

7. COA-047063-2019

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

January 22, 2019

PROPERTY ADDRESS

401 North Allen Avenue

DISTRICT

Monument Avenue

Commission of Architectural Review

STAFF REPORT



APPLICANT

J. & A. Stefanovich

STAFF CONTACT

C. Jeffries

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Site improvements to front and rear yards.

PROJECT DETAILS

- The applicant is proposing several improvements to the front and rear yards of a Colonial Revival brick residence built ca. 1906.
- The applicant proposes the following work:
 - Remove front portico roof balustrade.
 - Replace the existing brick front stoop with bluestone and install a metal handrail.
 - Install bluestone hardscaping in the front yard.
 - Replace the rear wood gates with stained vertical redwood.
 - Install a fireplace in the rear yard.
 - Construct a bike storage structure in the rear yard.
 - Replace the existing rear door and transom.
 - Create a large opening in the existing masonry outbuilding.
 - Install a large painting on the rear wall of the primary building.
 - Remove a portion of the brick wall in the rear yard.
- The planned renovation will also include other work not visible from the public way.



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STAFF RECOMMENDATION

PARTIAL APPROVAL WITH CONDITIONS

PREVIOUS REVIEWS

The Commission approved the enclosure of a second story rear porch on January 23, 2018. This approval included the condition that the painting on the rear wall be removed or moved to a less prominent location, as it had been installed without prior approval.

STAFF RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS

- The brick stoop and stairs be retained and repaired or replaced in-kind.
- The mural be installed in a less prominent location, to be administratively approved.
- The larger portion of the interior brick wall be retained.
- Staff recommends denial of the following items:
 - The proposed rear gate replacement.

- The replacement of the rear door transom.
- The proposed new opening on the west elevation of the garage.

STAFF ANALYSIS

<p>Porches, Entrances and Doors pg. 71 #3, 8, 11,</p>	<p><i>Whenever possible repair and partial replacement of a porch is preferable to complete replacement.</i></p>	<p>The applicant is proposing to remove several elements from the front of the home. Ghosting on the façade of the home indicates that the black metal railing on the roof of the portico is not original, and can be removed.</p>
	<p><i>Do not strip entrances and porches of historic material and details that should be retained in any repair or partial replacement.</i></p>	<p>The applicant is also proposing to replace the brick and bluestone at the front entrance with a bluestone veneer stoop, solid bluestone steps, and bluestone pavers in the front yard.</p>
	<p><i>A primary entrance should not be altered to give an appearance that was not originally intended, such as adding a pediment to a simple vernacular structure.</i></p>	<p>The application states that the front porch is not believed to be original to the home. Staff was unable to locate any documentation that verifies that the current portico is not original. The change of material and design would not be appropriate as it would be altering the appearance of the primary entrance in a way that was not originally intended. <u>As such, staff recommends that the brick stoop and stairs be retained and repaired or replaced in-kind.</u></p>
		<p>Staff finds that the proposed metal handrail is compatible with the district and recommends approval of the handrail.</p>
<p>Landscaping Pg. 77, #11</p>	<p><i>In instances where physical or documentary evidence does not exist, the proposed front yard landscaped area should be compatible in design, materials, and location, and should look to precedent on the block face or the block face opposite. The non-historical over-development of front yards should be avoided.</i></p>	<p>The applicant is proposing new hardscaping in the front yard to provide a small seating area. Staff finds that the proposed material and design is compatible with the district and is clearly not historic. Other homes on this block of North Allen Avenue also have hardscaped front yards. <u>Staff recommends approval of the front yard hardscaping.</u></p>
<p>Residential Outbuildings Pg. 51, #3</p>	<p><i>New outbuildings should be smaller than the main residence and be located to the rear and/or side of the property to emphasize they are secondary structures.</i></p>	<p>The proposed bike storage is located at the rear of the property and is smaller than the primary structure. It is a small structure and will be minimally visible from the public right of way. The structure will also be removable.</p>
<p>Secretary of the Interior Standards, pg. 5, #10</p>	<p><i>New construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.</i></p>	<p>Though the <i>Guidelines</i> do not specifically address structures like the proposed outdoor fireplace, staff finds that the structure is subordinate to the main structure, will be minimally visible from the public view, and is a reversible alteration.</p>
<p>Fences & Walls, pg. 78, #10</p>	<p><i>Wooden fences should be repaired and painted as needed. Existing picket designs should be</i></p>	<p>The applicant is proposing to replace the existing rear wooden gates with new cedar gates with opaque stain. Though the current gates may not be original to the</p>

	<i>matched when replacement is necessary.</i>	building, a photograph from 1980 shows gates of the same design at the entrance to the garage. As the proposed gates do not match the existing design, <u>staff recommends denial of the proposed new gates.</u>
Stands for Rehabilitation, pg. 59, #2	<i>Retain original wood features such as cornices, brackets, window and doorway surrounds, sashes and doors.</i>	The applicant is proposing to replace the rear door and transom with a modern steel door and transom. Though the existing door appears to be a replacement door, staff finds that the transom is likely original and should be retained. The transom is also clearly visible from the sidewalk. <u>Staff recommends approval of the proposed door replacement and denial of the replacement of the transom.</u>
Secretary of the Interior Standards, pg. 5, #s9-10	<i>9. New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.</i>	The <i>Secretary of the Interior Standards</i> do not allow for exterior alterations that destroy historic materials and that are not easily reversible. Staff finds the proposed insertion of a new opening and the destruction of historic openings on a masonry wall will negatively impact the historic integrity of the building.
	<i>10. New construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.</i>	Staff finds that the creation of a new, large opening is not an action that can be easily reversed, and attempts to repair it would impact the historic integrity of the building.
Windows, pg. 69, #8	<i>The number, location, size or glazing pattern of windows should not be changed by cutting new openings, blocking out windows or by installing replacement sash that do not fit the original window.</i>	<u>Staff recommends denial of the proposed new opening on the west elevation of the garage.</u> The <i>Guidelines</i> recommend against allowing new openings, especially on visible elevations. Staff finds that the existing openings on the garage are visible from the street.
Mural Guidelines, pg. 75	<i>Murals may be permitted on commercial buildings, as defined by current zoning.</i>	The proposed mural does not meet the Commission's guidelines for murals listed on page 75 of the <i>Guidelines</i> as it is located on a residential building. <u>Staff recommends that the mural be installed in a less prominent location, to be administratively approved.</u>
Fences & Walls, pg. 78 #1	<i>Original fences and walls should be retained and maintained whenever possible.</i>	The applicant is proposing to remove a portion of the rear wall. Though the wall is behind a wooden gate, staff finds that the wall is still visible from the public right of way. Photographic documentation submitted with the application indicates that a brick pier connected to the garage is in disrepair. No evidence has been submitted to demonstrate the remainder of the wall is in disrepair. Staff also has concerns that this portion of the wall is attached to the wall fronting the sidewalk, which could be damaged if the wall is removed. <u>Staff recommends that the larger portion of this interior wall be retained.</u>

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

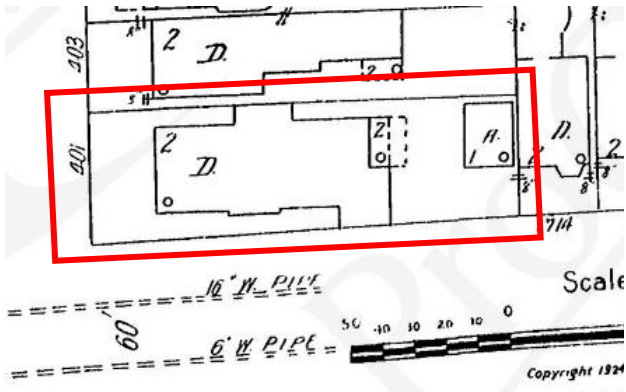


Figure 1. Sanborn map, 1924



Figure 2. 401 North Allen Avenue, façade ca. 1980



Figure 3. 401 North Allen Avenue, ca. 1980, garage in rear



Figure 4. Ghosting of roof balustrade



Figure 5. Existing garage and gate



Figure 6. View of garage openings from Park Avenue



Figure 7. East elevation



Figure 8. Proposed mural, which was previously installed without approval