



**Staff Report**  
**City of Richmond, Virginia**



**Commission of Architectural Review**

5.COA-161197-2025	Final Review	Meeting Date: 2/25/2025
Applicant/Petitioner	Chris Coiner	
Project Description	Rehabilitate the exterior of an existing building.	
Project Location		
Address: 2211 Venable Street		
Historic District: Union Hill		
<p><b>High-Level Details:</b></p> <p>The applicant proposes to rehabilitate an Italianate single dwelling circa 1876-1888. This 2-story, 3-bay frame dwelling has a raised brick foundation and a replacement porch with iron rails and supports, and a wood deck. The wood porch rests on brick piers.</p> <p>The building has replacement aluminum siding, front porch posts, and vinyl windows.</p> <p>The applicant proposes to replace the vinyl windows in-kind, to replace the non-original aluminum siding with fiber cement siding, and to replace the front porch metal posts and railing with new turned posts and Richmond Rail.</p>		
Staff Recommendation	Approval, with Conditions	
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, alex.dandridge@rva.gov, (804) 646-6569	
Previous Reviews	Staff issued an administrative approval for the reconstruction of a non-original rear deck in January 2025.	
Staff Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The front porch roof be built back to match the previous structure in-kind using the same materials, profiles, dimensions, and pitch. Original brick piers must be retained.</li> <li>• The front porch roof be installed onto the face of the building in the exact location as the original, using the scaring/ghosting on the front of the building as physical evidence of the location.</li> <li>• The new windows have clear glass and be non-reflective.</li> <li>• That the new windows match the existing exactly and fit within the existing window openings proportionately.</li> <li>• The applicant install new turned posts that match the original turned posts seen in the historic photograph or are a simplified design that matches the proportions and dimensions (turned to square portion ratio) of the original posts. Final post design submitted for administrative approval.</li> </ul>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All original doors, windows, trim, transoms, and decorative features be retained and repaired.</li> <li>• If it exists, any salvageable wood siding be relocated to the façade. Documentation of the salvageable siding submitted to staff for review. If there is no original siding left, or it is deteriorated beyond repair, Staff recommends approval of the installation of the Allura fiber cement siding on the façade.</li> <li>• The new front porch decking be installed perpendicular to the face of the building and have a dimension that matches that of historic decking found in the district.</li> <li>• Final exterior colors be submitted for administrative approval.</li> <li>• Any replacement doors on the façade be wood or wood and glass or match the existing in-kind. Specifications submitted for administrative approval.</li> <li>• Any new gutters and downspouts match the existing in-kind or be a simple box gutter with rounded downspouts.</li> </ul>
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## Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
<b>Standards for Rehabilitation, Residential Construction, pg. 59</b>	<p><i>9. Do not remove or radically alter fundamental architectural features such as windows, roofs or porches.</i></p>	<p>The building has lost all its original windows, other than one window at the basement level. The original two-over-two windows have been replaced with one-over-one vinyl windows.</p> <p>When the application was submitted, the front porch on the building was in poor condition; the only original feature being the roof structure itself. The metal posts and railings were not original. Since then, the porch roof and non-original posts and railings have been removed.</p> <p>The applicant proposes to rebuild the porch roof structure in-kind using the same materials that were present upon its removal.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends that the front porch roof be built back to match the previous structure in-kind using the same materials, profiles, dimensions, and pitch. Original brick piers must be retained.</u></p> <p><u>Staff recommends that the porch roof be installed onto the face of the building in the exact location as the original, using the scaring/ghosting on the front of the building as physical evidence of the location.</u></p>
<b>Building Elements, Windows,</b>	<p><i>7. Windows should only be replaced when they are missing or beyond repair. Any reconstruction should be based on physical evidence or photo documentation.</i></p> <p><i>8. The number, location, size or glazing pattern of windows should not be changed by cutting new openings,</i></p>	<p>The applicant proposes to replace the existing one-over-one vinyl windows with new one-over-one vinyl windows to match the existing.</p> <p>Based on photographic documentation, the original windows were wood, two-over-two windows. It is unclear when they were replaced with the existing vinyl windows. On a site visit, staff observed one original window on the façade, basement level under the front porch. Other than</p>

	<p><i>blocking out windows or by installing replacement sash that do not fit the original window. Changes to existing windows or the addition of new windows along a secondary elevation will be considered by the Commission on a case-by-case basis.</i></p> <p><i>9. The architectural character of windows should not be altered by inappropriate materials or finishes that radically change the sash, depth of reveal, muntin configuration, the reflective quality or color of the glazing or the appearance of the frame.</i></p> <p><i>10. The architectural appearance of original windows should be used as a model for new windows. Changes in the sash, depth or reveal, muntin configuration, frame or glazing is strongly discouraged. New glass should not be tinted or receive reflective coatings.</i></p> <p><i>11. Because the material cannot be manufactured to model effectively the appearance of historic windows, vinyl windows are not appropriate for historic buildings in historic districts.</i></p>	<p>this window, all original windows have been removed, likely prior to the district's designation.</p> <p>The guidelines state that vinyl windows are not appropriate for use on historic building within City Old and Historic Districts; however, the Guidelines also speak to the idea of in-kind replacement of materials being appropriate. Staff finds that since the building has lost its original windows and currently has existing vinyl replacement windows, new vinyl windows that match the existing in dimension and style are appropriate, as it would not alter the character of the building any more than what has already occurred.</p> <p>If the Commission doesn't accept the in-kind replacement of vinyl windows, then wood, or aluminum clad wood windows would be acceptable with either a one-over-one light configuration, or a two-over-two light configuration to match the original that are documented in the historic photograph.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends that the new windows have clear glass and be non-reflective. Staff recommends that the new windows match the existing exactly and fit within the existing window openings proportionately.</u></p>
<p><b>Building Elements, Porches, Entrances &amp; Doors, pg. 71</b></p>	<p><i>4. Do not remove or radically change entrances and porches important in defining the building's overall historic character. Front and side porches are architecturally more ornate than utilitarian back porches.</i></p> <p><i>5. The entire porch should only be replaced if it is too deteriorated to repair or is completely missing; replacements should match the original as much as possible.</i></p> <p><i>6. When restoring a railing or balustrade there may be difficulty in maintaining the original height while meeting current building code. Always consult with the building department.</i></p> <p><i>7. When replacing a railing on a historic building which has lost its railing, the first step is to look for documentary evidence which records the appearance of that railing. If no documentary evidence survives, look for physical evidence (this may benefit from the help of a design professional)</i></p>	<p>The applicant proposes to replace the existing non original metal posts and railings with new turned posts and railings. The <i>Guidelines</i> suggest that when replacing original features on a building, the first step is to look for documentary and physical evidence of the original design.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends approval of removing the existing, non-original metal posts and railings.</u></p> <p>The application also suggests that the non-original metal railing will be removed and replaced with a simple wooden Richmond Rail. Richmond Rail is an appropriate design for the building and District.</p>

	<p>6. Retain original entrances and porches including doors, frames, fanlights, sidelights, steps, balustrades, pilasters, entablatures, columns and decorative features.</p> <p>7. 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.</p>	<p>The façade of 2211 Venable Street has been heavily altered. Based on City of Richmond Assessor documentation, the building originally featured two-over-two windows, and a front porch with turned posts, decorative brackets on either side of the posts, and a simple rail.</p> <p>The applicant proposes to remove the metal supports and railings and to replace them with new turned posts. <u>Staff recommends that the applicant install new turned posts that match the original turned posts seen in the historic photograph or are a simplified design that matches the proportions and dimensions (turned to square portion ratio) of the original posts. Final post design submitted for administrative review and approval.</u></p> <p>During the exterior rehabilitation of the building, <u>Staff recommends that all original doors, windows, trim, transoms, and decorative features be retained and repaired.</u></p> <p><u>Staff recommends that any original window trim and sills remain unwrapped by aluminum or vinyl, but rather sealed and painted as necessary.</u></p> <p>The applicant is proposing to install new tongue and groove decking on the front porch. <u>Staff recommends that the new decking be installed perpendicular to the face of the building and have a dimension that matched that of historic decking found in the district.</u></p>
<p><b>Commission of Architectural Review</b></p> <p><b>Guidelines for Administrative Approval of Fiber Cement Siding</b></p>	<p><i>The replacement of wood siding with fiber cement siding may be approved administratively if the following criteria are met:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Smooth, unbeaded fiber cement siding is installed on the secondary elevations only. Textured siding should not be used, including faux wood grain finishes.</i></li> <li>• <i>Secondary elevations have limited visibility from the public right-of-way.</i></li> <li>• <i>A sufficient amount of existing wood siding is salvaged and installed with the historic reveals on the façade, or wood siding is replaced in-kind on the front façade.</i></li> <li>• <i>Reveals of the new siding match the historic reveals.</i></li> <li>• <i>The siding is painted a color or colors found on the Commission's paint palette.</i></li> </ul>	<p>The building is currently clad in aluminum siding. Based on historic documentation, this non-original siding has been on the building since at least the 1950s. The building was originally clad in wood, lap siding.</p> <p>The applicant proposes to remove the non-original siding and to install new Allura, fiber cement siding.</p> <p>It is unknown how much, if any, original wood siding is located beneath the aluminum siding.</p> <p><u>Staff recommends approval of the removal of the aluminum siding on the side and rear elevations.</u></p> <p><u>Staff recommends that, if it exists, any salvageable wood siding be relocated to the façade. Documentation of the salvageable siding submitted to staff for review. If there is no original siding left, or it is deteriorated beyond repair, staff recommends approval of the installation of the Allura fiber cement siding on the façade.</u></p>
<p><b>Commission of Architectural Review</b></p> <p><b>Guidelines for Administrative Approval of</b></p>	<p><i>Only wood or wood and glass doors will be approved on the front of a historic building.</i></p>	<p><u>Staff recommends that any replacement doors on the façade be wood or wood and glass or match the existing in-kind. Specifications submitted for administrative approval.</u></p>

<p><b>Door Replacement</b></p>		
<p><b>Commission of Architectural Review</b></p> <p><b>Guidelines for Administrative Approval of Gutter and Downspout Installation</b></p>	<p><i>The following items are an appropriate treatment for historic buildings and administrative approvals may be granted for gutter and downspout installation as follows:</i></p> <p><i>1. The in-kind replacement of gutters and downspouts. Replacement gutters and downspouts must be consistent with the Guidelines and must appear as an exact match, to include having the same profile as the existing gutters and downspouts and be of a comparable material.</i></p>	<p>Information on gutters was not provided in the application. <u>Staff recommends that any new gutters and downspouts match the existing in-kind or be a simple box gutter with rounded downspouts.</u></p>
<p><b>Commission of Architectural Review</b></p> <p><b>Guidelines for Administrative Approval of Removal of Non-historic Elements</b></p>	<p><i>The purpose of these administrative approval guidelines is to set out the clear circumstances when it would be appropriate to replace elements that are not historic to the building and do not contribute to the character of the Old and Historic District of which they are a part.</i></p>	<p>The applicant proposes to remove the non-original shutters that are not operable or proportionate to the windows. Staff finds their removal to be appropriate.</p>

*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. 2211 Venable Street, 1950s. City Assessor. Original porch posts, railings, and two over two windows in place.



Figure 2. 2211 Venable Street, January 2025.



Figure 3. Original siding under aluminum siding. Poor condition with some rot and many nail punctures.



Figure 4. Original siding under aluminum siding. Poor condition with some rot and many nail punctures.

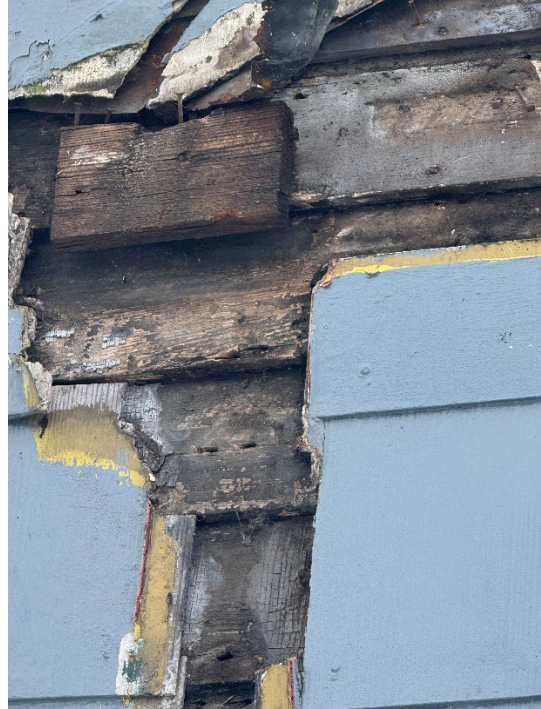


Figure 5. Original siding under aluminum siding. Poor condition with some rot and many nail punctures.

