

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

19. **COA-028608-2018** (Eastern Edge Development) **2108 ½ East Broad Street**
St. John's Church Old and Historic District

Project Description: **Construct a new 3-story single family dwelling.**

Staff Contact: **M. Pitts**

Proposal: The applicant requests conceptual review and comment for the construction of a new detached single-family house on a vacant lot in the St. John's Church Old and Historic District. The applicant had submitted a contemporary adaptation of a home with an English basement for review, but subsequently submitted a revised, more traditional design for review. The applicant is requesting conceptual review and comment for the traditional design which consists of the elevation submitted of 2-story frame structure set on a raised brick foundation. The structure has a 2-bay façade and a fully façade front porch.

Surrounding Context: The proposed new construction will be located on the north side of East Broad Street on a narrow lot between two historic houses. The two flanking houses are frame, two-story, 2-bay vernacular Italianate-style dwellings with decorative porches, window hoods and cornices. The majority of the houses on this side of the street have shallow gable roofs. In addition to the historic structures, there is a three story multifamily home near the intersection of North 21st Street. The structures across the street include a mix of Italianate and Greek Revival masonry and frame homes that are 2 to 3 stories in height. Due to the slope and street, the grade greatly varies from North 21st to North 22nd Streets.

Previous Reviews: The applicant came before the Commission on October 24, 2017, with a proposal to construct a 3-story, 2-bay home. The home included a full façade porch with a low sloped hipped roof. Several of the Commissioners expressed concerns with the three-story height and encouraged the applicant to consider setting a two-story structure on an English basement. The Commission encouraged the applicant to propose a contemporary design.

The applicant returned to the Commission on December 19, 2017 with a 3-story home with a contemporary design. While the Commissioners expressed differing opinions on the contemporary design, they continued to express concerns regarding the three-story height. The Commission encouraged the applicant to draw inspiration from the way the historic structures across Broad Street address the topography and height and to examine putting the 1st floor partially in the ground.

In response to the Commission's, staff's, and neighborhood concerns; the applicant has substantially changed the design of the façade. The height of the proposed structure has been reduced as the applicant is proposing an English basement. The applicant is proposing a full façade porch rather than the previous front porch which did not span the width of the façade and has altered the fenestration. As only the elevation was provided, staff will only be commenting on the compatibility of the façade and the proposed height of the structure.

The applicant is seeking **Conceptual Review** for this project. Conceptual review is covered under Sec. 30-930.6(d) of the City Code: The commission shall review and discuss the proposal with the applicant and make any necessary recommendations. Such Conceptual Review shall be advisory only. 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*.

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**

Site plan not provided.

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

Site plan not provided.

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

The structure addresses East Broad Street

☒ ☐ ☐ **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 project utilizes elements found on structures on the block including full façade porch, a 2-bay composition, and a symmetrical facade.

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

The proposed project incorporates human-scale elements including a front porch, a simple cornice, and front steps.

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

Though the proposed project is taller than the adjacent structures, the applicant has substantially reduced the overall height of the structure when compared to the previous submittals. The structures on the subject block of East Broad Street vary in height as there are several taller homes with English basements on the south side of the street in addition to the two story historic homes and three story new construction on the north side of the street. The applicant has revised the plans to decrease the height by incorporating an English basement into the design. Staff believes that height is consistent with the diversity of heights found on the block.

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

The project is narrower than the historic structures on the block due to the lot size constraints. The proposed project façade does maintain the 2-bay configuration, vertical alignment, and the symmetry of the surrounding buildings.

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

The typical fenestration pattern in the district includes evenly spaced ranked windows. The proposed fenestration is consistent with patterns in the district.

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

Due the slope of the street, the porch heights do not align. The proposed porch height appears to be consistent with the structures across Broad Street which have English basements. The cornice height is taller than the adjacent buildings but is compatible with the heights of taller buildings on the block.

☒ ☐ ☒ **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 frame construction with a brick basement is consistent with structures in the District.

The applicant should refer to the Commission's New Construction Checklist and Required Dimensions document for additional details on the requirements for final submittal of this project.