

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
October 25, 2016 Meeting**

10. CAR No. 16-152 (R. Hopper)

**215 West Clay Street
Jackson Ward Old and Historic District**

Project Description:

Rehabilitate the existing structure to include replacing or infilling with wood panels existing windows and doors.

Staff Contact:

M. Pitts

The applicant requests approval to rehabilitate a commercial structure at the corner of West Clay Street and Brook Road in the Jackson Ward Old and Historic District. Specifically, the applicant proposes the following work:

- Replace all 2nd story windows with 2/2, simulated-divided-lite, aluminum-clad, wood windows. The applicant has stated the windows have deteriorated beyond repair and in many cases are inoperable.
- In-kind repair of the door on the West Clay Street elevation and the corner storefront.
- Infill with wooden panels an existing 6/6 window on the Clay Street elevation and two transom windows on the Brook Road elevation.
- On the Brook Road elevation, replace the existing window with a wooden panel below with a door and side lite and replace an existing door with fixed windows. Additionally, the applicant proposes to replace two other windows on the first story.
- Paint the previously painted brick structure a color from the Commission's palette.

Staff recommends denial of the project. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* state that all original windows should be retained and repaired and should only be replaced when the windows have deteriorated beyond the point of repair (pg. 65, #1, 6, 7). Though there is evidence that some windows are in poor condition, staff does not believe the applicant has provided enough evidence that all of the existing windows have deteriorated beyond repair. As the *Guidelines* emphasize that original windows should be retained and damaged elements should be repaired not replaced (pg. 55, #5, 7), staff cannot recommend approval for the replacement of the windows which are visible from the public right-of-way. The Commission may wish to defer this application to allow the applicant the opportunity to provide a more detailed window survey which thoroughly illustrates the condition of each window.

The *Guidelines* note that windows should not be blocked out (pg. 65, #8), and therefore, staff cannot recommend approval of infilling windows on primary

elevations with wooden panels. The applicant may wish to consider leaving the sashes in place and infilling the windows from the interior.

The *Guidelines* state that changes to existing windows on secondary elevation are to be considered by the Commission on a case-by-case basis. Staff has some concerns about altering the openings on the 1st story of the Brook Road elevation as this is a primary elevation. While the existing door is a replacement door, staff believes the window above is original and therefore should not be replaced; and due to the presence of a granite curb, it appears that there has historically been a door in this opening. Staff recommends the Commission defer the application to have a better understanding of why the change is needed.

As the *Guidelines* note that previously painted brick should be painted the same color as it is currently painted or a natural brick color, staff recommends the applicant provide more information about the proposed paint scheme for Commission review and approval.

It is the assessment of staff that the application is not consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation in Sections 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.