

## 8. COA-089504-2021

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021

PROPERTY ADDRESS

2516 E. Leigh Street/602-608 N.26<sup>th</sup> Street

DISTRICT

Church Hill North

APPLICANT

Evolve Development, Inc

STAFF CONTACT

C. Jones

# Commission of Architectural Review

## STAFF REPORT

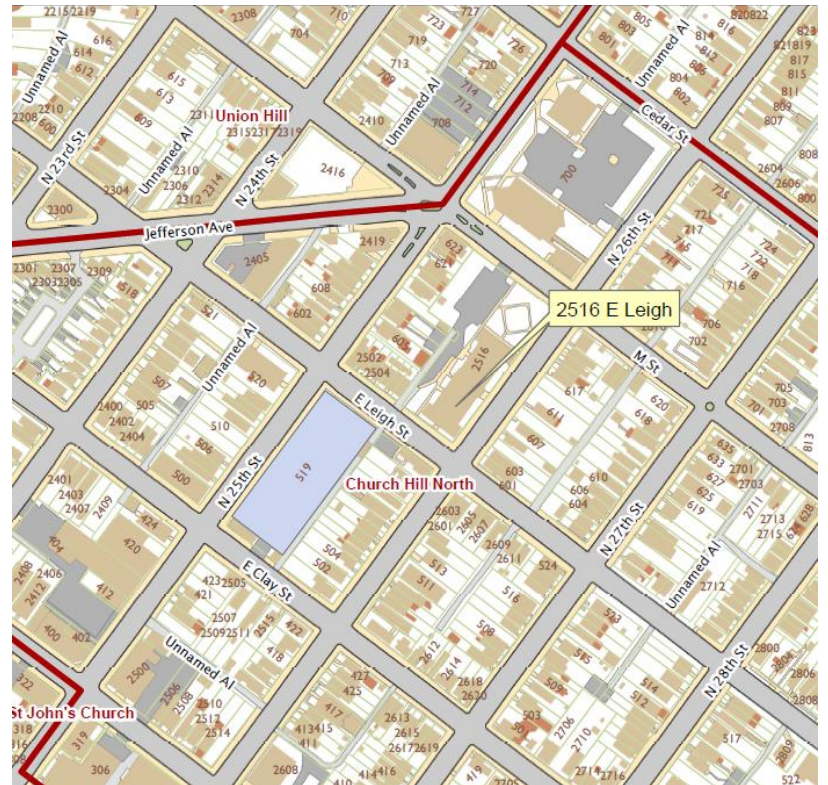


### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

**New construction of nine single-family attached dwellings.**

### PROJECT DETAILS

- The applicant proposes new construction of nine single-family attached dwellings on a vacant portion of the Bowler School parcel. Seven of the units will face M Street, the other two will face N. 26<sup>th</sup> Street.
- The proposed buildings are a mix of configurations including:
  - Two stories above a crawl space with an attic level formed by a gable roof dormer (618 & 620 N. 26<sup>th</sup> Street)
  - three stories above a full English basement (2501, 2501, 2509 M Street)
  - three stories with a full English basement with a mansard roof with a single, central dormer (2503, 2505, 2511 M Street)
- The applicant proposes a mix of brick and lap siding, one-over-one double-hung windows, and standing seam metal for the mansard roofs and membrane for the porch roofs.



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The seven residences facing M Street will have two-car garages served by a newly created alley. The application will require a special use permit.

## CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

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" on pages 44, and 46-56 of the Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines utilizing the Guidelines presented below.

### PREVIOUS REVIEWS

The Commission has not previously reviewed this application. Staff could not find any previous reviews or approvals for this property.

### SURROUNDING CONTEXT

The proposed project location shares a lot with the former Bowler School, now Bowler Retirement Community.

The former Bowler School is a ca. 1913, three-story, granite-faced building designed in the Gothic Revival style by Carneal and Johnston, noted Richmond architects. The remainder of the lot is paved parking and landscaping. Adjacent to the parking lot on the corner of M Street and North 25<sup>th</sup> Street is a two-story mixed-use frame building with a hipped roof. Also on the corner of M Street and North 25<sup>th</sup> Street is a tall two-story masonry Colonial Revival funeral home. Directly across the project location on M Street is a tall two-story dark masonry building masonry owned by the City of Richmond Department of Public Works and a two-story masonry building with stepped parapet walls. Across North 26<sup>th</sup> Street are a mix of frame and masonry dwellings with decorative cornice lines and front porches.

#### STAFF COMMENTS

Staff recommends the applicant provide:

- fully dimensioned elevations
- information about the location of the proposed HVAC equipment

Staff recommends the applicant consider:

- adding a horizontal element, such as a stringcourse, that turns the corner to unify the overall design and reflect the architectural treatment of the Bowler School
- removing the porch screens
- ways to screen the garage doors

#### STAFF ANALYSIS

Siting, pg. 46, #s2-3	<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>	Currently there are no buildings facing M Street on the subject block. Staff notes the applicant proposes to set the façades back five feet on both M and North 26 <sup>th</sup> Streets.
	<i>3. New buildings should face the most prominent street bordering the site.</i>	The proposed buildings face both M and North 26 <sup>th</sup> Streets.
Form, pg. 46 #s1-3	<i>1. New construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district.</i>	The applicant proposes three-bay, three-story buildings with single raised entry porticos. Staff notes that there are a variety of building forms and heights in the surrounding area. The applicant proposes a variety of roof forms including mansard with dormers, shed, and front gable with side dormers. Staff finds there are a variety of roof forms in the immediately surrounding areas including stepped parapets, hipped, and shed.
	<i>2. New residential construction should maintain the existing human scale of nearby historic residential construction in the district.</i>	The applicant proposes three-story buildings with different roof forms and one-bay porticos. Staff finds the majority of the purpose-built residential building are two stories in height with one-story porches. However, there are a number of taller buildings in the immediate area, including the former Bowler School and the funeral home.
	<i>3. New residential construction and additions should incorporate human-scale</i>	The applicant proposes curved front stairs, raised one-bay porticos, and simple cornice

	<i>elements such as cornices, porches and front steps into their design.</i>	lines. Staff finds that these are not common features in the surrounding area.
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>2. New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in surrounding historic districts.</i></p> <p><i>3. The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.</i></p>	<p>The applicant has not provided dimensioned elevations and staff requests <u>fully dimensioned elevations be included in a subsequent application.</u></p> <p>The applicant proposes horizontally and vertically aligned openings in keeping with patterns found in the district.</p> <p>The applicant proposes three-story buildings on M Street which will be a story taller than the neighboring building at 623 N 25<sup>th</sup> Street, though as noted above there are a number of taller buildings in the surrounding area.</p>
Materials and Colors, pg. 47, #s2-4	<i>2. Materials used in new residential construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.</i>	<p>Proposed materials include a brick veneer, 5" lap siding, standing seam metal for the mansard roofs and membrane for the porch roofs, and aluminum clad double-hung windows. Staff finds these materials are in keeping with those found in the surrounding area.</p> <p>Staff notes that metal screens are proposed for the entry porticos and finds that this is not a common material for screening in porches and recommends <u>the applicant consider removing the porch screens.</u></p>
New Construction, Standards for New Construction: Corner Properties – Residential, pg. 48	<p><i>1. Secondary elevations of corner properties should reference massing similar to other corner locations in the historic district.</i></p> <p><i>2. The material used in the primary elevation should be continued along the second, corner elevation.</i></p> <p><i>4. Windows and doors on the secondary, corner elevation should be organized following the principals of the primary elevation: windows should be proportioned appropriately, aligned vertically, and arranged as though designing a primary elevation.</i></p>	<p>The applicant proposes a unit facing M Street and a freestanding unit facing North 26<sup>th</sup> Street. The applicant proposes brick material and horizontally and vertically aligned windows along both elevations. Staff recommends <u>a horizontal element, such as a stringcourse, that turns the corner to unify the overall design and reflect the architectural treatment of the Bowler School.</u></p>
New Construction, Doors and Windows, pg. 56, #5	<i>5. With larger buildings, applicants are encouraged to develop multiple entry points (doors), in keeping with historic precedent for the building type in question. Single entry points - such as a single garage entrance accompanied by single pedestrian</i>	<p>The applicant proposes front portico entries with spiral stairs on the façades and rear entry doors for each unit. The applicant proposes interior garages accessed by a newly created alley. Staff finds that this is not a feature found in the historic district and recommends the</p>

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*entrances are not in keeping with historic precedent, which demonstrates that most large buildings had multiple pedestrian entry points.*

applicant consider ways to screen the garage doors.

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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 not provided information about the location of the proposed HVAC equipment and staff requests this be submitted in a subsequent application.

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Shutters, pg. 70

*21. Wood shutters must be functional (mounted on hinges) and not nailed or fixed to the wall surface...*

*22. Metal and vinyl shutters are not recommended, particularly for the front façades of buildings.*

The applicant proposes shutters on the façades of the North 26<sup>th</sup> Street buildings and some of the M Street townhouses. Staff recommends the shutters be appropriately sized to fully cover the openings.

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Fences & Walls, pg. 51

*1. Fence, wall, and gate designs should reflect the scale of the historic structures they surround, as well as the character of nearby fences, walls, and gates.*

*2. Fence, wall, or gate materials should relate to building materials commonly found in the neighborhood.*

Brick walls are proposed between the North 26<sup>th</sup> Street townhouses and the two groups on M Street. Staff finds that they are in scale with the proposed buildings, though notes that there are not many brick walls in the surrounding area.



## FIGURES

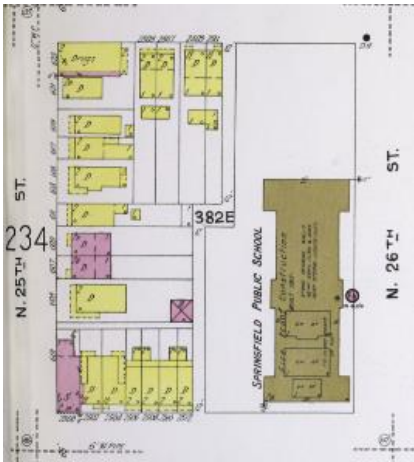


Figure 1. Sanborn map, 1925.

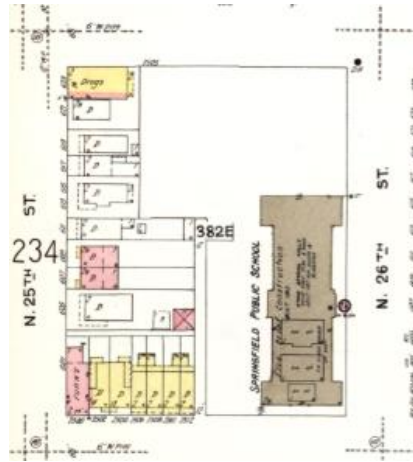


Figure 2. Sanborn map, 1952.



Figure 3. Project location, view east on M Street.



Figure 4. Project location, view north from N. 26th Street.

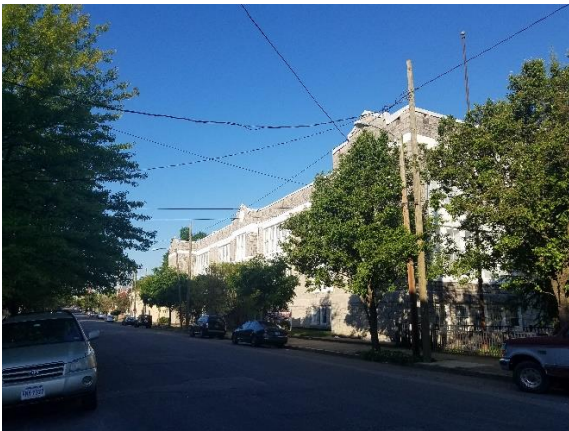


Figure 5. Former Bowler School.

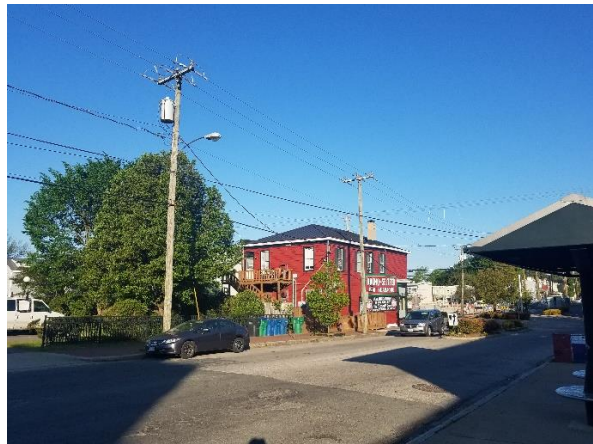


Figure 6. 623 N. 25th Street, building adjacent to the project site.



*Figure 7. 700 N. 26th Street, located across M. Street from project site.*



*Figure 8. 617-624 N. 26th Street, across N. 26th Street from the project site.*