

**City of Charlottesville  
Board of Architectural Review  
Staff Report  
January 21, 2026**



**Pre-application discussion: CoA in HC District**  
BAR # HST25-0119  
705 St. Charles Ave, TMP 520155001  
Martha Jefferson Historic Conservation District  
Owner: Kimberly and Galen Suppes  
Applicant: Marcelino Arroyo / Nola Builds  
Project: New residence on vacant parcel

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**Background**

Year Built: Vacant parcel  
District: Martha Jefferson Historic Conservation District

**Prior BAR Review**

N/A

**Application**

- Submittal: BNC Homes of Virginia drawings for *NEW HOME: Pro 5 MODEL, ST. Charles Ave.*, dated October 3, 2025, 24 pages. (Attached to this staff report are excerpts showing the front and side elevations.)

Pre-application discussion re: construction of a two-story residence. See comments and questions in the Discussion. No action will be taken.

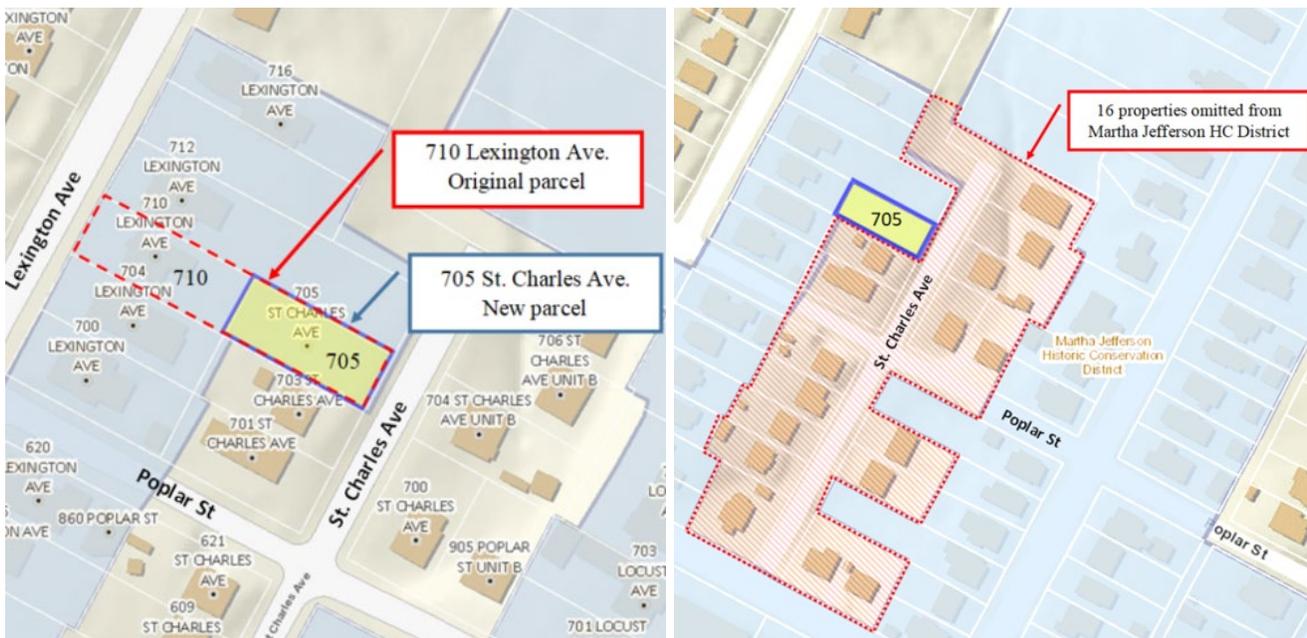
**Materials**

- Roof: Asphalt shingles
- Gutters: K-style gutter
- Cornice and trim: PVC wrapped, Fypon brackets
- Exterior wall: vinyl horizontal siding, vinyl shakes
- Foundation: framed walls with thin-stone veneer
- Windows: not specified

- Doors: not specified
- Garage door: not specified
- Porch railings: vinyl
- Light Fixtures: not specified

The proposed dwelling is on a parcel recently created by the subdivision of 710 Lexington Avenue. Subdivision does not alter the boundary of the HC District overlay; therefore, the new lot is still subject to design review. However, had this not been a separate parcel and a new structure proposed at this location--that is, behind the existing house and not visible from Lexington Avenue—staff would have determined it was either not subject to formal review or it could be reviewed administratively with BAR consultation.

Additionally, this new parcel is located on a two-block section of St. Charles Avenue that was omitted from the Martha Jefferson HC District. The 16 properties and 16 primary structures on them are not subject to design review.



## **Discussion**

Note: The regulations and guidelines for projects within a Historic Conservation District (HCD) are, by design, less rigid than those for an ADC District or an IPP. The HCD designations are intended to preserve the character-defining elements of the neighborhoods and to assure that new construction is not inappropriate to that character, while minimally imposing on current residents who may want to upgrade their homes.

For the proposed dwelling at 705 St. Charles Avenue, the garage is integral to the house, accessible from the street with doors on the front elevation. However, this conflicts with the zoning for this district, which requires garages be at least 10-feet behind the primary façade and no wider than 40% of the primary façade. Resolution may alter the design; however, staff’s primary questions (below) are related to the design in-concept and materiality.

In addition to any comments, suggestions, or questions from the BAR, staff requests guidance on two primary questions:

1. **Is the design appropriate?** The architecture is neither traditional nor contemporary, borrowing elements from various styles. The siding, shakes, eave brackets, porch columns, window lite patterns, and stone foundation suggest a Craftsman-style design intent. Conflicting with this intent are elements such as the shallow eaves, the three, dissimilar dormer types of the front elevation, the prevalence of vinyl and PVC materials, and the expansive side elevations with limited and dissimilar windows.

This dwelling fronts on a street not within the district and is immediately adjacent to no designated structures. To what extent should it be *visually and architecturally compatible* with the surrounding district? If the intended Craftsman-style is compatible, does the overall design, as presented, achieve that intent? consistent with and appropriate for that intent?

2. **Is the materiality appropriate?** Per the guidelines, *materials and textures should relate architecturally to the district and be compatible with and complementary to neighboring buildings; that long-lasting, durable and natural materials are preferred.* Throughout the Martha Jefferson HC district, dwellings with horizontal siding are common, and several feature decorative shingles on gables. However, there are few examples of vinyl and PVC elements, and there are no examples where their use is so prevalent.

Unlike ADC Districts, the HC District guidelines do not specifically recommend against the use of synthetic materials, including vinyl. Is the use of vinyl and PVC materials consistent with the design guidelines for this district?

See specific comments below under Pertinent Design Review Guidelines.

Additionally, per Code Sec. 5.2.6.A.1., while this request is subject to a Major Historic Review, the BAR may delegate to staff the final review (approval of the CoA), especially given its unique circumstances and location within a HC District.

### **Suggested Motions**

No action will be taken.

### **Criteria, Standards and Guidelines**

#### **Review Criteria Generally**

Per Chapter 34, Div. 5.2.7. C.2:

- a. In considering a particular application the BAR will approve the application unless it finds:
  - i. That the proposal does not meet specific standards set forth within this Section or applicable provisions of the City's design guidelines; and
  - ii. The proposal is incompatible with the historic, cultural or architectural character of the district in which the property is located or the IPP that is the subject of the application.
- b. The BAR will approve, approve with conditions, or deny applications for Certificates of Appropriateness in accordance with the provisions of this Section.
- c. The BAR, or City Council on appeal, may require conditions of approval as are necessary or desirable to ensure that any new construction or addition is compatible with the scale and character of the Architecture Design Control District, Individually Protected Property, or Historic

Conservation District. Prior to attaching conditions to an approval, due consideration will be given to the cost of compliance with the proposed conditions as well as the goals of the Comprehensive Plan. Conditions may require a reduction in height or massing, consistent with the City’s design guidelines and subject to the following limitations: [not germane].

**Standards for Review and Decision**

Per Chapter 34. Div. Section 5.2.7.D. Criteria for Review and Decision

2. Historic Conservation District

Review of the proposed construction, reconstruction, alteration, or restoration of a building or structure is limited to the exterior architectural features, including signs, and the following features and factors:

- a. Whether the form, height, scale, mass, and placement of the proposed construction are visually and architecturally compatible with the site and the applicable conservation district;
- b. The harmony of the proposed changes in terms of overall proportion and the size and placement of entrances and windows;
- c. The impact of the proposed changes on the essential architectural form and integrity of the existing building;
- d. The effect of the proposed change on the adjacent building or structures; and
- e. Any applicable provisions of the City’s design guidelines.

**Historic Conservation Districts: Design Guidelines for New Construction and Additions**

Note: In reviewing the design guidelines, staff examined the 31 primary structures within the district located on the 500, 600, and 700 blocks of Lexington Avenue.

Building Location – setback and spacing

- 1. Align a new building close to the average building setback line on the same street, if established, or consistent with the surrounding area.
- 2. Maintain average spacing between buildings on the same street.

**Staff Comment:** Spacing between the new dwelling and that on the adjacent parcel (703 St. Charles) is approximately 12-feet. Spacings for the nearby structures range between 10 and 30 feet.

Building Scale – height and massing

- 1. Keep the footprint, and massing of new buildings consistent with the neighborhood characteristics and compatible with the character of buildings on the same street.
- 2. Keep the height and width of new buildings within the prevailing average height and width. Exceptions up to 200% of the prevailing height and width may be approved by the BAR when contextually appropriate.

**Staff Comment:** The 1,700 sq ft footprint, the façade width, and the two-story height are compatible with nearby structures in the district

Building Form – roofs and porches

- 1. Roof forms should reference contributing buildings on the same street or surrounding area. Other roof forms may be approved by the BAR when contextually appropriate.
- 2. If many of the contributing buildings on the same street have porches, then it is strongly recommended that the design of a new residence includes a porch or similar form of similar width and depth.

**Staff Comment:** The proposed gabled roof with dormers is compatible with the district. The new dwelling features a front porch.

Building Openings – orientation, doors and windows

1. A single entrance door (or main entrance of a multifamily dwelling) facing the street is recommended.

**Staff Comment:** The primary entrance is at the front, from the street-facing porch.

2. Window and door patterns and the ratio of solids (wall area) to voids (window and door area) of new buildings should be compatible with contributing buildings in the surrounding area.
3. Windows should be simple shapes compatible with those on contributing buildings, which are generally vertically oriented in residential areas.

**Staff Comment:** On the primary façade, window and door alignments and patterns are compatible with the district.

Building Materials and Textures

1. The selection of materials and textures for a new building should relate architecturally to the district, and should be compatible with and complementary to neighboring buildings.
2. Long-lasting, durable and natural materials are preferred, including brick, wood, stucco, and cementitious siding and standing seam metal roofs. Clear glass windows (VLT of 70% or more) are preferred.

**Staff Comment:** [See question in *Discussion.*] Throughout this district, dwellings with horizontal siding are common, and several feature decorative shingles on gables. However, the prevalent use of vinyl and PVC materials is inconsistent with the preference for *long-lasting, durable and natural materials.*

Building Paint

1. Painting unpainted brick or other masonry is discouraged because it is irreversible and may cause moisture problems.

**Staff Comment:** n/a

Site

1. Fences or walls that abut a City street (or fences located in a side yard between a street and the front of the principal structure on a lot) should not exceed three and one-half feet in height.

**Staff Comment:** n/a

Architectural character-defining features of the Martha Jefferson Historic Conservation District:

1. Encourage one-story front porches;

**Staff Comment:** The new dwelling features a front porch.

2. Encourage garages to be located in the rear yards;

**Staff Comment:** [See comments in *Discussion.*] The garage is part of the house, accessible from the street with doors at the front elevation. However, this will require modification in order to comply with the City Code. For this zoning district, garages must be positioned at least 10-feet behind the primary street facing building façade and are limited in width to no more than 40% of any street facing façade.

3. The levels of a building's stories should be consistent with those on surrounding structures with respect to the natural grade [for example, a first floor should not be raised so that it is higher than most surrounding first floors];

**Staff Comment:** The site's grade rises from front to back. The first floor is one-half story above grade, with stairs to the porch entry. An elevated front entrance is not unusual for this district.

4. Do not exclude well-designed, new contemporary architecture [there may be a misconception that only historic-looking new buildings are permitted];

**Staff Comment:** [See question in *Discussion.*] The architecture is neither traditional nor contemporary, borrowing elements from various styles. The siding, shakes, eave brackets, porch columns, window lite patterns, and stone foundation suggest a Craftsman-style design intent. Conflicting with this intent are elements such as the shallow eaves, the three, dissimilar dormer types of the front elevation, the prevalence of vinyl and PVC materials, and the expansive side elevations with limited and dissimilar windows.

5. Encourage standing seam metal roofs;

**Staff Comment:** The roof will be asphalt shingles, which is not unusual in this district.

6. Maintain and encourage tree canopy [Maintain the existing tree canopy and encourage new large shade trees];

**Staff Comment:** There are no existing large trees on the site. To meet zoning requirements, a 10% tree canopy will be required.

7. The following Historic Conservation Overlay District Design Guidelines are especially pertinent:
  - a. maintain neighborhood massing and form;
  - b. encourage the use of sustainable materials;
  - c. limit the height of fences in front yards to 3 ½ feet in height.

**Staff Comment:**

- a. Height massing and scale is compatible with nearby dwellings.
  - b. [See question in *Discussion.*] Materials, as presented, are predominantly vinyl and PVC.
  - c. No fencing is proposed.
8. Regarding the future development of the hospital properties, the neighborhood's focus has been:
    - a. not to tear down the old houses; to encourage low density residential development north of Taylor Walk (with the suggestion that Taylor Street be reinstated);

- b. to expect the High Street area to develop as a sensitively designed, high-quality, mixed use development;

**Staff Comment:** n/a

- 9. Encourage good stewardship of Maplewood Cemetery.

**Staff Comment:** n/a







10' 0' 10' 20' 30'

SCALE: 1"=10'

TMP 52-1561  
GARDNER, DONALD W  
DB 2008 PG 2789

TMP 52-155  
SUPPES, GALEN J  
DB 2024 PG 1867

TMP 52-154  
RAJAGOPALAN, PRADEEP  
UMBERGER, EMILY  
DB 2018 PG 2116

IF

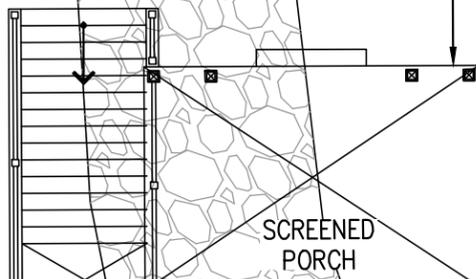
IF

EX. GRAVEL  
DRIVEWAY  
TBR

30' NO BUILD  
EASEMENT  
(PRIVATE)

TMP 52-155-1  
SUPPES, GALEN J  
DB 2024 PG 1867

34.1'



SCREENED  
PORCH

TMP 52-156  
CRADDOCK, WILLIAM B  
DB 2024 PG 1120

N61°37'13"W 121.03'

4.9'

TSB

44.5'

2-STORY  
W/BASEMENT  
FFE=503.5  
GFE=497.5  
BFE=493.5

23.5'

1.5'

4.9'

4' BSL

46.0'

S61°16'51"E 120.61'

NOTES:

1. THIS PLAT HAS BEEN PREPARED WITHOUT THE BENEFIT OF A TITLE REPORT AND DOES NOT THEREFORE NECESSARILY INDICATE ALL ENCUMBRANCES ON THE PROPERTY SHOWN HEREON.
2. THE INTENT OF THIS EXHIBIT IS TO SHOW THE LOCATION OF A PROPOSED DWELLING FOR BUILDING PERMIT PURPOSES ONLY AND IS NOT INTENDED TO REPRESENT A CURRENT FIELD SURVEY.

LEGEND

- BSL BUILDING SETBACK LINE
- IF IRON FOUND
- TBR TO BE REMOVED
- WM WATER METER

EX. WOOD FENCE

COVERED  
PORCH

39.0'

20' BSL

IF

EX. WOOD FENCE  
TBR

21.9'

PROP.  
RETAINING  
WALL WITH  
RAIL

PROP.  
ASPHALT  
DRIVEWAY

PROP.  
4" PVC  
SANITARY  
LATERAL

S28°13'43"W 48.40'

PROP. WM

MERIDIAN

CIVIL - SURVEY, PLLC

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Charlottesville, VA 22911

www.meridianwbe.com

ST. CHARLES AVE  
40' PUBLIC R/W

BUILDING PERMIT PLAN FOR  
TAX MAP 52, PARCEL 155

CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE, VA

SHEET: 1 OF 1

FILE: C-52-155 St. CHARLES - BPP.DWG

DATE: OCTOBER 1, 2025