



Staff Report
City of Richmond, Virginia



Commission of Architectural Review

2. COA-161192-2025	Final Review	Meeting Date: 2/25/2025
Applicant/Petitioner	Erin Webb	
Project Description	Enclose side porch, remove, and replace rear porch	
Project Location		
Address: 500 North Arthur Ashe Blvd		
Historic District: Boulevard		
<p>High-Level Details:</p> <p>The property is located at the northwest corner of North Arthur Ashe Boulevard and Kensington Avenue. The residence is a 12,000 square foot, double lot that features a two and a half story single-family Arts and Crafts style house with three detached garages constructed ca 1925.</p> <p>The first element encloses the existing side porch with a glazed structure featuring large, clear, insulated glass panels framed by minimal bronze metal mullions and top and bottom rails, positioned inside the existing porch columns. The second element encloses the open terrace between the side porch and the southwest wing with painted wood-frame walls, painted wood windows, and a clear glass roof with standing seam copper. The materials, including Farrow & Ball Matchstick 2013 paint, complement the home's character while remaining visually independent. The third element replaces the deteriorated rear porch with a similar structure, including an enclosed kitchen expansion and an open area for garden access. Materials will match the existing design, including painted wood walls, trim, porch columns, deck flooring, a slate roof, and a brick foundation, all painted in Farrow & Ball Matchstick 2013. The rear addition will not be visible from public right of way.</p>		
Staff Recommendation		
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, alex.dandridge@rva.gov, (804) 646-6569	
Previous Reviews	This application was reviewed and deferred by the Commission at the December 2024 meeting. Specifically, the Commission requested more information on the intent of the applicant regarding the porch enclosure and its use. The Commission also requested a revised design of the conservatory enclosure that features a simplified window and base paneling design, and that the location of any	

	<p>exterior HVAC equipment for the enclosures on visible elevations be submitted.</p> <p>Overall, the Commission found the design to be appropriate in terms of preserving historic materials but were hesitant, and mostly not in support, of the enclosure of the side porch given the visibility as well as the Guidelines specific recommendation that porches on primary elevations should not be enclosed.</p> <p>There was concern that enclosing the porch could reduce the building's interaction with the street, and installation of interior blinds could ruin the openness of the design; although the Commission acknowledged that if enclosed, their purview is limited to the exterior.</p>
Staff Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The windows used on the conservatory enclosure not include transom windows, but rather single, taller windows. • Staff recommends approval of the enclosure of the side porch with the condition that all character defining architectural features such as the columns, entablature, and brick be retained and not altered by the installation of the glass; and that the glass be non-reflective and installed on the interior side of the columns.

Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
Building Elements: Porches, Entrances & Doors pg. #71	<p>4. <i>Do not remove or radically change entrances and porches important in defining the building's overall historic character. Front and side porches are architecturally more ornate than utilitarian back porches.</i></p> <p>9. <i>Existing entrances or porches should not be removed when an historic structure has been reoriented to accommodate a new use.</i></p> <p>12. <i>Do not enclose porches on primary elevations.</i></p> <p>13. <i>Porch enclosures to aid in energy conservation are only appropriate on secondary elevations. Solid materials are not recommended for use in enclosure projects since they can radically alter the historic appearance of a porch. Glass enclosures which reveal decorative porch elements are strongly preferred.</i></p>	<p>On the south elevation of the building, two alterations are being proposed. The first alteration includes the enclosure of an uncovered terrace with large windows, paneled knee board, and a copper roof with skylights.</p> <p>During the last review, it was recommended that the applicant simplify the design of this enclosure. In response, the applicant is now proposing single windows rather than windows with divided lights. Staff finds that the revision to the window design is appropriate but believes that further simplification is necessary to differentiate this enclosure from the original windows and openings on the first story. <u>Staff recommends that the window used on the conservatory enclosure not include transom windows, but rather single, taller windows.</u></p> <p>Original windows on the first story feature divided lights and/or transoms. Having larger single windows without divisions or transoms on the conservatory enclosure would further differentiate this alteration.</p> <p>The other alteration proposed for the south elevation is the enclosure of a covered terrace that is visible on the south and east elevations. The applicant is proposing to enclose this space with clear, non-reflective glass with butt joints to reduce visual clutter and maintain the open appearance of the porch.</p> <p>Originally, the glass panels were proposed to be joined together by metal joints which are more prominent than the newly proposed butt joints.</p>

		<p>The glass will be installed on the interior side of the existing columns. The character defining features of the porch will not be removed or radically altered.</p> <p>The guidelines state “do not enclose porches on primary elevations”. While this building features two primary elevations (south and east) the side porch is not the primary entrance to the building. The primary entrance is articulated by a front stoop with a portico which faces North Arthur Ashe Boulevard. The applicant is enclosing the side porch in the most unobtrusive way possible, and which can be reversed in the future.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends approval of the enclosure of the side porch with the condition that all character defining architectural features such as the columns, entablature, and brick be retained and not altered by the installation of the glass; and that the glass be non-reflective and installed on the interior side of the columns.</u></p>
<p>Standards for New Construction: Siting, pg. # 46</p>	<p>1. <i>Additions should be subordinate in size to their main buildings and as inconspicuous as possible. Locating additions at the rear or on the least visible side of a building is preferred.</i></p>	<p>The third element proposed, involves replacing a deteriorated rear porch with a new structure of similar form and materials. The new porch will include an enclosed section for kitchen expansion, featuring six painted wood double-hung windows and a half-lite painted wood door, as well as an open section providing covered access to the garden. Two existing casement windows will be replaced with painted wood French doors within the same openings. Materials will match the existing design, including painted wood walls, trim, porch columns, a slate roof, wood deck flooring, and a brick foundation. The addition will not be visible from public view.</p>
<p>Building Elements: Porches, Entrances & Doors pg. #71</p>	<p>4. <i>Do not remove or radically change entrances and porches important in defining the building’s overall historic character. Front and side porches are architecturally more ornate than utilitarian back porches.</i></p>	<p>This element of the project remains the same as the previous review.</p> <p>Staff recommends approval of proposed work as described in the application as the rear porch removal and addition will not be visible from the public right of way.</p>

It is the assessment of staff that, with the conditions above, the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation and New Construction outlined in Section 30-930.7 (b) and (c) of the City Code, as well as with the Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines, specifically the pages cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.

Figures (Next Page)

Figure 1. Existing Photos of Primary Residence:



Figure 2. Existing Photos of Primary Residence:

