

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
July 26, 2016 Meeting**

3. **CAR No. 16-108** (D. Tupponce)

**2224 Jefferson Avenue
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

Project Description: Construct a carport/deck at the rear of the structure.

Staff Contact:

M. Pitts

The applicant requests approval to construct a carport/deck at the rear of a home in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. This application is the result of enforcement activity as the approximately 12' by 14' wooden carport was constructed without a Certificate of Appropriateness or a building permit.

On February 23, 2016, the applicant came before the Commission for approval of the carport with a railing above to give the appearance that the structure was a deck. The Commission denied the application as the proposed deck did not meet with the Commission's Guidelines for a deck, and a carport is not a building form found in the Old and Historic District.

With this application, the applicant is proposing to add a railing to the top of the carport to match the existing railings which consist of pickets on the outside of handrails. Additionally, the applicant is proposing to provide access to the deck from the existing landing with a set of stairs. The applicant proposes to replace the plywood roof of the carport with decking boards. The applicant has installed a concrete slab beneath the structure and also at the base of the existing stairs. The applicant is proposing to opaquely stain the railing, stairs, and decking of the structure to match the existing porches at the rear of the property.

Zoning staff has reviewed the application and noted that the deck must be set back 3 feet from all property lines. Per the site plan provided, the proposed deck does not meet the zoning requirements as it is built to the alley adjacent property line.

Staff recommends approval of the project with conditions. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* note that new construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the district (pg. 44). Though there are decks constructed throughout the district including multiple within the surrounding blocks which were constructed prior to the establishment of the district, carports are not a typical building element found within the district. In comparison with the structure proposed in the previous application, the proposed structure will actively function as a deck with a patio below and passively function as a carport if desired. Staff supports the construction of a deck at this location as decks of this height are characteristic of this block.

Staff reviewed the project through the lens of the “Standards for New Construction: Decks” on pages 48 of the Guidelines. The proposed deck meets some of the guidelines because it is located at the rear of the dwelling and does not alter, damage or destroy significant site elements of the property. The *Guidelines* note that deck sub-decking should be screened with wood lattice work or with brick piers (pg. 48, #4). Staff recommends the applicant screen the three open sides of the proposed deck with lattice to be painted or opaquely stained a color to be reviewed by staff or replace the proposed wooden piers with brick piers. Staff recommends the applicant confirm the ability to maintain the structure with its current siting with Zoning and obtain any necessary additional entitlements.

It is the assessment of staff that the application is consistent, with the noted conditions, with the Standards for New Construction outlined in Section 30-930.7(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.