

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
November 22, 2016, Meeting**

12. **CAR No. 16-168** (K. Blowe)

**811 ½ North 24th Street
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

Project Description: **Rehabilitate a home with fire damage by installing of fiber cement siding, new windows, and porch details.**

Staff Contact: **K. Chen**

The applicant requests approval to rehabilitate a residential structure in the Union Hill North Old and Historic District that was damaged by a fire in August of 2015. The Victorian structure is a 2-story, 2-bay frame portion of a double-house.

The applicant is proposing the following changes to structure:

- The siding on the façade and north elevation were damaged in the fire. The applicant proposes to remove all existing siding and install HardiePlank smooth siding.
- All missing and existing windows are to be replaced with new, 2/2 aluminum-clad wood windows to fit the historic openings. The applicant proposes to modify the fenestration pattern on the rear of the building. In the narrow off-set at the rear, the 2nd story window will be centered and the door on the 1st story will be replaced with a similar window aligned with the window above. On the main portion of the rear elevation a window on the 1st story will be converted to a door and aligned below the window on the 2nd story.
- The porch was substantially damaged in the fire and has been subsequently removed. The applicant proposes to reconstruct the front porch to match existing photographic and physical evidence.

Staff recommends approval of the project with conditions.

Siding: The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* note that fiber cement siding is a product with limited applications which includes being used on secondary elevations with limited visibility from the public right of way (pg. 56). Staff supports the installation of fiber cement siding on all elevations with the condition that the siding be installed with a reveal consistent with the historic reveal, and be smooth and unbeaded. As colors were not provided, staff recommends paint colors be provided to staff for administrative review and approval.

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 adequate

evidence has been presented that the windows have been damaged beyond the point of repair or are missing all together. The 4/4 windows on the rear of the building are vinyl replacement windows. Staff recommends approval of the replacement of the missing and deteriorated windows.

Door: The *Guidelines* note that when reconstructing missing elements, available pictorial, historical, or physical documentation should be used (pg. 55, #7). The ca. 2001, National Register inventory photograph suggests that the front door was a solid four-panel wood door. Staff recommends approval of this element if it is based on the photographic documentation rather than the door depicted in the application.

Porches: The *Guidelines* note that porches should not be removed or radically changed (pg. 67, #4). The porch was removed because of the extensive damage caused by the fire. The ca. 2001, National Register inventory photograph gives photographic evidence of many of the historic elements of the porch. Staff recommends that a drawing depicting the proposed reconstruction of the front porch's illustrative decorative elements to be reproduced be provided to staff for administrative review and approval.

It is the assessment of staff that, with the conditions above, the application is partially consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation outlined 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 page cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.