

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
May 24, 2016 Meeting**

3. **CAR No. 16-085** (M. Fields)

**2007 Venable Street
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

Project Description: **Install an awning over business door.**

Staff Contact: **M. Pitts**

The applicant requests approval to install a stationary dome awning over the business entrance at the front of a building in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. The proposed awning will be 57" wide, project 36" from the front façade, and will be 7'-6" from the sidewalk. The applicant proposes a weather resistant canvas material in brown. The proposed awning will have a fixed valance with the word "CLEANERS" written in white 5" standard font on the front of the awning and the phone number for the business in 3" font on both sides of the awning. Staff has advised the applicant that an encroachment application may be necessary to obtain prior to the installation of the proposed awning.

Staff recommends approval of the project. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* note that use of awnings on commercial structures should enhance the individual building on which such coverings are placed as well as the image of the surrounding area and that awnings can protect the pedestrian from inclement weather as is proposed with this awning (pg. 68). Specifically, the Guidelines note that the awning valance should be no lower than 7 feet above the sidewalk; metal, plastic or overly ornate fabric awnings should be avoided; and the choice of colors should coordinate with the overall color scheme (pg. 68, #3, 5, 7). The proposed awning meets these standards as the awning is a brown fabric awning which coordinates with the color of the painted detail work and is located 7 ½ feet above the sidewalk. Though the *Guidelines* do not address the appropriate shape for awnings, the Commission may wish to consider if a simple shed awning with a free hanging valance as is characteristic of historic awnings may be more appropriate than the proposed dome awning. As the proposed awnings meets the standards for awnings in the Guidelines, staff recommends approval of the proposed dome awning.

It is the assessment of staff that the application is 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.