

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW  
STAFF REPORT  
April 25, 2017, Meeting**

7. **COA-015043-2017** (S. Tuttle)

**2320 Venable Street  
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

**Project Description:**

**Construct a two story addition  
on the rear of an existing building.**

**Staff Contact:**

**M. Pitts**

The applicant requests approval to rehabilitate a single family residential structure in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. The existing structure is a 2-story Italianate brick home with an English basement. The applicant is proposing to rehabilitate the façade of the home by restoring the windows and doors and reconstructing the demolished front porch per the Commission's May 26, 2017, conditional approval. In addition to restoring the existing structure, the applicant is proposing to construct a small 3 story addition and a 2<sup>nd</sup> floor deck at the rear of the home. The addition will project 6 feet from the existing structure and will be set in from the existing building walls. On the ground floor which aligns with the existing basement level, the applicant is proposing a small room to be clad in stucco. On the first story the applicant is proposing to clad the structure in fiber cement lap siding. On the second story, the applicant is proposing a small balcony to be accessed from the existing structure by a new door and to clad the enclosed section of the addition in fiber cement board and batten siding. The applicant is proposing to install ranked aluminum clad wood 1/1 windows and full lite doors in the addition and the existing openings at the rear of the structure. The proposed deck will be at the same height as the existing rear deck and will project 9 feet into the rear yard from the proposed addition. The deck will be constructed of pressure treated decking. All proposed railings will have metal pickets and bottom rails and a wood top rail.

**Staff recommends approval of the project with conditions.**

**Rehabilitation of the Historic Structure:** The proposed rehabilitation is in general in keeping with the Standards for Rehabilitation found on page 55 of the *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines*. The applicant is maintaining the historic fabric and restoring the missing elements on the façade including the demolished porch. At the rear of the historic structure, the applicant is modifying a window opening to accommodate a door on the second story. The Guidelines note that changes to existing windows along a secondary elevation will be considered by the Commission on a case-by-case basis (pg. 65 #8). As the proposed modification is at the rear of the structure and maintains the width of the historic window opening, staff supports this modification. At the rear of the historic section, the applicant is proposes to install new windows, and staff does not know if any historic windows remain. Staff recommends the applicant restore any existing windows in the openings

that will remain visible at the rear of the structure. If no historic windows remain, staff supports the use of the simple 1/1 aluminum clad wood windows as they are compatible with the windows in the district.

**Addition:** The Guidelines note that an addition should be subordinate to the size of the main structure and as inconspicuous as possible (pg. 44, Siting #1). The proposed addition is small in scale as it minimally projects from the rear of the existing structure and located at the rear of the property. The Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation found on pages 5 and 6 of the Guidelines note that new additions should be differentiated from the old, and the proposed addition achieves this by being setback from walls of the original section and the use of alternate building materials. As a dimensioned setback was not provided, staff recommends that this detail be provided and that the setback be a minimum of 6" to clearly delineate the addition from the historic structure. Though the proposed building materials successfully differentiate the new construction from the historic brick structure, the use of three different materials to clad one elevation is not a building form typically found in the historic district. Staff supports the use of stucco for the ground level as it is found in neighboring buildings and distinguishes the basement level. Staff recommends a single building material be used to clad the upper two stories in a manner to be reviewed and administratively approved by staff. As paint colors and lighting details have not been provided, staff recommends these details be provided for administrative review and approval.

**Deck:** The proposed deck is consistent with the Deck Guidelines found on page 48 of the Guidelines. Staff recommends that the deck be painted or opaquely stained a neutral color that complements one of more of the colors found on the main structure to be reviewed and administratively approved by staff. As dimensioned details of the railings were not provided, staff recommends these details be provided for administrative review and approval.

It is the assessment of staff that, with the conditions above, the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation and New Construction outlined in Sections 30-930.7(b) and (c) 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.