

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
May 26, 2015 Meeting**

15. **CAR No. 15-015** (W. Watson) **2913 East Marshall Street
St. John's Church Old and Historic District**

Project Description: **Restore fenestration, stucco façade,
and construct rear balcony**

Staff Contact: **W. Palmquist**

The applicant seeks approval for the rehabilitation of a two-story residence in the St. John's Church Old and Historic District. The applicant proposes to remove the "Permastone" siding, stucco the façade, restore the full length windows on the façade and install new 1-over-1, aluminum-clad wood windows. The application also consists of the removal a non-historic front porch and construction of a new rear second floor balcony. The applicant has decided not to pursue the construction of a new front porch, and proposes to install simply black steel railings and handrails.

This application was originally deferred at the February 2015 CAR meeting. In the weeks prior to that meeting, staff observed that exterior work had commenced without staff or Commission approval and with permits for "Interior Work Only." Sections of the "Permastone" siding had been removed, the rough openings for the façade windows had been created, and some of the stucco had been applied. The non-historic front porch had been removed and new concrete steps and a low curb enclosing the front yard had been poured.

Since that time, work has continued at the property, which includes the installation of the proposed 36"x96" first floor windows and the installation of wooden window lintels at the bottom of these new windows.

Staff recommend approval of the project a condition. The proposed work to restore the façade windows, apply stucco over the damage brick, install black steel railings and handrails, and construct a rear balcony are consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation with the condition that the new balcony structure be painted or opaquely stained a color to be reviewed and approved by CAR staff.

Windows. The first story façade windows were previously replaced with a three-part picture window and the owner proposes to restore the size and placement of the full length windows based on the precedence of the adjacent properties. New 1-over-1, aluminum-clad wood windows will be installed.

This treatment, as well as modeling the new window openings on adjacent, similar historic structures is supported by the *Richmond Old and Historic Districts*

Handbook and Design Review Guidelines which states that, "Windows should only be replaced when they are missing or beyond repair. Any reconstruction should be based on physical evidence or photo documentation" (p. 65 #7).

Rear Balcony. The owner proposes to construct a new 6'x8' rear balcony centered on the second story at an existing door opening. The proposed balcony will be constructed of treated lumber and be situated 11'-6" from the ground. The handrail will be 42" in height and will consist of 2"x2" balusters, spaced 4" on center and finished in a Richmond rail style. The proposed balcony appears to be consistent with the *Guidelines*, the historic presence of which is evidenced by an existing door on the 2nd story.

Front Porch. The owner has removed the non-historic front porch and has decided not to pursue the construction of an historically appropriate front porch. Instead, the applicant proposes installing black, steel railings on all sides of the porch and handrails leading down the front porch steps. This component of the project is supported by the *Guidelines* and is typically an item delegated to CAR staff for administrative approval. The new railing and handrails will match that of adjacent houses at 2911 and 2909 E. Marshall Streets, which have the same treatment and likewise lack a front porch.

Stucco. The proposed removal of the "Permastone" siding has commenced and the process of removal has damaged the underlying brick. Stucco is an appropriate repair as it will protect the compromised brick. The applicant proposes stuccoing the façade in a mix of Portland cement, tan masonry sand, and hydrated lime, to be finished in Dryvit "Stone Gray."

It is the assessment of staff that, with the condition above, the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation outlined in Section 114-930.7(b) 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.