

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
April 24, 2018, Meeting**

5. **COA-033435-2018** (Second Presbyterian Church) **5-9 North 5th Street**
Second Presbyterian Church Old and Historic District

Project Description: **Enlarge an existing glass atrium.**

Staff Contact: **M. Pitts**

Description of Existing Structure: The existing structure at 9 North 5th Street is Second Presbyterian Church, the first Gothic style church to be built in the City. The Church was designed by Minard Lafever and was completed in 1848. The masonry structure is defined by a square tower, pinnacles on each corner, and stained glass lancet windows. In 1873, the church was enlarged by the addition of a one-hundred foot long north-south transept. The Church is an individually listed City Old and Historic District. The building at 5 North 5th Street which is at the corner of East Main and North 5th Streets is 5-story Renaissance-style office building constructed ca 1906 and is not located within a City Old and Historic District. In 1987, a glass atrium was built to connect the office building to the church structure.



5-9 North 5th Street (April 2018)

Proposal: The applicant proposes to modify the existing glass atrium to increase the area by 88 square feet. The applicant proposes to reconfigure the curtain

wall to attach to the front corner of the church. A glass awning will be installed above the new door. The existing non-historic fountain will be relocated.

Staff recommends approval of the project with conditions. The *Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* note that additions should not obscure or destroy original architectural elements (pg. 47, Materials & Colors #1). Staff has concerns that the proposed modifications will obscure the view of the corner of historic structure. It appears the existing atrium was intentionally designed to preserve the view of the corner.



Existing Glass Atrium and Church Corner (April 2018)

Staff also has concerns about how the curtain wall will be attached to the historic material. The proposed addition does meet the Commission's guidelines in regards to scale and will be constructed of materials consistent with the existing additions. Staff recommends approval of the proposed addition with the following conditions: the proposed curtain wall engage with the church on the south elevation past the corner in a manner to be administratively reviewed and approved by staff to allow the corner to continue to be visible; and details of how the curtain wall will attach to the historic fabric be submitted for administrative review and approval.

It is the assessment of staff that, with these conditions, the application is consistent with the Standards for New Construction outlined in Section 30-930.7 (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 the code.