

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
January 26, 2016 Meeting**

8. **CAR No. 16-006** (C. Dossier)

**725 North 24th Street
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

Project Description: **Painting previously painted masonry blue.**

Staff Contact: **M. Pitts**

The applicant requests approval to paint the brick piers and masonry foundation of the English basement of a Greek Revival home in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. The applicant previously came before the Commission on November 24, 2015, as the result of enforcement activity as the elements of the front façade included the brick piers and foundation were painted a bright blue color without obtaining a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Commission. In November, the Commission approved the application with the following conditions that all masonry was to be painted a red brick color to be reviewed and administratively approved by staff and that the applicant work with staff to determine a blue color from the Commission's paint palette or a color from the Commission's paint palette which is appropriate for Greek Revival style structures to paint the top and bottom porch railing, the porch decking, the front door, and the stair treads. The applicant has not determined which color to paint the wooden elements of the front façade but has expressed interest in the blue colors which are on the Commission's paint palette.

Though the Commission approved the repainting of the masonry elements a red brick color, the applicant informed staff that he would like to paint these elements a color that would contrast with red brick walkway located in the rear of the home. The applicant is proposing to paint the piers and foundation a blue color from the Commission's paint palette which would either be Naval, Needlepoint Navy, or Bunglehouse Blue. The masonry elements are proposed to be painted the same color as the porch railing, decking, and doors. Staff has advised the applicant that the proposed colors do not meet the conditional approval granted by the Commission and require the application which is currently before the Commission.

Staff recommends denial of the project. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* state when painting previously painted masonry the colors of natural brick are strongly encouraged and are preferred over less appropriate colors such as blue (pg. 59). For this reason, staff recommends denial of the painting of brick piers and masonry foundation any blue color. The applicant has supplied images of other homes in the area with masonry painted blue, though no addresses have been provided. Of the homes which staff can identify (700 N. 27th Street and 2017 Venable Street), staff believes that they were painted blue prior to the establishment of the historic districts and may have been permitted to be repainted the same color as is

authorized by the guidelines. Staff recommends the applicant abate the violation by painting the masonry elements a red brick color or the brown color of which they were previously painted as was authorized by the previous approval.

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