

9. COA-065074-2019

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

December 17, 2019

PROPERTY ADDRESS

524 North 21st Street

DISTRICT

Union Hill

APPLICANT

Watney Ventures, LLC

STAFF CONTACT

C. Jones

Commission of Architectural Review

STAFF REPORT



PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Construct a new multi-family residence on a vacant lot.

PROJECT DETAILS

- The applicant proposes to construct a frame, two-family residence on a vacant lot.
- The proposed building is two stories in height, four bays wide, rectangular in form with a one-story full width porch on the façade and an inset, two-story porch on the rear elevation.
- The side elevations will feature vertically and horizontally aligned 2/2 windows.
- Proposed materials for the building include 6" horizontal lap siding and a parged foundation. For the porches the applicant proposes architectural shingles for the roof, 6x6 wood columns, tongue & groove floorboards, and wood Richmond rail.
- The applicant will also provide a concrete stair and walkway to the sidewalk.



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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS

PREVIOUS REVIEWS

The Commission previously reviewed this application at the October 22, 2019 meeting. The Commission primarily discussed the setbacks and siting on the lot and the porch designs and details. The Commission generally felt that the setback of the building was too deep and that the new construction should align with the existing building at 526 North 21st Street. The Commission also expressed concern about the change in elevation on the site and asked for more information about the need for stairs, a walkway, and a retaining wall. The Commission also discussed if the building design was too narrow due to the side yard setbacks and staff confirmed that this a zoning requirement that could be addressed through the Zoning Division. The Commission also discussed eliminating the second story of the front porch in favor of a more traditional one-story porch design and removing some of the decorative details on the rear porch.

STAFF RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

- The applicant use a standing or flat-lock metal seam roof that closely approximates hand seaming, or a dark membrane roof for the front porch.
- The applicant use a central stair or a second stair to provide access to both units.
- The applicant revise the cornice line to align the brackets with the window jambs to be consistent with the neighboring properties.
- The applicant provide colors for administrative review and approval.

The applicant submit the following to staff for review and approval prior to applying for a building permit:

- a fully dimensioned context elevation that indicates the height of the proposed building elements, including foundation, porch floor and roof, cornice, and top of the roof, and the same features on the neighboring properties for comparison
- details about any screening for the HVAC equipment
- clarification about the foundation wall and retaining wall to staff for review and approval
- details about the size and style of the porch columns and railings, gutters, and downspouts

The applicant update the following prior to submitting the plans for a building permit:

- the window and door schedule (electronically)
- details about the size and style of the porch columns and railings, gutters, and downspouts

STAFF ANALYSIS

Siting, pg. 46, #s2-3	<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>	The applicant has responded to Commission feedback and aligned the façade with the buildings at 524-526 North 21 st Street.
Form, pg. 46 #s1-3	<p><i>1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district.</i></p> <p><i>3. New residential construction and additions should incorporate human-scale elements such as cornices, porches and front steps into their design.</i></p>	<p>The proposed building is rectangular in shape and 2 stories in height, similar to other buildings in the historic district.</p> <p>The applicant has responded to Commission feedback and reduced the front porch to one story with a shed roof to address the space between the window headers and sills. During conceptual review, staff recommended the applicant consider the architectural elements, such as the raised foundation and 1-story, 1-bay entry porch found on the buildings at 521-527 N. 21th Street which also utilize a 4-bay composition or a central stair like the duplex at 517-519 N. 21st Street. Since the applicant has reduced the height of the front porch to one story, staff recommends that <u>the applicant use a central front porch stair or a second stair to provide access to both units.</u></p>
Height, Width, Proportion, & Massing, pg. 47, #s1-3	<p><i>1. New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.</i></p> <p><i>3. The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i></p>	<p>The applicant's plans indicate construction of a 2-story building; however, there is not an indication of the overall height of the building. During conceptual review, the Commission asked the <u>applicant to submit a fully dimensioned context elevation that indicates the height of the proposed building elements, including foundation, porch floor and roof, cornice, and top of the roof and the same features on the neighboring properties for comparison.</u> The context elevation should also account for the current elevation of the property and any proposed grading.</p> <p>As mentioned above, the applicant has not provided a fully dimensioned context elevation to compare the cornice height of the proposed</p>

building with the adjacent historic buildings.

Staff notes that the applicant has updated the cornice line detail and now proposes PVC dentils, PVC picture frame moulding, and PVC brackets. Staff finds that this decorative detailing is in keeping with the cornice lines at 520 and 522 North 21st Street. Staff notes that the cornice line details at 520 and 522 North 21st Street have additional brackets and different sized panels to align with the window openings and staff recommends the applicant follow this pattern.

Materials and Colors, pg. 47, #s2-4

2. Materials used in new residential construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.

3. Paint colors used should be similar to the historically appropriate colors already found in the district.

Staff notes the windows schedule has been updated by hand and requests the window schedule be updated electronically prior to submitting the plans for building permit review. The applicant has not indicated any proposed colors and staff recommends the applicant provide colors for administrative review and approval.

Porches and Porch Details, pg. 49 #s2,5

2. When designing a new railing for a new infill building, or for an existing building which has lost its railing and for which no documentary or physical evidence survives, the balusters in the traditional Richmond rail are generally rectangular in section (with the narrow dimension facing the street) or square. The baluster is fitted into the recess in the top rail and a sloped bottom rail. Typical deck railings, consisting of nailed-up stock elements, are not approved as they are not based on a compatible historical model found in Richmond's Old and Historic Districts.

The material keynotes indicates the use of a Richmond Rail for the front and rear porch railings; however, that is not what is shown in the drawings. Staff requests the applicant confirm the use of Richmond Rail, provide details for staff review and approval, and update the plans prior to applying for a building permit.

5. Porch roofs are encouraged to utilize standing- or flat-lock metal seam roofs that are hand-seamed, or closely approximate handseaming. Seams that, in section, are large, rectangular seams, reminiscent of pre-formed seams utilized on prefabricated industrial or commercial structures, are not acceptable. Membrane roofs are acceptable substitutes for flat-lock seamed metal roofs.

The applicant proposes to use architectural shingles for the porch roof. Staff recommends the applicant use a standing or flat-lock metal seam roof that closely approximates hand seaming, or a dark membrane roof for the front porch.

Mechanical Equipment, pg. 68

The visual impact of new mechanical equipment should be minimized to protect the historic character of the district.

The applicant has updated the site plan to indicate the location of the HVAC equipment in the side yard. Staff recommends the applicant provide screening, the details of which should be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval.

Standards for Site Improvements, pg. 76	<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 throughout Old and Historic Districts. The use of more than two paving materials within an area is discouraged.</i>	The applicant has updated the application and now states that the existing cinderblock wall along the front of the property will be parged, a staircase will be cut into the wall, and a brushed concrete path will lead to the door. The applicant has indicated that this will match the properties next door at 526-528 N. 21 st Street.
Building and Site Accessibility, pg. 79	<i>Regrading is any adjustment made to the slope or land leading up to any exterior entrance to a property.</i>	The applicant has updated the application to indicate that the retaining wall along the alley will be removed and replaced by the foundation of the proposed building. However, staff notes that the site plan does not show the building on the lot line and the elevation does not illustrate the height of the foundation wall next to the alley. Staff requests the applicant submit <u>clarification about the foundation wall and retaining wall to staff for review and approval.</u>
Submission Materials Checklist, pg 9	Other Details as required (or requested) to describe the project – e.g. porch column and railing details; cornice, soffit and gutter details; door and window details, etc.	During conceptual review, the Commission asked about the gutter details, especially given the slope of the site and how water will drain from it. The applicant has not provided information about the gutter details. <u>Staff recommends the applicant use a low profile gutter, such as a ½ round and update these details on the building permit plans.</u>

It is the assessment of staff that, with the conditions above, the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation and New Construction outlined in Section 30-930.7 (b) and (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 the code.

FIGURES

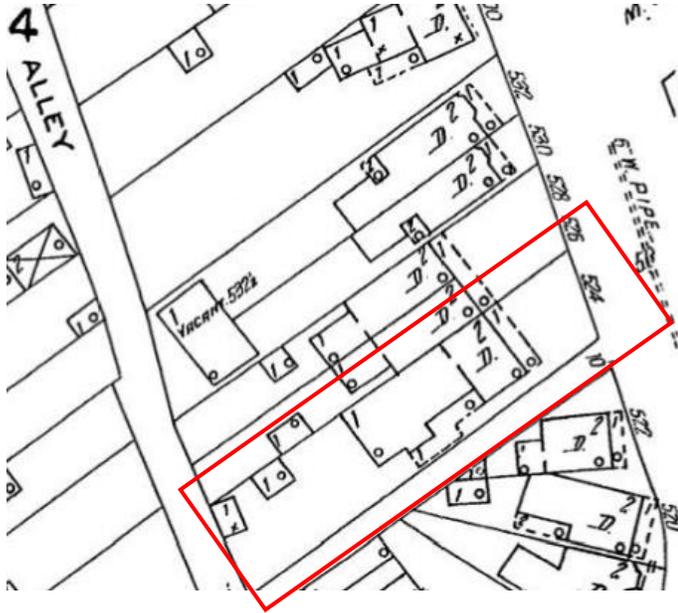


Figure 1. 1905 Sanborn map



Figure 2. 524 N. 21st Street



Figure 3. 500 block N. 21st Street, even side, looking south



Figure 4. 500 block N. 21st Street, even side, looking northeast



Figure 5. 521-527 N. 24th Street



Figure 6. 517-519 N. 21st Street