

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
September 23, 2014, Meeting**

8. **CAR No. 14-099** (Arcadia Condo Assoc.) **407 N. Allen Avenue
Monument Avenue Old and Historic District**

Project Description: **Exterior paint treatment**

Staff Contact: **J. Hill**

The applicant requests approval to paint the brick portions of an eclectic Mediterranean-style multifamily residence in the Monument Avenue Old and Historic District. The exterior painting is the final phase of a repair and maintenance campaign precipitated by the damage caused when a tree fell onto the building in April. Other phases of the campaign have been reviewed and approved by the Commission or have received administrative approval by Commission staff. Staff wanted to bring the request for painting the brick portions of the exterior before the Commission because of the apparent specific treatment and appearance of the brick.

The brick portions have clearly been treated with some combination of paint, wash or other coating that has resulted in a weathered, partially exposed brick appearance. This appears to be an intentional design feature and staff believed that if the brick portions of the building were primed and painted and thus rendered monochromatic, an important character-defining feature of the property would be lost.

Staff recommends denial of the project and recommend an alternate treatment. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* notes that “painting previously unpainted masonry is historically inaccurate and is not permitted. The brick portions of the building appear to have been treated with a multi-step process of one or more colors of paint that were then distressed or partially removed and then coated with a wash to allow variation in weathering to yield the overall current appearance. Staff recommend that the applicant seek to replicate that process for the brick portions or to find the method for feathering in that treatment on the portions that had to be cleaned or repaired. The brick that has clearly never been painted should remain unpainted, as the applicant has indicated.

It is the assessment of staff that, if the applicant agrees to the alternate treatment, to be reviewed for approval by Commission staff, the application is consistent with Richmond City Code Section 114-930.7 (b) Standards for Rehabilitation, as well as the *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines*, specifically the page cited above, adopted by the Commission in accordance with Section 114-930.7 (g) of the Code.