

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
June 23, 2015 Meeting**

1. **CAR No. 15-075** (J. & B. Whitworth) **2815 East Grace Street
St. John's Church Old and Historic District**

Project Description: **Replace stainless steel roof
on front elevation with a copper roof**

Staff Contact: **M. Pitts**

The applicant requests approval to install a standing seam copper roof on the front elevation of a home in the St. John's Church Old and Historic District. The home is an 1853 gable-roofed Greek Revival brick structure with a standing seam stainless steel roof. At the time of staff's site visit, the roof from the front of the ridge line forward had been replaced with a standing seam copper roof as proposed by this application. The applicant states that the stainless steel roof needed to be replaced as it was leaking and attempts to repair the roof including replacing a portion of the roof which is not visible from the right of way were not successful in addressing the leak.

Staff recommends approval of the project. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* state that "deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced" (pg. 5, #6). The applicant attempted to address the leaking roof through repairs, but the repairs were unsuccessful in resolving the issues with the roof. The *Guidelines* state that if in-kind materials cannot be found or are impractical, substitute materials can be used (pg. 57) and that substitute materials should match the original style and form as much as possible (pg. 62, #3). Due to the limited availability of stainless steel roofs, the applicant is proposing to use copper as a substitute metal material. The standing seam copper roof has the same visual appearance as the historic stainless steel roof. Over time, the copper roof will develop a green patina which would resemble the historic grey roof color more closely. Staff recommends approval of this project as the historic roof was failing, and the proposed roof closely matches the visually appearance of the historic roof.

It is the assessment of staff that the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation in Section 114-930.7(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.