

City of Richmond

*City Hall
900 East Broad Street*



Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, May 23, 2023

3:30 PM

To access the meeting via Microsoft Teams, please use the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/vv3bbs4r>
5th Floor Conference Room of City Hall

Commission of Architectural Review

[PDRPRES](#) Public Access Information - Commission of Architectural Review
[2023.034](#)

Attachments: [Public Access and Participation Instructions -COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW.pdf](#)

Call to Order

This meeting was called to order at 3:30pm.

Alex Dandridge read the announcement for virtual public meetings.

Commission members are present in City Hall.

Staff present: Planner Alex Dandridge, Planner Samantha Lewis, Preservation Planner Annie Delaroderie, Planner Jackie Stephens, Senior Preservation Planner Kimberly Chen, Planner Alyson Oliver

Roll Call

- Present --** 8 - * Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., * Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, * Commissioner Coleen Bulter Rodriguez, * Commissioner Andrew Moore, * Commissioner Sean Wheeler, * Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, * Commissioner John Grier and * Commissioner Mitch Danese
- Absent --** 1 - * Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

Secretary's Report

Secretary Dandridge had nothing new to report.

Administrative Approval Report

Secretary Dandridge provided a copy of the Administrative Approval Report to Commissioners. They had no questions.

Enforcement Report

Dandridge provided updates on ongoing and recent CAR violations. There is an active violation at 1830 W Grace Street, but staff are unable to get in touch with the owner. Several staff members are working to abate a violation at 2515 E Grace Street. Currently, the owners are waiting on a contractor to install screening around an HVAC unit. Property owners at 315 N Monroe Street are waiting on a contractor. At 2511-2515 E Franklin Street, a property with prior Commission approval for a rear addition, he noticed that the front porches had been removed without approval. Dandridge requested new plans to reconstruct the porches back to their original states. Finally, staff observed a violation on the siding of the tower to the Belgian Building at 1500 N Lombardy Street. Staff met onsite with DHR. The siding blew off in a windstorm. Owners need to install a crib wall to support scaffolding to repair the siding. It will likely be an in-kind material.

Shockoe Small Area Plan

Senior Preservation Planner Kimberly Chen shared updates on the upcoming Shockoe Small Area Plan including the major goals and objectives of the plan and how it has evolved over the past few years.

Commissioner Rodriguez asked how form-based codes relate to design overlays.

Chen says they overlap. It might do away with the need for design overlay districts but by having it as part of the zoning code it's more consistent across the board and more enforceable. They're looking at areas where that could be the most effective.

Commissioner Morgan asked about Shockoe Creek. Is it sewer right now? She asks if it will still be enclosed and if that's best for the floodplain.

Chen says it's part of the combined sewer system. It's in a 20-foot pipe under Shockoe. Chen says now it makes sense for it to stay enclosed but there are some flood management things they can do further upstream to prevent flooding and potential damage. There may be better mechanisms upstream where there's a lot of impervious pavements. The problem will never be eradicated but the city does have to address the combined sewer problem.

Morgan asked how the team anticipates the cultural resource management plan impacting the Shockoe Small Area Plan.

Both things will be adopted as appendices to the Richmond 300 Master Plan.

Commissioner Brewer arrived at 3:42pm.

CONSENT AGENDA

The consent portion of the meeting began at 4:00pm.

Commission Chair Wheeler asked if the Commissioners wished to move any items from the Regular Agenda to the Consent Agenda or vice versa.

A motion was made by Commissioner Morgan, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to move 2006 Monument Avenue to the consent agenda.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye – 8 – Wheeler, Rodriguez, Morgan, Danese, Johnson, Moore, Grier, Brewer
Excused – 1 – Pearson

Commission Chair Wheeler opened the floor for public comment. There was none.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Brewer, to approve the consent agenda as amended.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Coleen Bulter Rodriguez, Commissioner Andrew Moore, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner John Grier and Commissioner Mitch Danese

1. [COA-129910-2023](#) 23 W Marshall Street - Install a mural on a previously painted masonry wall of a mixed-use building.

Attachments: [Application & Plans](#)
[Staff Report](#)

This Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness was approved with conditions.

2. [COA-129498-2023](#) 2204 E. Broad Street - Construct a rear shed.

Attachments: [Application & Plans](#)
[Staff Report](#)

This Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness was approved with conditions.

8. [COA-129513-2023](#) 2006 Monument Avenue - Replace a non-original asphalt shingle front porch roof with a standing-seam copper roof.

Attachments: [Application & Plans](#)
[Staff Report](#)

This Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness was approved as submitted.

3. [COA-129504-2023](#) 411 Brook Road - Alter the size of a rear masonry opening and window.

Attachments: [Application & Plans](#)
[Staff Report](#)

This Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness was approved with conditions.

REGULAR AGENDA

The regular portion of the meeting began at 4:04pm.

4. [COA-128332-2023](#) 3909 Hermitage Road - Construct a front yard asphalt driveway.

Attachments: [Application & Plans](#)
[Staff Report](#)

Alex Dandridge presented this application.

Commissioner Grier asked if there was an alteration to the curb.

Dandridge said no, the driveway has been installed on the property but there is no curb cut. The curb is sinking.

The applicant, Kimberly Graziano, approached the podium. She has been living at the home for 3 years and installed the driveway due to safety concerns with parking in the rear. Many Hermitage Road neighbors have both alley and front driveway parking, so she didn't think it was an issue. She has not made any alterations to the city sidewalk. The

curb was already low to the street when she moved in. Pedestrians must cross other curb cuts from neighboring driveways, so she doesn't believe her driveway presents a safety issue. Other homes in the area have other black asphalt non-historic driveways. If she is asked to remove the driveway or alter the materials, she feels like other homes need to do so as well. She has been harassed by a neighbor regarding this case and feels like personal information should not be shared as it's inappropriate.

Commission Chair Wheeler opened the floor for public comment.

A resident at 3907 Hermitage Road approached the podium. The area by the road has become a dirt path from the applicant driving over the curb. She informed the applicant that she would need approval from the city to get the driveway installed. There is a gravel drive that leads right up to the back door. She states that the applicant has visitors park on the driveway which intrudes upon the curb. Approval will set a bad precedent within City Old & Historic Districts.

Lisa Wood, a resident on Hermitage Road, spoke in opposition to the driveway.

Commissioner Danese said that by definition the hardscaping is just a path.

Dandridge said the intent is to use it as a driveway even if it presents as a path. The application was for a driveway.

Commissioner Rodriguez asked if staff received any letters in support of the driveway.

Dandridge said no.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Brewer, to deny the application for the reasons cited in the staff report.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Coleen Bulter Rodriguez, Commissioner Andrew Moore, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner John Grier and Commissioner Mitch Danese

5. [COA-129501-2023](#) 1014 Russell Street - Construct a new single-family, two-story detached house on a vacant lot.

Attachments: [Application & Plans](#)
[Staff Report](#)

Alex Dandridge presented this application.

The applicant, Will Gillette from Baker Development Resources, approached the podium. The rear covered porch was removed to allow more open yard space. The proposed setbacks are compatible for the historic district and the underlying R-63 zoning district. They are 3.5 feet from property line. Staff does note that the window awning is not common, but some do exist. They are more efficient for energy consumption and meet environmental goals of the Richmond 300 master plan. The use of transoms to provide additional light was recently approved on a new construction on 2307 Carrington Street.

Commissioner Johnson said the house at 2307 Carrington Street had a unique setting with the position of the corner lot, so the CAR approved the transoms as a unique

circumstance. It shouldn't be used in this instance as a precedent.

Commission Chair Wheeler opened the floor for public comment.

Nancy Lampert spoke in opposition. She says that this area and wave of new construction is starting to look a lot like the Live Oak neighborhood off Huguenot Road and resembles a faux Ginter Park. It is losing the essence of the Union Hill characteristics. There has been no transition between Union Hill and the Fairmont areas, so it sticks out as a new subdivision. She supports a deferral of the application.

Vice Chair Moore says the massing is the issue due to the one-story projection, the clash of gables, and the swooping down from the roof to the front. It is suburban looking.

Commissioner Grier concurs. It looks like a faux panhandle Florida beach town.

Commissioner Rodriguez thinks the decorative elements on the front façade are too much.

Commissioner Morgan can't believe that a transom window costs less than just getting a bigger window.

Wheeler agrees that getting a bigger window is the better solution. The elephant in the room is the single-story gable projecting and the asymmetrical roof.

Grier noted these comments were the same in the conceptual review period.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Moore, seconded by Commissioner Rodriguez, to defer the application for the reasons cited in the staff report.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Coleen Bulter Rodriguez, Commissioner Andrew Moore, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner John Grier and Commissioner Mitch Danese

6. [COA-129502-2023](#) 1016 Russell Street - Construct a new single-family, two-story detached house on a vacant lot.

Attachments: [Application & Plans](#)
[Staff Report](#)

Alex Dandridge presented this application.

Vice Chair Moore asks what Staff thinks about the nested gable.

Dandridge thinks including that second entry canopy is an appropriate solution to add more interest.

The applicant, Will Gillette from Baker Development Resources, approached the podium. The faux shingle siding was removed per staff comments. A side entrance was added which opens to a mud room along the alley. He has no issue with submitting an updated window schedule and material specifications.

Commission Chair Wheeler noted the vent on the side elevation on one side and not on

the other. Is that intentional?

Gillette says he doesn't know. He assumes it was a design feature that was added.

Commission Chair Wheeler opened the floor for public comment.

Nancy Lampert echoed her previous comments about Union Hill's character.

Commissioner Morgan thinks an awning could be approved but it is more decorative than functional. The guidelines don't address awnings on new construction specifically.

Vice Chair Moore is skeptical that the awning would function in the way that actually provides the environmental benefits noted by the applicant.

Commissioner Brewer thinks the way that the awning interrupts the nested gable is awkward. The side entry is recessed so it's not necessary. She suggests getting rid of the awning on the side entry.

Commissioner Rodriguez thinks Commissioners should give more input about what to do if the awning is removed, such as making the windows bigger.

Brewer thinks perhaps it could be a double window.

Morgan questions if the Commission can use language that substantiates the height so that it stays as presented.

Commissioner Danese questions if Staff approval of windows could include the grid patterns because they're a bit all over the place.

Dandridge will look at what's being presented in plans.

Danese thinks the plan could be simplified to have a standard on the grid pattern. It seems inconsistent.

Moore thinks that's getting too in the weeds with the project design. Simplification could make the incongruity worse.

A motion was made by Vice Chair Moore, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: the setback of the dwelling be labeled on a site plan for final review, and that it be similar to the depth of historic setbacks in the district; and the windows on each floor be consistent in size, final window dimensions shown on the plans for administrative review and approval; and windows of the same width have the same grid pattern; and decorative window hood over the second-story window be eliminated from the design; and any side yard hardscaping be submitted in a subsequent COA application for administrative review and approval; and building plans be revised to show aligned gable vents on the side facades, if required; and plans be revised to remove the awning from the north side elevation; and final material specifications be submitted for administrative review and approval, including handrails and fencing.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 8 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Coleen Bulter Rodriguez, Commissioner Andrew Moore, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner John Grier and Commissioner Mitch Danese

7. [COA-129500-2023](#) 613 N. 1st Street - Construct a two-story rear addition.

Attachments: [Application & Plans](#)
[Staff Report](#)

Annie Delaroderie presented this application.

Commission Chair Wheeler asked about the material of the horizontal siding.

Delaroderie said it will be hardiplank per an applicant email.

The applicant is not present.

Commission Chair Wheeler opened the floor for public comment. There was none.

Wheeler thinks that the massing might change because they might have to move the chimney up. He was hoping the applicant would be present to clear up whether the chimney is functioning or not.

Delaroderie said the addition will not extend to the chimney, but it does look close.

Wheeler says it's about the gas that will come out of the chimney. That chimney will need to extend past the roof line if it's active. It either becomes a one-story addition or it's not an issue if the chimney is inactive.

Commissioner Morgan said it looks functional. There's a new cap on the chimney.

Morgan left at 5:32pm.

A motion was made by Commissioner Morgan, seconded by Commissioner Johnson, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: that the proposed addition be no taller than the existing building; and that the small, square window on the rear addition be re-evaluated to have a dimension similar to other historic buildings on the block or be removed from the plans; and the rear windows have a consistent pane configuration; and any changes to the footprint of the rear addition required by the Board of zoning Appeals be submitted to Staff for administrative approval; and any substantial changes required by the building code due to the operation of the shared rear chimney be resubmitted to the CAR for review and approval.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 7 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Coleen Bulter Rodriguez, Commissioner Andrew Moore, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner John Grier and Commissioner Mitch Danese

Excused -- 1 - Commissioner Kathleen Morgan

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

None.

OTHER BUSINESS

Staff presented two nominations for national historic districts.

[NRHP Nom. 2](#) NRHP Nomination - Hermitage Road Warehouse District Expansion

Attachments: [2023May_NR WarehouseHistDistIncrease.pdf](#)

Samantha Lewis presented this district nomination.

Dandridge said CAR has 60 days to either support or oppose the district nominations before they are then forwarded to DHR. The two nominations will be presented at the Virginia National Register in June. The boundaries were determined by the proximity to the railway corridor and had the same type of buildings as the original boundaries.

Commissioner Rodriguez questioned why the metal warehouse was named as a historic structure over the other structures.

Lewis doesn't know.

Dandridge says staff will need to review the nomination.

A motion was made by Commissioner Rodriguez, seconded by Commissioner Brewer, to approve the Hermitage Warehouse District Expansion.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 7 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Coleen Bulter Rodriguez, Commissioner Andrew Moore, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner John Grier and Commissioner Mitch Danese

Excused -- 1 - Commissioner Kathleen Morgan

[NRHP Nom. 1](#) NRHP Nomination - Fay Towers

Attachments: [2023May_NR FayTowers.pdf](#)

Annie Delaroderie presented this application.

Commissioner Grier asked if there is a story behind why this structure is coming to the forefront now.

Kimberly Chen says the primary reason it is being nominated is that they are using federal and state historic tax credits for renovation. Gilpin Court around it has been determined eligible although it has not been nominated.

Commissioner Danese wonders about the significance of the architect.

Vice Chair Moore thinks that this building is reflective of a very poor period of urban

planning. It's problematic to nominate something of this type of design and intent for historic preservation.

Lewis says that through the Jackson Ward planning process and discussions about revitalization, some residents have expressed the desire to see some of these things stay as a reminder of this period, of redlining, and of racial planning, as a reminder that we don't go back there. This building is being renovated for families and not just the elderly.

Chen says just because something is nominated doesn't mean it's a reflection of outstanding architectural design and character but that it speaks to what it was. The tower reflects that time and speaks to the architecture of public housing and federally funded, mass-produced high rises.

Moore said if you remove the idea of architectural significance and simply the age then you can make the argument about anything, even an early 70's strip mall.

Grier joked that maybe in 50 years there will be more of an appreciation for this type of building.

A motion was made by Commissioner Johnson, seconded by Commission Chair Wheeler, to approve the nomination.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye -- 6 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Coleen Bulter Rodriguez, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner John Grier and Commissioner Mitch Danese

Excused -- 1 - Commissioner Kathleen Morgan

Abstain -- 1 - Commissioner Andrew Moore

Adjournment

This meeting was adjourned at 5:58pm.