

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
October 24, 2017, Meeting**

7. **COA-024477-2017** (M. Daniel) **2037 West Grace Street
West Grace Street Old and Historic District**

Project Description: **Replace front walk, install
planters and retaining wall.**

Staff Contact: **C. Jeffries**

The applicant requests approval to modify the front yard of a Colonial Revival brick rowhouse built ca. 1910 in the West Grace Street City Old and Historic District. The applicant proposes the following work:

- Replace the existing concrete walkway to both the front door and the side gate with brick pavers in a herringbone pattern.
- Install an 18" high brick planter box along the front walkway. The planter box will have rounded bricks along the top edge.
- Replace the existing concrete curbing enclosing the front yard with an 18" high brick wall.

Staff recommends denial of the project. *The Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* recommend retaining original features and materials and repairing damaged elements instead of replacing them (pg. 57, #1, 7). Concrete is a common paving material found throughout the district, and the existing concrete is likely original. Removing the concrete and introducing additional brick elements would significantly alter the front yard of the home and contribute to a loss of historic fabric. Staff recommends the concrete walkways and curbing be repaired or replaced in-kind and a nonpermanent planter be used if the applicant wishes to increase greenspace in the front yard.

It is the assessment of staff that the application is not consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation outlined 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 page cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.