

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
April 28, 2015 Meeting**

1. **CAR No. 15-047** (TDH Properties, LLC) **104 North 19th Street**
Shockoe Valley Old and Historic District

Project Description: **Construct new rooftop deck and access structure**

Staff Contact: **M. Pitts**

The applicant requests approval to construct an approximately 220 square foot rooftop deck and the associated access structure on a commercial structure in the Shockoe Valley Old and Historic District. The proposed deck railing will consist of a four foot tall glass guard with 3/8" clear tempered glass, a 1/2" by 1 1/2" metal top bar, and 1 1/2" by 1 1/2" by 3/16" metal pickets with a four foot separation. The proposed access structure will not be visible from the public right of way and will consist of a 66" by 66" aluminum double leaf roof hatch and a wood landing.

Staff recommends approval of the project. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* states that "when rooftop railings are required for seating areas or for safe access to mechanical equipment, the railings should be as unobtrusive as possible, in order to minimize their appearance and visual impact on the surrounding district" (pg. 45). The applicant is proposing to set back the deck railing from the roof edge which minimizes the visibility of the structure. In addition, the proposed predominantly glass railing offers minimal visual interference even where there is no existing parapet wall to block view of the structure. The *Guidelines* on page 5 also include the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation which state that "new work shall be differentiated from the old...to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment." Staff recommends approval of the proposed glass and metal railing as it is clearly differentiated in its modern aesthetic from the historic Gothic Revival structure and provides minimal visual impact.

It is the assessment of staff that the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation in Section 114-930.7(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.