

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
June 27, 2017, Meeting**

5. **COA-018233-2017** (Project Homes)

**2015 Venable Street
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

Project Description:

**Rehabilitate a single family home
and construct an addition at the rear**

Staff Contact:

M. Pitts

The applicant requests approval to rehabilitate a home in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. The Italianate-style home was constructed around 1882 and is a 2-story frame house with a projecting bay, and a 1-story, 2-bay porch. The structure has a decorative cornice with a pierced soffit and sawn brackets. There is a 1-story shed roofed addition to the rear. The structure has been altered over time to include the installation of vinyl siding, the replacement of windows, and alterations to the front porch to include new metal columns and a new roof clad in asphalt shingles.

The applicant is proposing to complete the following work:

- Remove the existing siding from the entire dwelling and install smooth, unbeaded Hardie-plank siding and PVC or Hardie trim on all the corners and replace existing trim. The soffit and cornice will be repaired with wood.
- Replace all existing windows with 2/2, true-divided-light, wood windows. A new four-panel, wood front door will be installed with a sidelight and transom.
- The front porch will be replaced with a new front porch to match the historic details of the porch to include turned columns. Richmond rail, Azek porch decking, and a standing seam metal roof will be installed.
- New TPO roofing will be installed on the shallow gable roof of the main house. The roof is not visible from the street or the alley.
- A 1-story, shed-roofed addition will be added to the rear of the dwelling. The proposed addition will be inset approximately 1 foot from the west building wall of the existing structure and approximately 4'-8" from the east building wall of the existing structure.

Staff recommends approval of the project with conditions.

Siding: The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* state that on existing buildings, the use of fiber cement siding should be limited to secondary elevations with limited visibility from the public right-of-way (pg. 56). Staff does not know the condition of the historic wood siding underneath the vinyl cladding though the applicant has stated that underneath the vinyl siding on the façade is T-111 cladding and no historic siding remains. Staff recommends

the condition of the historic siding beneath the vinyl on all elevations be assessed in coordination with staff and be salvaged for installation on the facade; and if the siding cannot be salvaged, wood siding with a reveal to match the historic reveal be installed on the facade. Staff recommends the fiber cement siding installed on the secondary elevations be smooth, unbeaded, and with a reveal to match the historic reveal found on the wood siding of the front facade. The color for the siding should be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval.

Windows: The *Guidelines* state that all original windows should be retained (pg. 65, #1). Based on the lite configuration of the existing windows, staff does not believe they are original to the structure as the configuration is not characteristic of windows in the District. The applicant is proposing to install true-divided-light wood windows in a 2/2 configuration. Though staff has no documentation of the historic windows on the structure, staff recommends approval of these windows as they are consistent with the historic windows on the neighboring structures.

Porch: The *Guidelines* recommend using documentation when reconstructing missing elements including physical evidence such as surviving posts, brackets and soffit details. Unfortunately, the front porch of this structure retains no historic fabric. Staff recommends the porch be restored to match front porches found on the adjacent structures. The *Guidelines* note that front porches typically have shallow pitched metal roofs with flat seams and that prefabricated metal roof systems are inappropriate on historic front porches (pg. 62, #5, #6). Staff recommends the front porch roof be metal with flat seams or be a dark colored membrane roof which will effectively convey the appearance of flat seam metal roof.

Addition: The *Guidelines* state that additions should be subordinate in size to their main buildings and as inconspicuous as possible. Locating additions to the rear or on the least visible side of a building is preferred (pg. 44, Siting #2). The proposed addition is located at the rear of the dwelling and subordinate in size. Additionally, the addition will be differentiated from the historic structure as it will be inset from the existing building walls.

It is the assessment of staff that the application, with the conditions noted above, 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.