



# City of Richmond

City Hall  
900 East Broad Street

## Meeting Minutes Commission of Architectural Review

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Tuesday, March 23, 2021

3:30 PM

5th Floor Conference Room of City Hall

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This meeting will be held through electronic communication means pursuant to and in compliance with Ordinance No. 2020-093, adopted April 9, 2020. This meeting will be open to participation through electronic communication means by the public and closed to in-person participation by the public. Less than a quorum of Richmond City Commission of Architectural Review members will assemble for this meeting in the 5th Floor Conference Room of City Hall at 900 East Broad Street in Richmond, Virginia 23219, and most Commission members and other staff will participate by teleconference/videoconference via Microsoft Teams.

Special Guidelines for Public Access and Citizen Participation:

To access or participate, or both, in the Commission of Architectural Review meeting on Tuesday, March 23, 2021 at 3:30 PM, you have several options outlined in the following document:

[PDRPRES 2021.106](#) Public Access and Participation Instructions - Commission of Architectural Review

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

### Call to Order

Commission Chair Neville Johnson called the April 23, 2020 meeting of the Commission of Architectural Review to order at 3:30 pm.

Secretary to the Commission, Carey L. Jones, read the announcement for virtual public meetings:

This meeting of the Commission of Architectural Review will be held as an electronic meeting pursuant to and in compliance with Ordinance 2020-093. The public has been notified of this meeting and how to participate by a notice in the Richmond Times Dispatch, and an instruction sheet posted with the agenda on the Legistar website. The public may participate in the meeting by calling \*67-804-316-9457 and entering 201-932-327#. Public comment will be heard for each item on the agenda after the applicant has responded to staff recommendations. Members of the public will be limited to 3 minutes for their comments.

The person responsible for receiving the comments from the public is me, Carey L. Jones, Secretary to the Commission of Architectural Review.

Commission members are electronically present, none are physically present in City Hall.

We will be conducting a roll call vote with the Secretary stating each Commissioners name prior to voting.

**Roll Call**

- Present --** 8 - \* Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., \* Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, \* Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, \* Commissioner Sean Wheeler, \* Commissioner Lawrence Pearson, \* Commissioner Mitch Danese, \* Commissioner Coleen Bulter Rodriguez and \* Commissioner James W. Klaus
- Excused --** 1 - \* Commissioner Sanford Bond

**Approval of Minutes**

January 12, 2021 Quarterly Meeting

January 26, 2021

February 23, 2021

**OTHER BUSINESS**

## Secretary's Report

The Secretary's Report was provided by Commission Secretary Ms. Carey L. Jones.

Ms. Jones stated that the next quarterly meeting will be in two weeks' time, for which she would be sending Commissioners some materials. Ms. Jones stated that she hopes to have meeting minutes ready for review at that meeting, and that she would welcome email submittal from Commissioners of additional items to discuss at that meeting.

There is currently a position opening on the Urban Design Committee for a member from the CAR. This position was previously held by Commission Klaus, and he can provide information on what the position entails for anyone interested. CAR members interested in the position should contact either Ms. Jones or Mr. Alex Dandridge.

Commission Chair Johnson encouraged any interested Commissioners to apply for the vacant UDC position, and stated that leadership positions in CAR would also be discussed at the upcoming quarterly meeting, in order to give Commissioners a better understanding of the roles of Chair and Vice-Chair.

## Administrative Approvals Report

## Enforcement Report

Ms. Jones stated that the ongoing enforcement issue with Virginia Union University's sign was heard by the Historic Resources Board at their most recent meeting, to which Ms. Jones listened in. VUU has applied for a Special Use Permit; that application and the sign enforcement are working their way through the City's review processes.

Ms. Jones stated that violations are now being entered by staff into the online RVA 311 system, which is available also to members of the public. Ms. Jones stated that historic Guidelines violations should still be brought to the attention of CAR staff, but that the RVA 311 system is useful for reporting violations as well as other issues such as sidewalks in need of repair.

## Other Committee Reports

Commissioner Pearson asked if there were any updates on staffing within the department. Ms. Jones stated that the City is currently under a hiring freeze, which does include the Planning and Development Review department. Ms. Jones stated that she has advocated for filling some of the vacant positions, especially the Planner position held by Ms. Chelsea Jeffries, since that position included the Section 106 work which the department is required to carry out.

Ms. Jones stated that it is currently budget season, so City Council will be reviewing the budget, which includes that of PDR, and there will be opportunity for members of the public to provide comment on that.

**CONSENT AGENDA**

The regular portion of the meeting was called to order at 4:00 PM.

Ms. Jones re-read the announcement info for virtual meetings.

Commission Chair Johnson explained that there is an order to the meeting, starting with the Consent Agenda, followed by the Regular Agenda, and concluding with the Conceptual Review. At appropriate times, applicants will have an opportunity to speak in regard to their applications.

Commission Chair Johnson asked if the Commissioners wished to move any items from the regular agenda to the consent agenda.

A motion was made by Commissioner Wheeler, seconded by Commissioner Danese, to move the 6th item, 2909 E. Broad Street, to the Consent Agenda.

Commissioner Wheeler stated that the proposal seemed to satisfy the historic Guidelines, and that it would also be vetted for historic tax credit review.

The applicant, Mr. Amey, stated that he had no objection to the inclusion of the proposal on the Consent Agenda

Commission Chair Johnson asked if there was any public comment. There was none.

The motion carried by the following vote:

Aye – 8 - Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commission Chair Neville Johnson, Commissioner James Klaus, Commissioner Mitch Danese, Commissioner Ashleigh Brewer, Commissioner Colleen Butler Rodriguez, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Lane Pearson

Excused – 1 – Commissioner Sanford Bond

Commissioner Klaus asked if the proposed cedar shake roof for item 2, 413 N. 27th Street, was of a type that staff had seen before. Ms. Jones stated that, though the shed design is not traditional, staff had seen sheds of this type before. Commissioner Johnson pointed out that the cedar shake roof would be less visually striking when the cedar has aged. Ms. Jones offered to add a condition that the shed be stained or painted after it has seasoned; Commissioner Klaus stated that this did not seem necessary, since seasoning on its own would tend to improve the shed's appearance.

A motion was made by Commission Chair Johnson, seconded by Commissioner

Wheeler, to approve the Consent Agenda.

Commission Chair Johnson asked if there was any comment from the applicants with items on the Consent Agenda.

Mr. Peter Jackson, applicant for 413 N. 27th Street, stated that he had not realized the proposed paint color was not on the approved color palette, and that it does match the current color of the residence, and that he would prefer to paint the shed at the same time that he paints the house.

Mr. Jackson also asked for clarification about beaded siding. Commission Chair Johnson stated that the Commission has for some time only allowed the installation of siding which has a smooth finish.

Commission Chair Johnson stated that, if Mr. Jackson has concerns about the item, it could be removed from the Consent Agenda so it could be discussed in the regular agenda. Mr. Jackson confirmed that he would like to have discussion.

Ms. Jones stated that she would be happy to discuss the item with Mr. Jackson on the day after the meeting, or alternatively the item could be removed from the Consent Agenda if Commissioners Johnson and Wheeler agreed to so amend the motion to approve.

Commission Chair Johnson stated that the 2nd item, 413 N. 27th Street, seemed to require further discussion and stated that he would agree to remove it from the Consent Agenda. Commission Co-Chair Wheeler agreed. Commission Chair Johnson stated that the item was thereby removed.

Ms. Jones stated that she had received public comment letters regarding 520 North 25th Street, and that she had been working with Land Use planning staff on questions more pertinent to the Special Use Permit.

Commission Chair Johnson asked if there were any further comment or questions regarding the Consent Agenda. There was none.

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

**The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye --** 8 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson, Commissioner Mitch Danese, Commissioner Coleen Bulter Rodriguez and Commissioner James W. Klaus

**Excused --** 1 - Commissioner Sanford Bond

1. [COA-087771-2021](#) 520 N. 25th Street - Construct a new shed and a seating area in the side yards of an existing building.

**Attachments:** [Application and Plans](#)  
[Base Map](#)  
[Staff Report](#)

**A motion was made by Commission Chair Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Wheeler, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: the wooden siding be painted or**

stained a neutral color found on the Commission palette that complements the main building; the wrought iron fence be of a simple design, and specifications be submitted to staff for administrative review.

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye --** 8 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson, Commissioner Mitch Danese, Commissioner Coleen Bulter Rodriguez and Commissioner James W. Klaus

**Excused --** 1 - Commissioner Sanford Bond

6. [COA-087764-2021](#) 2909 E. Broad Street - Rehabilitation of front porch, partial demolition, new construction of a rear addition and deck.

**Attachments:** [Application and Plans](#)  
[Base Map](#)  
[Staff Report](#)

A motion was made by Commission Chair Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Wheeler, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: any replacement materials match the existing in material, size, profile, and color; the porch roof membrane be a darker color; final material specifications, including windows, be submitted to staff for review and approval; if the applicant intends any changes to the existing windows in the historic mass of the building, that they complete a window survey and work with staff to determine if the windows can be repaired; the missing glass in the existing front door be replaced with a pane of glass that matches the existing and does not have any divided lites; the new basement door have single lites, not the divided lite pattern shown in the application; the gentlest means possible be used to remove the existing paint, and any remaining unpainted masonry remain unpainted; the skylights be installed flush with the roof slope.

The motion carried by the following vote:

## **REGULAR AGENDA**

2. [COA-087772-2021](#) 413 N. 27th Street - Construct a new rear shed.

**Attachments:** [Application and Plans](#)  
[Base Map](#)  
[Staff Report](#)

The application was presented by Mr. Alex Dandridge.

Commission Chair Johnson stated that the cedar roof of the shed was startling in appearance, and asked if this is in fact a commonplace material. Ms. Jones stated that she did think similar sheds had appeared for review, but that she could double-check this to make certain.

Commission Chair Johnson asked if the review was the result of an enforcement issue.

Ms. Jones stated that there had not been an enforcement action on the shed, and that it had been constructed without approval due to a misunderstanding of the process for approval.

Commissioner Wheeler asked if the existing shed siding was beaded or smooth. Ms. Jones stated that it appeared to be a drop siding, and added that a lapped siding is more typical for a shed. Commission Chair Johnson stated that it looked as if the siding was overlapped in such a way as to simulate spaced indentations, which is a style he had seen before.

Commission Chair Johnson asked if the shed was made of Masonite, or Hardi plank. The applicant, Mr. Peter Jackson, stated that the siding was made of wood.

Commissioner Danese asked if, in following staff recommendations, the applicant would be required to remove the siding. Ms. Jones stated that staff would be happy to work with the applicant and that various remedies had been used in the past when the wrong kinds of siding had been installed, including filling in the siding for a smoother appearance or replacing as needed on the more visible elevations.

Commissioner Danese asked if there was a wood grain to the siding. Ms. Jones stated that there appeared to be a bit of a grain, and that the Commission and staff have had applicants smooth such a grain out in the past.

Mr. Jackson stated that he hoped an exception could be made for the color and the surface of the siding.

Mr. Jackson stated that the shed is a prefab shed with wood siding and cedar shingles, and that he had attempted to contact City offices beginning in late January to get approval but had not been able to elicit a response before the shed arrived. Mr. Jackson stated that he had painted the shed to match the house, thinking this the safest option. Mr. Jackson stated that he had first been advised to get authorization from Zoning.

Mr. Jackson stated that he had submitted plans in as timely a manner as possible.

Given that the shed is an all-wood structure and its appearance and lack of visibility from the road, Mr. Jackson stated that he believes it fits in well in the area, in fact better than some other nearby sheds, and asked that its current appearance be allowed. Mr. Jackson stated that the alley location is small and has minimal traffic, and the only people to whom the shed would be visible would be the residents whose houses back into the alley.

Commissioner Wheeler asked if the shed had ship lap siding. Mr. Jackson stated that he was not certain, not being conversant with building terminology, and that the boards are slightly spaced with an indentation of about 1/8 of an inch between, not overlapping. Mr. Jackson stated that it did look somewhat like ship lap.

Commission Morgan asked if there was a plan to finish the underside of the roof overhang of the shed. Mr. Jackson stated that he had planned to leave it as is, and not add a soffit. Commissioner Morgan stated that it would be good to create more of a loading door that would be typical of a garage building, rather than the double doors the shed currently has. Commissioner Morgan suggested possibly the addition of wood cross braces to make the doors look more like carriage doors. Mr. Jackson stated that he would be amenable to changing the appearance of the doors if so required, though his preference would be to leave the shed as it is. Commissioner Morgan stated that other than the overhang and the doors as mentioned, she did not have as many concerns about the proposal as staff and

other Commissioners did.

Commission Chair Johnson stated that the alley on which the shed was situated was a dead-end alley; Mr. Jackson confirmed this. Commission Chair Johnson asked if the shed conformed to setback requirements on the alley. Mr. Jackson stated that he had discussed this with Ms. Jones and that he believed that it did. Mr. Jackson stated that his property line is at the end of the fence seen in one of the presentation slides.

Commission Chair Johnson stated that he understood why the applicant had chosen to paint the shed to match the house, and asked if the applicant would be amenable to staining the cedar roof of the shed so that it does not stand out so much, and to altering the door so as to create more of a garage appearance. Mr. Jackson stated that he was amenable to whatever the Commission deemed necessary.

Commissioner Johnson asked if there was any public comment. There was none.

Ms. Jones stated that there had been one public comment letter submitted.

A motion was made by Commissioner Morgan, seconded by Commissioner Rodriguez, to approve the application as submitted with the conditions that a wood soffit be installed; cross bracing be added to the doors facing the alley; and the shed be moved if required by zoning codes.

Commissioner Brewer requested clarification of the motion. Commission Chair Johnson stated that the motion would not include staff conditions, and thus the shed would be permitted to stay its current color, nor would the applicant be required to make a smoother finish on the shed.

Commissioner Wheeler proposed a friendly amendment that the doors be altered to match those submitted in the application. Commissioner Morgan and Commission Chair Johnson stated that they did not like the door design in the submitted drawing. Commissioner Wheeler suggested that in this case the motion should be altered from "as submitted" to "as built," to which Commissioner Morgan agreed.

Commission Chair Johnson stated that typically a shed would not have a door on the alley side, as this one does, and suggested that the shed be reversed. Mr. Jackson explained that the side of the shed facing the house also has doors, but with glass lites. Commission Chair Johnson stated that in that case spinning the shed around would not be an option, and Commissioner Morgan's suggestion was the best option.

Commissioner Danese asked if a building permit was submitted for the shed installation. Ms. Jones and Commissioner Wheeler stated that a permit was not required for a small project such as this.

Commission Chair Johnson asked if the shed met Zoning requirements, given that it appears to extend beyond the fence. Mr. Jackson confirmed that the shed extends beyond the fence which closes in the yard.

Commissioner Morgan stated that she could amend the motion to include administrative approval for any setback adjustment that may turn out to be required by Zoning regulations.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Morgan, seconded by Commissioner Rodriguez, to approve the application as submitted with the conditions that a wood soffit be installed; cross bracing be added to the doors facing the alley; and**

the shed be moved if required by zoning codes.

The motion carried by the following vote:

**Aye --** 7 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Mitch Danese, Commissioner Coleen Bulter Rodriguez and Commissioner James W. Klaus

**Excused --** 1 - Commissioner Sanford Bond

**Abstain --** 1 - Commissioner Lawrence Pearson

3. [COA-086192-2021](#) 2012 W. Grace Street - Alter roof form of a rear carriage house.

**Attachments:** [Application and Plans \(2/23/2021\)](#)

[Base Map](#)

[Staff Report \(2/23/2021\)](#)

[Application and Plans](#)

[Staff Report](#)

The application was presented by Ms. Jones.

Mr. Snyder stated that the previous review in February had concluded with Commission instructing the applicant to work with staff on a revised design. Mr. Snyder stated that his attempts to work with staff had been ignored, hence he submitted the current three design options.

Mr. Snyder stated that due to structural damage to the building from water leakage, it would not be possible to return it to its previous roof form, but that he would be happy to finish the project with whatever finish or look the Commission desires. Mr. Snyder stated that the impossibility of returning the roof form to what it was before had been attested by engineers, and that part of the reason for this was that collar ties and rafter ties had been cut, causing one of the walls to deflect.

Commissioner Johnson stated that typically on projects such as these, in which bricks have been removed, it is possible to rebuild and reinsert joists and bricks. Commissioner Johnson asked if anyone had spoken with the applicant about rebuilding walls and reinstalling joists at the normal level of the roof. Commission Chair Johnson asked why it was so important to raise the height. Mr. Snyder stated that there had been concerns about repairing the wall so as to not endanger a neighbor's house.

Commission Chair Johnson asked why the height was increased.

Mr. Snyder stated that the wall had been rebuilt and repointed, and then collapsed, and that therefore the applicant and the builders did not trust the structural integrity of the building.

Commission Chair Johnson asked if the framing at the current time is attached to the exterior walls so that it does not deflect away, or is it just a structure within the existing brick wall.

Mr. Snyder stated that it is a structure within the existing brick wall, and that, though it is

tied with carriage bolts, it no longer relies on the exterior walls.

Commission Chair Johnson stated that it could then deflect again away. Mr. Snyder denied this, and stated that, as shown in pictures submitted, the wood framing has its own support outside of the brick walls.

Commission Chair Johnson stated that [if he understood correctly] the brick is not attached to the interior structure and does not rely on it, and the roof does not rely on the brick. Mr. Snyder confirmed this.

Commissioner Pearson asked why the height of the new construction had to be increased beyond the previous height of the building. Mr. Snyder stated that it was mainly a response to concerns about waterproofing, to raise the roof above the level of the brick.

Commissioner Pearson asked for details regarding the stated lack of follow-up from staff. Mr. Snyder stated that emails were sent and responses only reiterated Commission requirements, without responding with specific design recommendations.

Commission Chair Johnson stated that staff cannot make decisions, and can only advise on potential solutions that might work.

Mr. Snyder stated that he had asked Ms. Jones via email if she agreed or disagreed with the proposed design, but that the response had only been that the design had been received.

Commissioner Rodriguez asked if the engineer employed for the work had prepared a report on the issues with the building. Commissioner Rodriguez expressed concern that there could still be a roof collapse with just the wood supporting the roof, and stated that she did not see how increasing the height enhanced waterproofing any more than would a roof of the same height but with an improved design. Mr. Snyder stated that he had employed two engineers, and that he could furnish reports.

Commissioner Wheeler asked if the structure inside was still exposed, so that if approval were granted, an inspection could be made by Permits staff. Mr. Snyder stated that it is exposed and would stay that way. Mr. Snyder said that if anything it was over-engineered, with footers added in the bottom floor for additional support.

Commissioner Rodriguez asked if a permit was required or had been applied for. Mr. Snyder stated that he had had difficulty contacting the City, in addition to difficulty employing contractors, and so had acted on the emergency of the leaking roof.

Commission Chair Johnson asked if there was any public comment.

Hearing none, he opened the floor for Commission motion and discussion.

A motion was made by Commissioner Klaus, seconded by Commissioner Wheeler, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met:

the brick parapet walls, trim piece, and gutters be reinstalled based on photographic evidence; the new exterior material for the area above the parapet walls have a vertical orientation or be a clerestory window and be submitted to staff for review and approval.

Commissioner Johnson stated that staff working with the applicant would be a good approach to working out the particulars, and expressed concern that the way the project is designed, if the interior structure is not attached, the exterior walls will continue to

deflect. Commission Chair Johnson advised the applicant to make sure that his application for permits reflects structural needs, so as to not have a repeat of the problems with leaking.

Commissioner Wheeler expressed concern that the proposed design does not correspond to photo evidence, and also that it will be quite difficult to find a contractor willing and able to finish the work as described in the motion.

Commissioner Morgan suggested that the additional height be clad in the board and batten as in option 3, to differentiate from the historic structure. Commission Chair Johnson accepted this as an amendment to the motion.

Commissioner Klaus stated that he liked the more modern-looking option submitted by the applicant; Commissioner Wheeler stated that a glass clerestory would be ideal.

Commissioner Klaus stated that this discussion was useful, in that the ultimate choice would be administratively approved and it was useful for staff to have an idea of Commission thinking.

Ms. Jones requested clarification regarding which option or mix of options submitted were being recommended as a stylistic guide by the Commissioners, whether Option 3 or a light material such as clerestory glass. Ms. Jones suggested, if the selection is at the discretion of staff as they work with the applicant on details, both materials could be listed as options in the motion.

Commissioner Pearson asked if it is within the purview of CAR to require a permit. Ms. Jones stated that application for permits would be required anyway. Commissioner Pearson therefore suggested that this condition be removed, to which Commission Chair Johnson and Commissioner Wheeler agreed.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Klaus, seconded by Commissioner Wheeler, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met:  
the brick parapet walls, trim piece, and gutters be reinstalled based on photographic evidence; the new exterior material for the area above the parapet walls have a vertical orientation or be a clerestory window and be submitted to staff for review and approval.**

**The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye --** 7 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson, Commissioner Coleen Bulter Rodriguez and Commissioner James W. Klaus

**No --** 1 - Commissioner Mitch Danese

**Excused --** 1 - Commissioner Sanford Bond

4. [COA-088053-2021](#) 803 Jessamine Street - Construction of a new single-family, three-story, detached residence.

**Attachments:** [Application and Plans](#)

[Base Map](#)

[Staff Report](#)

The application was presented by Ms. Jones.

Mr. Greg Shron of Center Creek Homes introduced himself as representing the applicant.

Mr. Shron stated that the staff report and narrative regarding the project provide an excellent summary of revisions that had been made to the project plans. Mr. Shron stated that the project had been altered so as to have a much more horizontal orientation in response to staff and Commission suggestions from the conceptual review, and in deference to the prevailing aesthetic in the immediate vicinity.

Mr. Shron stated that the applicants had considered changing the exterior materials to be all one material, but had instead decided to retain the lighter material on the loft level, and treat that level as a monitor on top of the primary structure.

Commissioner Wheeler asked if the applicants had acquired a zoning variance for their setback. Mr. Shron stated that the applicants had learned that they could use their proposed setback by right, given the zoning of the lot.

Commission Chair Johnson asked if there was any public comment.

Ms. Nancy Lampert stated that the 3-story height of the proposed building was not typical or appropriate for the neighborhood, particularly in the proposed mid-block location. Ms. Lampert mentioned other recent new construction which had been reduced in height in order to fit in better, in one instance by use of an English basement design.

Ms. Lampert stated that the lack of a porch was also not in keeping, and did not fit in with the general character of Union Hill and the specific subject block. Ms. Lampert stated that the subject block is unique and popular for that reason, and is characterized by small cottage houses.

Mr. Matt Jarreau introduced himself as a neighbor and long-term Union Hill resident. Mr. Jarreau stated that the submitted design is unique, sharp, and would fit in well. Mr. Jarreau stated that there are other 3-story buildings in the area, and that the submitted design does read as two stories.

Commission Chair Johnson asked if there was any further public comment.

Hearing none, he opened the floor for Commission motion and discussion.

A motion was made by Commission Chair Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met the final exterior material, colors, and window specifications be submitted to staff for review and approval; and information about the type and location of gutters and downspouts be submitted to staff for review and approval.

Commissioner Morgan asked for another look at the context elevation slide, and stated that the view is misleading because the second story would be set back at least halfway back the length of the house, and thus not be as visible as it appears in the slide.

Commissioner Brewer stated that she appreciated the applicants' response to suggestions made in the conceptual review.

Commissioner Klaus asked if the staff review of final details would include colors, and suggested that this be done. Ms. Jones stated that colors are usually included but this

could be made explicit. Commissioner Klaus suggested that the color details review be added as a friendly amendment. Commission Chair Johnson and Commissioner Morgan agreed.

Commissioner Wheeler asked if the project would be slab-on-grade, or if it would have a crawlspace. Mr. Shron stated that sometimes this decision is made based on construction costs, when the applicants are ready to apply for permits. Mr. Shron stated that typically the applicants will put in a crawlspace, and that on a site such as this, which rises from front to back, it will be possible to place it at the rear of the property.

Commissioner Morgan stated that she was slightly concerned about the transition from the parapet to the guardrail, and suggested that making them the same color might help. Commissioner Wheeler stated that the problem with that is that it would make the front façade windows appear lower.

Commissioner Morgan asked about the dimensions of the green trim piece and the guard rail. Mr. Shron stated that the measurement was about 14-16 inches. Mr. Shron stated that the motivation in representing it as submitted was to prevent the front façade windows appearing lower.

Mr. Shron stated that by lowering the primary cornice projection as the applicants have done, it's possible that they could return the rest of the guard rail piece to the siding color, while still avoid having the windows look too low.

Mr. Shron stated that the applicants would be happy to work with staff on tidying up this detail. Commissioners Morgan and Wheeler expressed agreement with this.

**A motion was made by Commission Chair Johnson, seconded by Commissioner Morgan, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met the final exterior material, colors, and window specifications be submitted to staff for review and approval; and information about the type and location of gutters and downspouts be submitted to staff for review and approval.**

**The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye --** 6 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Coleen Bulter Rodriguez and Commissioner James W. Klaus

**Excused --** 1 - Commissioner Sanford Bond

**Abstain --** 2 - Commissioner Lawrence Pearson and Commissioner Mitch Danese

5. [COA-088212-2021](#) 2010-2012 Venable Street - Rehabilitate two, two-story attached residences, and construct a rear addition.

**Attachments:** [Application and Plans](#)

[Base Map](#)

[Staff Report](#)

The application was presented by Ms. Jones.

Commissioner Danese asked Ms. Jones what roof line options, other than a gable roof, had been discussed with the applicant prior to their submission of this application. Ms.

Jones stated that the applicant had asked if the project could be approved without the condition regarding the roofline; she had then discussed the change in roof form with the Chair and Vice-Chair, and the wording of the recommended condition had come out of that.

The applicant, Matt Jarreau, introduced himself and apologized for the multiple reviews which this project has required.

Mr. Jarreau stated that, despite the contemporary hardwood siding shown in the application, the applicants would much prefer to use a smooth hardi plank siding with a traditional appearance.

Mr. Jarreau stated that he understood what staff and Commission are looking for, and that there may have been some miscommunications, for which he took responsibility.

Mr. Jarreau stated that the real estate under review has no crawlspace in the rear under the kitchen, so the applicants would have to work from the top of the building down to install electrical duct work and such. Mr. Jarreau stated that if a slab on grade construction form is utilized on this house, some height will be lost and there will still be roofing issues. Mr. Jarreau stated that the roof on the new construction property can in no way be smaller than the roof on the existing home.

Mr. Jarreau stated that the new construction would be taller, whether on slab foundation or with a crawlspace construction than the existing roof, and therefore it will block the existing roof's visibility from the rear of the property. Mr. Jarreau stated that he understood the staff's wish that the old roof line not be altered, but stated that in this instance, due to the rising grade, any new construction would dwarf the existing house.

Mr. Jarreau stated that he is opposed to the idea of creating a box that will not have the lifespan of a normal sloped roof, due to water runoff from the original roof to the siding of the new construction.

Mr. Jarreau stated that the applicants are trying to very clearly differentiate the rear addition to show that it is modern. Mr. Jarreau stated that the property is unique in that only the front façade is visible from Venable Street, and that from the street or sidewalk one does not have a clear view of the back of the property; there is a view of a secondary elevation from the alley.

Mr. Jarreau stated that the applicants tried many design iterations, but in the end saw no way to not block the view of the original roof.

Mr. Jarreau stated that he hoped that some sort of compromise could be reached, and that he felt that the applicants had made a real effort to come up with a nice, sustainable design that also meets Commission requirements.

Commissioner Wheeler asked if a shed roof to the side had been considered. Mr. Jarreau stated that a shed roof is what the applicants were proposing. Mr. Jarreau stated that due to the height of the new construction, even a gable roof would block the old roof from view. Mr. Jarreau stated that the applicants are concerned to avoid having a slanted roof draining onto a flat roof, as this would create a bad situation in terms of drainage and wear on the addition.

Commissioner Danese asked about ceiling heights on the second floor of the new addition. Mr. Jarreau stated that they were 8 feet, 4 inches.

Commission Chair Johnson asked if there was any public comment.

Hearing none, he opened the floor for Commission motion and discussion.

Commissioner Klaus stated that he liked the new proposal from the applicant and its modern styling, and that he was sympathetic to Mr. Jarreau's argument regarding the connection of the new addition to the roof and did not consider it a huge change.

A motion was made by Commissioner Klaus, seconded by Commissioner Wheeler, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: any existing features, including the box gutters and cornice elements, be retained or repaired in-kind with wood to match the existing design and profile; the applicant submit a detailed window survey and work with staff for an administrative approval of window repairs, or replacement if necessary; the front doors be retained. If they are beyond repair, staff recommends the new doors match the existing design; the exterior portions of the chimneys be retained and the plans be revised to include the chimneys, prior to submitting plans for building permits; the existing windows in the outer bays on the first story of the rear elevation be retained on each house; the following information be submitted for administrative approval: paint colors, roof and gutter specifications; window specifications; door specifications; and a site plan showing location of HVAC.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Klaus, seconded by Commissioner Wheeler, to approve the application for the reasons cited in the staff report provided the following conditions are met: any existing features, including the box gutters and cornice elements, be retained or repaired in-kind with wood to match the existing design and profile; the applicant submit a detailed window survey and work with staff for an administrative approval of window repairs, or replacement if necessary; the front doors be retained. If they are beyond repair, staff recommends the new doors match the existing design; the exterior portions of the chimneys be retained and the plans be revised to include the chimneys, prior to submitting plans for building permits; the existing windows in the outer bays on the first story of the rear elevation be retained on each house; the following information be submitted for administrative approval: paint colors, roof and gutter specifications; window specifications; door specifications; and a site plan showing location of HVAC.**

**The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye --** 8 - Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson, Commissioner Mitch Danese, Commissioner Coleen Bulter Rodriguez and Commissioner James W. Klaus

**Excused --** 1 - Commissioner Sanford Bond

7. [COA-087763-2021](#) 1635 Monument Avenue - Construct a rear and a side addition and a roof over an existing deck.

**Attachments:** [Application and Plans \(3/23/2021\)](#)

[Staff Report \(3/23/2021\)](#)

[Application and Plans](#)

[Base Map](#)

[Staff Report](#)

The application was presented by Ms. Jones.

The applicant and property owner Mike Hogan introduced himself.

Mr. Hogan stated that the enclosures shown on the plans were intended to make the existing decks into more usable space. Mr. Hogan stated that mud rooms were initially planned but that that had been abandoned, and thus the applicants would not be enclosing or altering any windows on the side where that had been indicated.

Mr. Hogan stated that the chimney is not functional and has been internally blocked off.

Mr. Hogan stated that concerns about the height of the addition and resultant light blockage had been discussed with neighbors only today [the day of the meeting]. Mr. Hogan stated that the applicants did not have any resultant changes to the plans, as of yet, to offer as a result of those discussions.

Commissioner Klaus stated that the plans seemed formative, considering the mud room idea was only recently discarded and discussions with neighbors only recently begun. Commissioner Klaus asked if this was in effect a conceptual review. Mr. Hogan stated that the planning process had been extensive and the project was fairly far along and had been through several bids from contractors. Mr. Hogan stated that an earlier conversation had been had about the addition with a neighbor, but that the impact of the project had perhaps not been appreciated by that neighbor until he more recently saw three-dimensional renderings of the design.

Commission Chair Johnson asked how the concerns of neighbors could be taken on board, if no design changes were contemplated at this point, and whether the applicant felt the concerns of the neighbors were reasonable. Mr. Hogan stated that the concerns articulated by neighbors were new to the applicants as of today [March 23 2021]. Commission Chair Johnson asked if the neighbors' requests were, in Mr. Hogan's opinion, reasonable. Mr. Hogan stated that he understood the concerns, but that he could not speak to the architectural feasibility of any alterations.

Commission Chair Johnson asked Ms. Jones about the public comment letters received regarding this proposal. Ms. Jones stated that a number of letters were received and that most of the senders appeared to also be present on-line for the meeting.

The project architect, Dan Ensminger, stated that the applicants were happy with all staff recommendations, except regarding the chimney. Mr. Ensminger asked whether, if the chimney is preserved, it should be retained in its current location, which is set back 14 feet from the façade. Mr. Ensminger asked if staff were certain that they wished the chimney to be retained, stating that it is a "leftover."

Mr. Ensminger reiterated Mr. Hogan's statement that the mud room component was no longer planned.

Commissioner Rodriguez stated that the addition façade as proposed appeared to be so tall that it would be visible from the public right of way in the front of the house, and asked

if that would in fact be the case, as it was difficult to determine by looking at the renderings.

Mr. Ensminger stated that the roof in question is below the ridge line of the front, so it would not be at all visible from Monument Avenue. Mr. Ensminger stated that none of the proposed rooftop addition is above or outside of the original rooftop.

Commissioner Rodriguez stated that she still had concern that, because of the pie-like shape of the lot, and because there is a sort of sight line from the southwest corner of the house, that the rooftop deck would be visible from that direction. Mr. Ensminger stated that the rooftop addition would only be visible from a considerable distance, from behind the house a block back.

Commission Chair Johnson asked if there was any public comment.

Mr. David Wofford stated that he had been out of town until the previous day, and that Mr. Hogan had been kind enough to visit at that time to discuss the project. Mr. Wofford stated that the project would create a tunnel effect and significantly reduce the amount of light to his yard. Mr. Wofford asked if a deferral of a decision on the application would be possible, to allow for more neighborhood discussion.

Commission Chair Johnson asked if there was any further public comment.

Hearing none, he opened the floor for Commission motion and discussion.

Commissioner Klaus stated that it seemed as if significant changes were underway to the plans, and that there are neighborhood concerns for which additional perspective drawings would be helpful to assist in a review.

A motion was made by Commissioner Klaus , seconded by Commissioner Danese, to defer the application to allow the applicant to provide updated plans and elevations, additional information about the visibility of the rooftop addition from Monument Avenue, and provide a context site plan; and to continue discussions with the adjoining neighbors.

Commissioner Wheeler stated that he would like a more contextual site plan for the project. Commission Chair Johnson expressed agreement.

Mr. Hogan stated that the applicants would be supportive of a deferral, having just begun discussion with neighbors, but expressed concern about how soon the application could be re-reviewed. Ms. Jones stated that she would be in touch with the applicants on Wednesday March 24 regarding deadlines for a revised application.

**A motion was made by Commissioner Klaus , seconded by Commissioner Danese, to defer the application to allow the applicant to provide updated plans and elevations, additional information about the visibility of the rooftop addition from Monument Avenue, and provide a context site plan; and to continue discussions with the adjoining neighbors.**

**The motion carried by the following vote:**

**Aye -- 8 -** Commissioner Neville C. Johnson Jr., Commissioner Ashleigh N. Brewer, Commissioner Kathleen Morgan, Commissioner Sean Wheeler, Commissioner Lawrence Pearson , Commissioner Mitch Danese, Commissioner Coleen Bulter Rodriguez and Commissioner James W. Klaus

**Excused -- 1 -** Commissioner Sanford Bond

## CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

8. [COA-088025-2021](#) 1518 W Main St - Construct a new three- and four-story mixed-use building.

**Attachments:** [Application and Plans](#)

[Base Map](#)

[Staff Report](#)

The application was presented by Ms. Jones.

Ms. Jones noted that the applicants have met with members of the tax credit and other staff at Virginia Department of Historic Resources, as well as with a number of members of the community.

Ms. Jones stated that the applicant is applying for a Special Use Permit, in order to waive some of the parking requirements and possibly some of the height requirements, depending on final plans approved by the Commission.

Mr. John Conrad, the applicant, introduced himself and the project architect Jim Irving. Mr. Conrad expressed agreement with staff regarding the recommendation of a consistent material palette, and stated that the exterior material would now be all brick.

Mr. Conrad stated that in the previous review, the Commission asked that there be more separation between the existing and new buildings.

Mr. Conrad stated that the side yard of the building formerly contained a building with the address number 1518, which was not part of the original school property and was purchased by the City in 1925 and later demolished by the city.

Mr. Conrad stated that the current side yard is 49 feet wide, 28 feet and 7 inches of which was formerly the lot designated as 1518 West Main Street. Mr. Conrad stated that the original east side yard of the Stonewall Jackson School was only 20 feet, 5 inches wide.

Mr. Conrad stated that, in the newly revised design, the dimension from the southeast rear corner of the Stonewall Jackson building on the side yard is 24 feet, with an additional 4 feet, 11 inches on the front.

Mr. Conrad stated that with the new design there is a space of 24 feet, 4 inches between the front corner of the Stonewall Jackson building and the front corner of the east half of the proposed new building, plus an additional 4 feet, 11 inches due to the indentation on the back of the property, where the HVAC equipment would be located.

[2:53:10]

Mr. Conrad stated that the width of the resulting plaza would be 28 feet, 4 inches, and that the buildings would be 6 feet apart at the rear.

Mr. Conrad stated that a nice plaza and a good viewshed from Main Street had been created between the proposed building and the Stonewall Jackson School building and grounds, and that hopefully this would satisfy the Commission's request for greater separation.

Commission Chair Johnson asked if there was any public comment.

Ms. Cait Minnick stated that she lives behind the Stonewall Jackson building, and that she is very fond of the current view. Ms. Minnick stated that she felt that the three stories

had already sounded too high and like it would be competing visually with the Stonewall building, but was dismayed to learn that the proposed design is now four stories tall. Ms. Minnick stated that the proposed location also seems excessively close to the Stonewall building.

Ms. Catherine Farmer, a resident and neighbor of the Stonewall building since 1975, stated that she was very happy with the modification to the front elevation of the proposed building, but suggested sliding the curved part and the 4-story piece immediately behind it forward about 6 feet, thus relieving the rear elevation from the constriction referred to by Ms. Minnick. Ms. Farmer stated that this side of the existing building is not a secondary elevation, given that the Stonewall school when originally built had no neighbors on any side to block its view, and this elevation has a grand staircase and originally had great visibility as befits a primary elevation. Therefore, Ms. Farmer stated, it would be very shortsighted to block this elevation with a blob of undifferentiated horizontal elements.

Ms. Farmer stated that she had shared with the Commission an extensive document with photographs and specific recommendations, as well as a Photoshopped modification to the plans depicting the forward-sliding adjustment just described.

Ms. Farmer stated that she would like to see the height reduced, but that she believed it to be more important that the cornice of the new building wrap all the way around, so that rainwater does not dump off the back of the building and the HVAC units on the roof are not exposed. Ms. Farmer suggested that scuppers and downspouts would be much more elegant and create an aesthetic of "all sides are the best side" much like what the school building has – none of the elevations being secondary.

Commission Chair Johnson stated that the Commissioners had received Ms. Farmer's submitted public letter document, and that this would be shared with applicants as well.

Ms. Nancy Emerson, a long-term resident of the area, stated that she is concerned about the height and that it would block views for several people, and that the design was incongruous and would lower property values in the area. Ms. Emerson reiterated Ms. Farmer's remark that the elevation of the Stonewall building most impacted by the construction is not a secondary elevation.

Mr. Rex Scudder, a resident of the Fan neighborhood since the 1970s, stated that the six-bay, 4-story building proposed is a crude encroachment upon the Stonewall building, and the 6-foot clearance proposed would be inappropriate. Mr. Scudder suggested that the lot line of 1518 W Main, which is approximately 20 feet from the Stonewall building, would be a more appropriate distance.

Mr. Scudder stated that the building facing Lombardy Street, which was originally a gymnasium or auditorium, is spaced roughly 20 feet from the main Stonewall Building, and whereas this spacing looks normal, the proposed project's 6-foot spacing does not.

Commission Chair Johnson pointed out that the current review is a conceptual one, and that he hoped the applicants would be responsive to concerns expressed when they submit their revised explanation.

Commission Chair Johnson closed public comment and opened the floor for Commission discussion.

Commissioner Wheeler stated that he greatly appreciated the courtyard and setback in front, and stated that great progress had been made on the front. Commissioner Wheeler expressed agreement with Ms. Farmer that pushing the massing on the courtyard side closer to Main Street could be helpful for the rear elevation.

Commissioner Wheeler suggested that another option would be to relocate the glass tower to the back of the building, so that it relates to the curved nature of the stair at the back of the Stonewall building.

Commissioner Wheeler stated that, if the glass tower were moved, the courtyard façade might require revision.

Commissioner Wheeler stated that he had reservations about the articulation of the windows on the rear elevation at the back alley. Commissioner Wheeler also expressed agreement with others that the 6 foot reveal on the back might not be sufficient.

Commissioner Wheeler suggested that the height could be reduced, and that ideally it would be below the cornice, and pointed out that technically, going by the Guidelines, this would be an outbuilding of the school building, and that as such it must be subordinate to the existing school structure.

Commissioner Morgan expressed agreement with all of Commissioner Wheeler's comments, and appreciation for all the comments made by the public. Commissioner Morgan stated that she certainly would consider the comments from the public, and that she believed Commissioner Wheeler's comments did a good job of addressing them. Commission Chair Johnson expressed agreement with Commissioner Morgan, and suggested that softening that would help with that perspective on that side.

Commission Chair Johnson stated that he is not as critical of the height, and expressed appreciation at the progress that has been made on the project in terms of reducing the size and opening it up to the rear.

Commissioner Klaus expressed agreement with Commissioner Wheeler about the height ideally being below the cornice line of the existing building, and that the 6 foot spacing should be increased. Commissioner Klaus suggested that Ms. Farmer's submitted drawing and suggestion be seriously considered, as it offers a way to significantly open up the space. Commissioner Klaus expressed agreement with comments that all elevations of the existing building need to be respected.

Commissioner Rodriguez expressed agreement with Commissioner Wheeler's suggestion that the glass staircase be placed on the rear façade, as this would increase the visibility of the rear of the school building, as the Commission had requested of the applicants, as well as lightening up that area of the design. Commissioner Rodriguez also expressed agreement with Ms. Farmer's suggestion of sliding that block forward.

Commissioner Brewer expressed appreciation for the effort the applicants have put in thus far, and that with a project like this it is important to listen to neighbors' concerns, and that with this project there are important neighborhood concerns to address before moving forward.

Commission Chair Johnson stated that Ms. Farmer's input was potentially useful.

**The application was conceptually reviewed. The Commission discussed the proposal with the applicant and made recommendations in an advisory capacity. A record of the comments will be made available to the applicant upon the approval of the meeting minutes.**

9. [COA-087770-2021](#) 908 N. 24th Street - Construct a new two-story, single-family, detached residence.

**Attachments:** [Application and Plans](#)

[Base Map](#)

[Staff Report](#)

The application was presented by Ms. Jones.

Commissioner Klaus asked if a room addition might be considered, in place of the window or porch suggested by staff, as better reflecting the footprint of the previously existing building on the site. Ms. Jones expressed agreement, but stated that she had not had the opportunity to check with Zoning staff on whether this would fit with the Zoning regulations.

Ms. Jones stated that the applicant was not present, but that the meeting recording and meeting notes could be provided to the applicant after the meeting.

Commission Chair Johnson asked if there was any public comment.

Ms. Nancy Lampert pointed out the lack of a front porch in the proposed design and the incongruity of this with the region, and stated that the proposed building height was out of keeping with the area, 1-2 stories being more normal. Ms. Lampert stated that she hoped the Commission would be more consistent henceforth in the projects it approves.

Ms. Jodi Dubyoski, owner of 906 N. 24th Street, stated that she and her partner were supportive of staff comments regarding this proposed project.

Commission Chair Johnson expressed agreement with staff comments and stated that he liked Commissioner Klaus' suggestion very much, and that the project site offers unique opportunities.

Commissioner Morgan stated that she is in favor of simplifying new construction houses, by for example eliminating brackets and having 1/1 rather than 2/2 windows, rather than having them attempt to imitate their neighbors. Commissioner Morgan stated that she was receptive to Ms. Lampert's comments regarding height, and pointed out that there are 3-story buildings nearby and that the proposed building appears to be only a foot or so taller than its neighbors. Commissioner Morgan pointed out that there is considerable empty space between the second-floor windows and the roof, and stated that this is somewhat concerning and that one way to fix it would be to lower the building height.

Commissioner Klaus expressed agreement with Commissioner Morgan regarding dispensing with the faux-historic details. Commissioner Klaus stated that something additional could be done on the right elevation with the yard space, to add interest, and that in its current proposed form the right elevation would not be approvable as it has strange window sizes and spacing, and does not meet requirements for an important visible elevation. Commissioner Klaus stated that this elevation and the rear elevation would both require considerable revision.

Commissioner Wheeler stated that the project site has great potential, being a double corner lot, and that more could be done than what had been submitted. Commissioner Wheeler stated that there is some question as to what is the primary street for the property, and that Pink Street could be construed as primary and should in any case be addressed.

Ms. Lampert pointed out that Burton Street is one-way going west and is considered in

some respects merely an alley in this area, and that this could perhaps affect interpretation of which elevation is primary.

Commission Chair Johnson expressed agreement with Commissioner Wheeler regarding the double corner nature of the lot and suggested that there are various options for how to increase interest and create the appearance of a secondary entrance on Burton Street, including possibly an additional room, or a landing.

**The application was conceptually reviewed. The Commission discussed the proposal with the applicant and made recommendations in an advisory capacity. A record of the comments will be made available to the applicant upon the approval of the meeting minutes.**

## Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned at 6:59 PM.