

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

8. **CAR No. 16-049** (L. Torbert)

**1635 Monument Avenue
Monument Avenue Old and Historic District**

Project Description: **Modify an existing masonry opening
to convert a door opening to a window opening.**

Staff Contact: **M. Pitts**

The applicant requests approval to convert an existing secondary door opening on a recessed portion of the front façade of a home in the Monument Avenue Old and Historic District to a window opening and remove the portico associated with this door opening. The applicant proposes to remove the existing door and partially infill the opening with brick and mortar to match the existing brick and mortar. The new opening will accommodate a 6/6 wood window which will match the window on the second floor. Additionally, the sill and jack arch with keystone will match that of the window above. The applicant is proposing to remove the columns and porch roof at this secondary entrance and allow the existing stairs and landing to remain. The proposed change to this opening is to accommodate an interior renovation which includes elevating the floor in the subject area by 21" and placing a kitchen counter below the proposed window opening.

Staff recommends denial of the project. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* note that existing entrances and porches should not be removed when an historic structure has been reoriented to accommodate a new use (pg. 67, #9). Staff has located the original building permit drawings for this ca. 1925 building. The structure was built as the home and office of Dr. D. Meade Mann, and the subject entrance with the current portico was the entrance to the office portion of the structure. As this entrance and porch are original to the structure, staff cannot support the removal of these features. Additionally, the Guidelines note that original masonry openings especially on primary facades should be retained (pg. 65 #5, #8); and therefore staff cannot support the altering of the masonry opening to accommodate a window. Staff recommends the applicant consider installing a single lite door as is shown in the historic building elevation or a solid wood door in the fixed position to accommodate the desired internal renovations.

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.