

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW  
STAFF REPORT  
July 28, 2015 Meeting**

11. CAR No. 15-096 (B. Loos)

2601 E. Grace Street  
St. John's Church Old and Historic District

**Project Description:**

**Construct new shed**

**Staff Contact:**

**K. Chen**

The applicant requests approval to construct a prefabricated 8'x16' shed at the rear of the property located in the St. John's Church Old and Historic District. The shed will have a shed roof clad with ribbed metal panels. The walls will be of frame construction with *Duratem* primed 8" OC plywood panels with a rough sawn cedar texture. There will be two, 24" doors in the north elevation facing the house, and vents in the east and west elevations. The shed will be a maximum of 8' in height and slope down to 6' in height. The shed will be painted a gray tone selected from the color palette on page 60 of *The Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines*.

The applicant is seeking final approval for the design. Commission staff reviewed the project through the lens of the "Standards for New Construction: Residential Outbuildings" on page 48 of the *Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* and the resulting comments follow.

The primary building on the site is a two-story brick, Italianate-style dwelling with a shed roof. The rear brick terrace is elevated above the street grade and enclosed by a brick wall approximately 3' tall. At the southeast corner the brick wall is approximately 4' tall. The proposed frame and shed-roofed outbuilding is compatible with the primary building on the site and other outbuildings in the immediate neighborhood. The proposed shed is subordinate to the main residence and located in the southeast corner of the property.

The *Guidelines* discourage the use of prefabricated yard structures but screening (from public view) will be considered as a mitigating factor. To screen the prefabricated shed, the applicant proposes to extend the taller brick wall to the southwest corner of the property and to install vinyl or wood lattice work to the top of the 3' brick wall from the southwest corner to the main building.

Staff finds that overall the shed meets the *Guidelines* for new residential outbuildings and the existing brick walls do much to screen the prefabricated building. The use of vinyl or wood lattice atop the brick wall should be denied and the shed screened with a painted or opaquely stained wood pergola or, as an alternative, planters containing screening vegetation. Staff also recommends that the shed be located as close to the southeast property line as allowed.

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**Staff recommends approval of the project with the condition that the shed be screened by a pergola or planters containing screening vegetation that meets the *Guidelines*.** It is the assessment of staff that with the applicant's acceptance of the above condition the application is consistent with the Standards for New Construction outlined in Section 114.930.7(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 code.