

Commission of Architectural Review

2. COA-179900-2026	Final Review	Meeting Date: 2/24/2026
Applicant/Petitioner	Cynthia Devereaux	
Project Description	Replace existing front patio and walkway	
Project Location		
Address: 2417 East Grace Street		
Historic District: St. John's Church		
<p>High-Level Details:</p> <p>The applicant requests approval to install a new front yard patio and walk way in front of a brick, Italianate Style building circa 1870s.</p> <p>The new patio will be constructed of a mix of brick and granite and be enclosed by a wrought iron fence.</p> <p>The site is currently unimproved.</p>		
Staff Recommendation	Approval, with Conditions	
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, Alex.Dandridge@RVA.gov, (804)646-6569	
Previous Reviews	None.	
Staff Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Granite caps not be installed on the front yard retaining wall. 	

Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
Standards for Site Improvements, Landscaping – continued, pg. 77.	<p>10. For existing buildings, the development of front yard landscaped areas, where such elements did not exist historically, are discouraged.</p> <p>11. In instances where physical or documentary evidence does not exist, the proposed front yard landscaped area should be compatible in design, materials, and location, and should look to precedent on the block face or the block face opposite, or within the district, but not outside the district. By following this guidance, in some</p>	<p>While the <i>Guidelines</i> discourage the overdevelopment of front yards with hardscaping, under certain circumstances, they may be authorized.</p> <p>Historic documentation does not exist that indicates the front yard of 2417 E Grace Street ever featured a front patio; however, the applicant has designed the patio with materials that are sensitive to historic materials found within the district.</p> <p>The patio will be constructed to have red brick boarder which will surround an interior paving of randomly sized granite slabs.</p> <p>The existing brick wall will be capped in granite.</p>

	<p>circumstances, permission for new front yard seating areas may be granted. Suitable design, materials, and location will vary by district. In any event, the nonhistorical over-development of front yards should be avoided.</p>	<p>Granite and brick are historic materials found in the district.</p> <p>Photographs from the 1950s show that the front sidewalk and retaining wall at 2417 and 2419 East Grace Street were originally concrete. CAR records indicate that in 1978, the concrete sidewalk and retaining wall at 2417 were approved for replacement with brick to match 2419. It is unclear when the concrete at 2419 was replaced with brick.</p> <p>The 1978 CAR approval also included brick paving for the front yard at 2417; however, no images were found, and existing conditions do not show brick paving, suggesting the work may not have been completed.</p>
<p>Site Improvements, Fences & Walls, pg. 51</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Fence, wall, and gate designs should reflect the scale of the historic structures they surround, as well as the character of nearby fences, walls, and gates. 2. Fence, wall, or gate materials should relate to building materials commonly found in the neighborhood. 	<p>The applicant is proposing to install a black wrought iron fence around the new front patio. Iron fences are common site features in the district.</p> <p>The applicant is proposing to install a flat granite cap on top of the existing brick retaining wall that will surround the proposed patio.</p> <p>The <i>Guidelines</i> state that walls and fences should reflect district precedent. While the newer wall along the east side of St. John’s Church across East Grace Street features brick with a granite cap, the other low retaining walls on the subject block consist on one material (Brick or concrete). To respect the materiality of the other low front yard retaining walls, and to not detract from the existing granite sills and lintels of the existing building, <u>staff recommends that the granite caps not be installed on the front yard retaining wall.</u></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 (next page)



Figure 1. 2419 East Grace 1950s. Concrete sidewalk and curb.



Figure 2. 2417 East Grace 1950s. Sidewalk and curb obscured, but record indicate that it matched 2419 East Grace in materiality at this time.

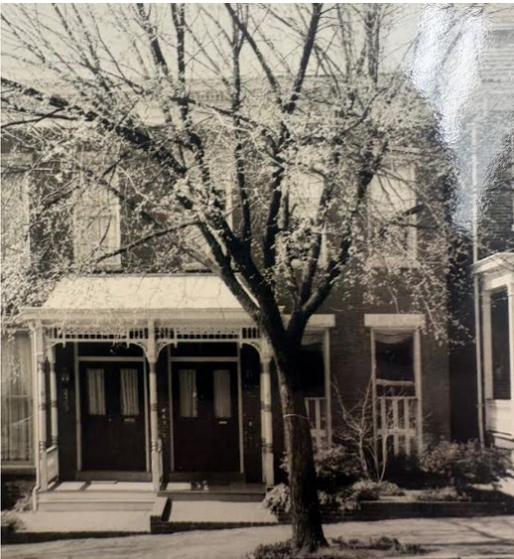


Figure 3. 2417-2419 East Grace, late 1970s. Concrete retaining wall and sidewalks have been replaced with brick.



Figure 4. Existing conditions of front yard. February 2026



Figure 5. Block context. Examples of brick and concrete. February 2026.