

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW  
STAFF REPORT  
March 27, 2018, Meeting**

8. **COA-031733-2018** (G. Murshed)

**823 North 24<sup>th</sup> Street  
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

**Project Description:**

**Modify the front door opening and  
replace the door of a commercial storefront.**

**Staff Contact:**

**M. Pitts**

**Description of Existing Structure:** The existing structure is a 2-story, mixed-use Italianate structure at the corner of North 24<sup>th</sup> Street and O Street. The structure was constructed as a residence in 1882 and converted to a grocery store with a residence around 1932. There is a commercial storefront on North 24<sup>th</sup> Street, and the front door to the storefront is not located at grade as there is a granite sill. The applicant is currently rehabilitating the structure to include in-kind repair and replacement of deteriorated elements.



Commercial Entrance to 823 North 24<sup>th</sup> Street (March 2018)

**Proposal:** The applicant proposes to alter the existing storefront entrance by removing the granite sill and installing aluminum storefront composed of a door, sidelight, and transom.

**Staff recommends denial of the project with conditions.** The *Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* note that

entrances should not be stripped of historic material and details (pg. 71, #8). Staff believes the present arrangement of the entrance is the historic configuration with the granite sill. Staff has not found photographic evidence to indicate an alternate configuration. The applicant is proposing removal of the granite sill to provide an accessible entrance. The *Guidelines* note that changes to provide accessibility to a structure should be designed to minimize the impact on the historic structure, and that while regrading to cover steps is appropriate, original steps should not be removed or eliminated (pg. 79, #3, #6). Staff recommends the applicant consider alternate locations for the accessible entrance or the use of a ramp. In addition to staff's concerns regarding the removal of the sill, staff has concerns that the proportions of the proposed storefront entrance are not consistent with the proportions of the historic doors and transom. Staff recommends denial of the project as submitted as it results in a loss of historic fabric and an inaccurate alteration to a historic entrance.

It is the assessment of staff that, the application is not consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation outlined in Section 30-930.7 (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.