

**5. COA-081843-2020**

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

November 24, 2020

PROPERTY ADDRESS

2204 West Grace Street

DISTRICT

West Grace Street

APPLICANT

A. Al-Saadawi

STAFF CONTACT

C. Jeffries

# Commission of Architectural Review

## STAFF REPORT



**PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

**Alter landscape and hardscape design in front, side, and rear yards.**

**PROJECT DETAILS**

- The applicant requests approval to make site improvements to the front, rear, and side of a two-and-one-half story brick Colonial Revival home in the West Grace Street City Old and Historic District.
- The proposed site improvements include:
  - Replacing existing concrete steps and walkways with brick pavers
  - Replacing a concrete stairway at the rear with new concrete or brick steps
  - Creation of a hardscaped patio on the ground level at the rear
  - Installation of a new trash enclosure
  - New plantings



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-STAFF RECOMMENDATION

### PARTIALLY APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS

**PREVIOUS REVIEWS**

The Commission has not previously reviewed this application. Staff had worked with the adjacent property owner at 2202 West Grace Street, who expressed a desire to make similar changes to their property. This staff report only addresses changes at 2204 West Grace Street.

**STAFF RECOMMENDED CONDITIONS**

- The front steps be repaired or replaced in-kind with new concrete to match the existing.
- The rear stairs be constructed of smooth, undecorated concrete.
- The concrete walkway to the side yard that is visible from the street be replaced in-kind with new plain concrete.
- Any unpainted concrete remain unpainted, and colors be submitted to staff for administrative approval.
- Specifications for the proposed handrail on the rear stairs be submitted for administrative review and approval.
- Final specifications for the trash enclosure be submitted to staff for administrative approval.

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## STAFF ANALYSIS

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Standards for Site Improvements, Sidewalks & Curbs, pg. 76 #7	<i>Sidewalks and curbs should be built of common building materials found throughout the District. Generally, simple paving designs are more compatible with the diverse building styles and better unify the various elements found on streets throughout Old and Historic Districts. The use of more than two paving materials within an area is discouraged.</i>	The applicant is proposing to replace the existing concrete steps and walkway to the side yard with brick pavers. The Guidelines call for simple paving materials and in-kind replacement of deteriorated elements. The Guidelines also recommend replacing damaged elements with materials that match the original in type or with substitute materials that convey the same appearance as surviving elements. Staff finds that the proposed brick pavers do not replicate the existing concrete, and <u>recommends denial of the propose brick paving</u> . Staff further <u>recommends the front stairs and concrete walkway to the side yard that is visible from the street be repaired or replaced in-kind with new undecorated and smooth concrete.</u>
Standards for Rehabilitation, pg. 59 #7	<i>Repair damaged elements instead of replacing them. Use materials that match the original in type, or use physically and chemically compatible substitute materials that convey the same appearance as the surviving elements or sections. Use available documentation when reconstructing missing elements. Pictorial, historical or physical documentation can be helpful.</i>	The applicant proposes to replace the rear stairs, altering the design. While the guidelines recommend against complete replacement, staff is supportive of the change in direction of the rear stairway as this is a minor alteration only visible from the rear of the property. Staff <u>recommends the rear stairway be constructed in-kind with new undecorated and smooth concrete.</u>
Standards for Rehabilitation, pg. 59 #7	<i>Repair damaged elements instead of replacing them. Use materials that match the original in type, or use physically and chemically compatible substitute materials that convey the same appearance as the surviving elements or sections. Use available documentation when reconstructing missing elements. Pictorial, historical or physical documentation can be helpful.</i>	Staff finds that the proposed new patio area at the rear is consistent with the property and the district, and will only be visible from the alley. <u>Staff recommends approval of the rear patio.</u>
Paint, Historic Masonry #1, pg. 63	<i>Do not paint historic brick or stone masonry that has not previously been painted. Painting previously unpainted masonry is historically inaccurate and is not permitted.</i>	The application states that the concrete curbing at the sidewalk will be painted. <u>Staff recommends any unpainted concrete remain unpainted and colors be submitted to staff for administrative approval.</u>
Guidelines for Administrative Approval of Handrails and Porch Railings, #1	<i>Staff may approve up to two metal handrails for any type or location of porch, deck, or stoop as long as the railings are a simple wrought iron design and installed in such a way as to have a minimum impact on historic materials. Such railings shall be painted black, black green, or a color complementary to the primary structure on the property.</i>	As details for the proposed handrail at the rear stairs were not provided, <u>staff recommends specifications for the proposed handrail be submitted for administrative review and approval.</u>
Standards for Site Improvements, Fences & Walls	<i>9. Rear-yard privacy fences should mimic traditional fence designs. 10. Wooden fences should be repaired and painted as needed. Existing picket designs should be matched when replacement is</i>	The plans state that screening will be added to the trash enclosure at the rear. As details were not provided, <u>staff recommends final specifications for the enclosure be submitted to staff for administrative approval.</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. 2204 West Grace Street.*



*Figure 2. Shared walkway between 2202 and 2204 W. Grace Street.*



*Figure 3. 2204 West Grace Street, rear walk and stairs.*



*Figure 4. 2204 West Grace Street, rear parking area.*