



**Staff Report**  
**City of Richmond, Virginia**



Urban Design Committee Report to Planning Commission

UDC 2021-33	<p align="center"><b>Final Location, Character, and Extent Review</b></p> <p align="right"><b>Meeting Date:</b> 7/19/2021</p>
Applicant/Petitioner	Louis Goode, Department of Public Works, City of Richmond
Project Description	Final location, character, and extent review of construction of a new Fire Station #12
Project Location	
Address: 2223 W. Cary Street	
Property Owner: City of Richmond	
<p>High-Level Details:</p> <p>The City of Richmond Department of Public Works proposes to demolish the existing Fire Station #12, and construct a new Fire Station #12.</p> <p>The existing building is a two-story, masonry, Italianate building that is no longer adequate. The proposed, new Fire Station will be a three-story, masonry building with a traditional design.</p>	
UDC Recommendation	Approval, with Conditions
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, <a href="mailto:alex.dandridge@richmondgov.com">alex.dandridge@richmondgov.com</a> , (804) 646-6569
Previous Reviews	<p>The Urban Design Committee reviewed the conceptual location, character and extent of this project at the February 2021 meeting. The Committee recommended conceptual approval of the project with the following conditions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Undergrounding of any existing overhead utilities as part of the final plan</li> <li>- A landscape plan be submitted that shows the location of any trees that are being removed, planted, or maintained be submitted for final review.</li> <li>- A contemporary roof form be considered for the projecting corner bay of the building</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The lite configuration of the building's windows be consistent and relate to the style of the final building design</li> <li>- Additional tree wells be added to the new sidewalk that utilize structured soil, rooting, or stormwater runoff curb cuts for irrigation, along with new street tree plantings to replace any trees that are removed during construction.</li> <li>- A set of floor plans and elevations, as detailed as possible be submitted for final review</li> <li>- The location of all lighting units (this should be noted on a site plan), including wall-mounted, as well as other site details, such as benches, trash containers, and bike racks be submitted for final review. Include specification sheets for each item.</li> <li>- The location of all HVAC equipment, generators, and dumpsters, including specifications on screening, be submitted for final review.</li> <li>- A product specification sheet for all proposed exterior building materials, including but not limited to brick, mortar, roofing material, siding, glass, paint and stain colors be submitted for final review\</li> <li>- The sidewalk in the front of the building be improved with planting and/or seating</li> <li>- More openings at balconies, stairs, and public room be provided; specifically on the eastern elevation of the proposed building</li> <li>- Explore maximizing connection between interior and exterior of the proposed building with transparent glass in the windows</li> <li>-</li> </ul>
<p>Conditions for Approval</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• along Addison Street, the applicant consider working with DPW to install larger tree wells and a species of street tree that does not grow to a mature height that will impact overhead utilities.</li> <li>• the final design keep all brick detailing, as proposed, but utilize less dark brick around the windows and bottom of cornice, and rather utilize darker window framing and dark metal coping on the roof line to create contemporary, darker accents.</li> <li>• the CMU being proposed at the ground level be rusticated, or a smooth, finished appearance</li> <li>• the projecting corner bay have a more transparent and contemporary form that sets it apart from the main massing of the building.</li> <li>• public art related to the Fire Department be incorporated on the site</li> <li>• pedestrian scale elements be incorporated on the ground-level along Addison Street</li> <li>• the project team meet with a UDC Subcommittee, formed July 8, 2021, to discuss the final design of the corner projecting bay, and any other details mentioned by the Urban Design Committee; updated renderings and construction drawings be submitted to staff for review and final approval by the Chair and Vice Chair of the Urban Design Committee.</li> </ul>

## Findings of Fact

<p>Site Description</p>	<p>The existing Fire Station #12 building, a two-story masonry Italianate building, is located at the southeast corner of W. Cary Street and Addison Street. The main entrance to the building and the two bays for firetrucks face W. Cary Street, with additional entrances on S. Addison Street and the alley behind the building. West Cary Street in this location is a one-way eastbound street with two travel lanes and street parking on both the north and south side of the street. The intersection of Addison Street and W. Cary Street is signalized, and is triggered to stop traffic when fire trucks are entering and exiting the fire station. This block consists of an auto repair shop; two-story masonry Italianate row homes with single-story front porches, and three-story mixed use new construction.</p>
<p>Scope of Review</p>	<p>The project is subject to location, character, and extent review under Section 17.07 of the City Charter as a “park or other public way, ground, open space, public building or structure”.</p>
<p>Project Description</p>	<p>Fire Station No. 12 is generally described as a new construction, three-story masonry building totaling approximately 14,670 gross square feet, including a mezzanine between the first and second story. The building shall replace in totality the existing fire station on the same site. Two apparatus bays will be located on Cary Street for the fire engines, and the Battalion Commander will have vehicular access to the rear of the building via the alley.</p> <p>The building will have two roof areas, the higher portion of which shall cover the elevator overrun and access to the roof via a shipladder. Including the parapet height, the building shall be 46’ above grade, and the higher roof area shall be 50’ above grade. The building will have a low-slope single-ply fully adhere membrane roof with parapets approximately 3’ higher than the roof deck.</p> <p>Exterior windows shall be an aluminum storefront framing system with tempered one inch insulating glazing. Windows in brick veneer walls shall have loose steel lintels supporting brick headers. Exterior doors to storage spaces, mechanical spaces, vehicle bays, and the bay support spaces shall be painted flush steel doors in steel frames. All other exterior access doors shall be aluminum entrance doors with tempered one inch insulating-glazing mounted in aluminum storefront frames. Bi-folding apparatus bay doors shall be constructed of prefinished metal panels and shall include glass lights.</p> <p>The store front on the main façade will have clear anodized windows, and the doors of the fire truck bays will be painted black (not red as seen in the conceptual rendering). The parapet flashing will be black or a charcoal color, and all signage will be metal painted black with a silver border.</p>

## Urban Design Guidelines and Master Plan

	<b>Text</b>	<b>Staff Analysis</b>
<b>Master Plan</b>	<i>Co-locate, consolidate, and modernize community-serving public facilities, and locate them in or near Nodes (pg.87).</i>	The Richmond 300 Master Plan notes that Fire Station #12 is situated within a micro node, which is defined as a notable place within a neighborhood that generally provides goods and services to the immediate residents but may attract visitors. The Richmond 300 Plan also states that it is necessary to “co-locate, consolidate, and modernize community-serving public facilities, and locate them in or near Nodes (pg.87).” This project proposes to modernize a public-serving facility so that it can better meet the needs of fire staff and the surrounding community.
<b>Urban Design Guidelines</b>		
<b>Public Facilities</b>	<i>A new building should have the same or similar setback as existing buildings on the same street. There will be situations, however, where a different setback would be appropriate for the type of building and the desired environment. Examples would include larger public buildings, such as schools and recreation centers, located within urban residential areas. In certain cases, a new building should be constructed with a minimal setback to reinforce the traditional street wall. (pg.14)</i>	The new fire station will have a 15 foot setback from the curb on West Cary Street, matching that of the existing fire station and a majority of the other buildings on the south side West Cary Street. The rear of the new fire station will be built out over the entire parcel, unlike the existing fire station, which does not fill the entire lot.
<b>Public Facilities</b>	<i>Facilities required for the ongoing operation of the building, such as loading docks, maintenance sheds, or HVAC equipment, should be to the rear of the site and screened from view. (pg.14)</i>	Drawings submitted by the applicant show that HVAC equipment and the rear stair case will be screened from view.

<p><b>Public Facilities</b></p>	<p><i>Public buildings, such as hospitals, schools, libraries and community centers, may require larger proportions than adjacent buildings. To minimize the visual impact on a neighborhood with smaller scaled structures, the public building should incorporate design techniques which strengthen its design relationship to adjacent buildings. (pg. 15).</i></p>	<p>Staff finds that the proposed fire station is larger in scale than the adjacent structures; however, both the traditional and contemporary designs utilize similar materials and a similar fenestration pattern to the adjacent structures. Staff noticed on a site visit that there are several examples of three-story new construction on the north side of West Cary Street, setting the precedent for three-story new construction on this block. Staff finds that the height of the building is appropriate due to its location on a corner lot, and the presence of other three-story new construction buildings in the immediate area.</p>
<p><b>Roof Form</b></p>	<p><i>A corner building may use its roof form to define an entry point location to the block. Larger scaled buildings should have varied roof forms and roof lines in order to minimize monolithic visual impacts. Roof materials and colors should blend with building materials and colors. (pg. 16)</i></p>	<p>The Committee requested that the corner bay have a more contemporary roof form. <u>Staff recommends that the projecting corner bay have a more transparent and contemporary form that sets it apart from the main massing of the building.</u></p> <p>The Committee also recommended that there be more openings at balconies, stairs, and public room be provided; specifically on the eastern elevation of the proposed building. The applicant has addressed this recommendation by increasing the size of the opening on the projecting corner bay of the proposed building.</p>
<p><b>Building Materials</b></p>	<p><i>New building materials should be compatible with and complement adjacent buildings. The selection and use of colors should be coordinated and compatible with each other and with adjacent buildings (pg. 17).</i></p>	<p>In the project narrative, the applicant notes that the overall exterior design of this building is inspired by the warehouses of Shockoe Bottom, as well as the nearby Cary Street Gym. Staff notes that these buildings do not utilize dark brick detailing, but same color brick, that is laid in a decorative design. Many dark accents of these existing buildings are made by utilizing darker window framing, gutters, flashing, and coping along the roof line.</p>

		<p>Staff also finds that light colored stone used on brick buildings at ground level generally have a rusticated or smooth face. <u>Staff recommends that the final design keep all brick detailing, as proposed, but utilize less dark brick around the windows and bottom of cornice, and rather utilize darker window framing and dark metal coping on the roof line to create contemporary, darker accents.</u> Staff also recommends that the CMU being proposed at the ground level be rusticated, or a smooth, finished appearance</p>
<p><b>Building Design</b></p>	<p><i>The number, size, style and type of windows should be appropriate for the architecture of the building. The rhythm, patterns, and ratio of walls to windows should be proportional and be compatible with adjacent buildings. Too many different window variations on a building can lead to visual confusion and should be avoided. Window design is also influenced by and should be compatible with details such as sills, sashes, lintels, depth of reveal, decorative caps and shutters. (pg. 18)</i></p>	<p>Committee requested that there be greater transparency at ground level along Addison Street. Staff notes that as submitted, there are no windows on the first floor along Addison street. <u>Staff recommends that the applicant include windows on the first-floor along Addison Street.</u></p>
<p><b>Building Design</b></p>	<p><i>New development should provide sidewalks along streets where there are currently no sidewalks or sidewalks in disrepair (pg. 4).” and “significant healthy trees should be preserved and maintained. Trees on public and private property should be appropriately trimmed around utility lines. Hazardous dead or dying trees on City-owned property should be removed and replaced (pg. 10).</i></p>	<p>The existing sidewalk will be demolished, a new concrete sidewalk will be constructed, meeting all A.D.A. requirements.</p> <p>The applicant has noted that due to overhead utilities, additional tree wells and street trees are not being considered along Addison Street. <u>Staff recommends that along Addison Street, the applicant consider working with DPW to install larger tree wells and species of street tree that does not grow to a mature height that will impact overhead utilities.</u></p> <p>An existing tree in which has outgrown its tree well and caused significant damaged in under consideration for preservation or removal.</p>