

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
October 25, 2016 Meeting**

8. **CAR No. 16-150** (H. Jackson)

**705 North 23rd Street
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

Project Description: **Rehabilitate the existing structure to include painting and replacement of all windows.**

Staff Contact: **M. Pitts**

The applicant requests approval to rehabilitate a Greek Revival cottage in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. Historic Richmond Foundation holds an exterior preservation easement on this property that requires the owner to receive prior written consent from the Foundation for any changes made to the exterior of the property. The applicant has been in consultation with staff regarding the proposed project.

Specifically, the applicant is requesting the following:

- **Porch Rehabilitation:** The applicant is proposing in-kind repair and replacement with the exception of the use of composite decking material and the replacement of the lattice beneath the porch with wooden panels.
- **Painting:** The applicant proposes to paint the previously painted brick white, the front door bright coral, the porch ceiling light blue, and the body of the structure Classic French Gray.
- **Picket Fence:** The applicant proposes to remove the existing wooden picket fence.
- **Windows:** The applicant proposes to replace all 11 windows with 1/1 windows. The applicant's preference is to install vinyl replacement windows.

Staff recommends partial approval of the project with conditions.

Porch Rehabilitation: The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* states that synthetic tongue-and-groove porch flooring may be a reasonable alternative to the use of wood tongue-and-groove decking (pg. 57). The *Guidelines* also notes that if in-kind materials are impractical, then substitute materials may be used (pg. 57). Staff recommends approval of the proposed composite decking, understanding that modern wood decking is much less durable than the first-growth timber that was historically used for porch flooring, with the condition that the decking be tongue and groove in a profile to match the existing wood decking.

Staff has concerns with the replacement of the lattice below the porch with solid wood panels as that is not a form typically found in the district as historically the area under the porch was left open. Staff recommends denial of the installation

of the wood panels and recommends the applicant repair, replace in-kind, or remove the existing lattice panels.

Painting: The *Guidelines* note that previously painted masonry should be painted the colors of natural brick and not less appropriate colors including white (pg. 59, Masonry #3). For this reason, staff recommends denial of painting the masonry foundation white.

As the *Guidelines* note that gray is an appropriate color for Greek Revival structures (pg. 58), staff recommends approval of the proposed body color. Additionally, the proposed porch ceiling color is characteristic of porch ceilings in the district, and therefore staff recommends approval. As the bright coral color is not a color found on the Commission's palette, staff recommends denial of this paint color and recommends the applicant chose a pink color found on the paint palette if the desire is to have a pink door.

Picket Fence: The *Guidelines* note that original fences should be retained and maintained whenever possible (pg. 74, #1). Staff finds that picket fences at the front of Greek Revival structures such as this are character defining features of properties in the district. For these reasons, staff believes the picket fence should not be removed and should be repaired or replaced in-kind.

Windows: The *Guidelines* state that all original windows should be retained and repaired and should only be replaced when the windows have deteriorated beyond the point of repair (pg. 65, #1, 6, 7). Staff believes that the applicant has provided evidence that the three ground floor windows on the northeast elevation are deteriorated beyond the point of repair as the windows appear to have been destroyed from the interior by an animal. Staff does not believe the applicant has provided adequate evidence that the other eight windows have deteriorated beyond the point of repair. Though the windows are likely not the original windows, staff finds the existing windows are characteristic of the historic windows which would have been found on the home. For this reason staff recommends approval of the in-kind replacement of the three windows on the ground floor of the northeast elevation to match the existing windows in material and form to include being wood, true-divided-lite, 6/6 windows. Staff recommends denial of the replacement of the remaining windows and encourages the applicant to consider installing new storm windows if the concern is energy efficiency.

It is the assessment of staff that the application, with the noted conditions, is partially consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation in Sections 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.