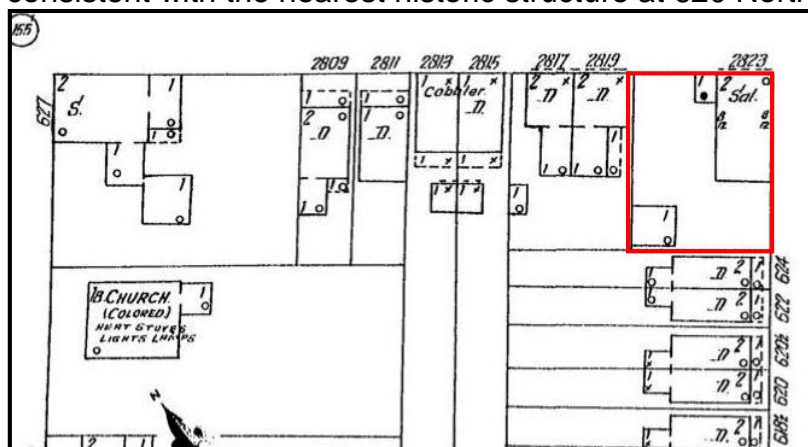
New infill construction should respect the prevailing front and side yard setback patterns in the surrounding district

Though the structure sits proud of the adjacent home on North 29th Street, the proposed setback appears to be consistent with the nearest historic structure at 620 North 29th Street. The proposed setbacks are compatible with the variety of setbacks on the block.

☐ ☐ ☐

Where the adjoining buildings have different setbacks, the setback for the new building should be based on the historical pattern for the block

The subject lot was developed with a structure which sited on the property lines at the corner of North 29th Street and M Street. The structures immediately adjacent on M Street were built with no front yard setbacks. The double houses which were built on North 29th had consistent front yard and side yard setbacks. The proposed setback appears to be consistent with the nearest historic structure at 620 North 29th Street.



1905 Sanborn Map

- ☒ ☐ ☐ **New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site**

The structure addresses North 29th Street which is the primary street frontage. The proposed project is located on a corner lot and interacts with M Street through the presence of windows on the side elevation. The Commission may wish to encourage additional architectural elements as recommended by the Commission's Guidelines for Corner Properties (pg. 48) be included on this side elevation as M Street is a prominent street bordering the site.

- ☒ ☐ ☐ **New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the district. Form refers to the combination of massing, size, symmetry, proportions, projections and roof shapes that lend identity to a building.**

The gable roofed, 2 ½ story, 3-bay massing is a form found throughout the Church Hill North district. The proposed dwellings are located on a block which was historically characterized by double homes. The limited remaining historic fabric on the subject blocks includes Greek Revival architecture of which the proposed structure draws inspiration. The applicant has modified the plans to include a projecting front porch as encouraged by the Commission.

- ☒ ☐ ☐ **New construction should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps.**

The proposed project incorporates human-scale elements including a cornice and front steps as part of the project. The Guidelines encourage human scale elements to be included on the secondary, corner elevation for corner properties. The Commission may wish to consider if additional architectural elements should be incorporated into the M Street elevation of the structure.

- ☒ ☐ ☐ **New construction should respect the typical height of surrounding buildings**

The structure is proposed to be 34' at the ridge. The typical height of the surrounding buildings is 2 to 2 ½ stories though the new construction is consistently taller than the historic structures. The proposed 2 ½ story structure is in keeping with the typical height of the buildings on the surrounding blocks.

- ☒ ☐ ☐ **New construction should respect the typical width, organization of bays, vertical alignment and symmetry of surrounding buildings.**

The proposed project does maintain the vertical alignment and the symmetry of the surrounding buildings. The applicant has modified the design to propose a five-bay façade to be more consistent with the style of home and the width of the building. The subject double house is, at 64', considerably wider than the double houses found on the subject block. The width of each dwelling is similar to that of the larger Greek Revival homes found in neighboring blocks including 510 North 29th Street.

- ☒ ☐ ☐ **The size, proportion, and spacing patterns of doors and window openings should be compatible with patterns established in the district.**

The proposed windows on the façade are vertically aligned and symmetrically placed which is consistent with patterns in the district. The applicant has also aligned the dormers with the window bays. As the Commission's Guidelines for Corner Properties note that windows and doors on the corner elevations should be organized following the principals of the primary elevation to include being aligned vertically, the applicant has modified the proposed design to eliminate a transom window and propose vertically aligned windows on the upper stories.

- ☒ ☐ ☐ **Porch and cornice heights should be compatible with adjacent buildings**

The porch and cornice heights are compatible with structures on the street. The Commission's Guidelines for Corner Properties note that particular attention should be paid to the height of foundations to create an appropriately scaled appearance that relates to neighboring structures and is consistent with neighboring properties and that heights should be kept to a level that will enhance, not detract, from the pedestrian experience. The proposed 1'-4" foundation meets this guideline.

- ☒ ☐ ☐ **Materials used in new construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district. Vinyl, asphalt, and aluminum siding are not permitted.**

The proposed construction utilizes fiber cement siding and trim; composite windows, standing seam metal, architectural shingles, steel railings, wood decking and railings, and a brick foundation. The materials are compatible with frame structures found in the district. As the rear of the structure is visible from the public right of way, staff recommends the entire roof to be clad in standing seam metal.

Staff recommends the following additional conditions for the proposed materials

- Details of the proposed porch columns be submitted for administrative review and approval.
- The siding be smooth and without a bead.
- Paint and brick colors be submitted for administrative review and approval.
- The rear deck railing be Richmond rail and the deck be painted or opaquely stained a neutral color that complements one or more of the colors found in the main structure to be reviewed and approved by staff.

Staff recommends approval of the project with conditions. Staff finds the proposed project responded to the Commission's concerns and is a building form compatible with the historic structures in the district.

It is the assessment of staff that, with the acceptance of the stated conditions, the application is consistent with the Standards for New Construction outlined in Section 30.930.7(c) of the City Code, as well as with the *Richmond Old and Historic Districts*

Handbook and Design Review Guidelines, specifically the pages cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of code.