

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
July 28, 2015 Meeting**

1. **CAR No. 15-098** (2502 E Grace St., LLC) **2502 E. Grace Street**
St. John's Church Old & Historic District

Project Description: **Replace front concrete steps with wood as part of repairs to the front façade, replace wall of rear shed, install rear gate, and construct a one-story addition at the rear**

Staff Contact: **K. Chen**

The applicant requests approval to replace front concrete steps with wood as part of repairs to the front façade, replace wall of rear shed and install a rear gate located in the St. John's Church Old and Historic District. The rehabilitation of the front includes the repair of the cornice, masonry wall, windows and porch. Concrete steps and landing at the front porch will be removed and replaced with a wood step and handrail. A one-story addition will be constructed to infill an area between two two-story portions of the building. Wood siding on the east side of a rear shed will be replaced with smooth fiber cement siding and a new gate installed at the rear of the property.

Staff recommends approval of the project. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* Standards for Rehabilitation – Residential Construction found on page 55 place an emphasis on the repair and retention of historic material and features. The majority of work described in the application qualifies as repair and retention of historic materials. The removal and replacement of the concrete steps with a wood step will not radically change the historic character of the front porch. The concrete curb retaining and defining the front yard will be retained.

The proposed one-story rear addition, tucked between two, two-story portions of the building, is not visible from a public-right-of-way.

The plywood siding on the rear shed is minimally visible and its replacement with smooth fiber cement siding will not remove historic material or alter the appearance of the shed.

The new gate replaces an existing gate and should match the existing in style, size, and materials.

It is the assessment of staff that the work outlined in the proposal is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation outlined in Section 114-930.7(c) of the City Code, as well as with the *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines*, specifically the page cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.