## COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW STAFF REPORT July 26, 2016 Meeting

**2. CAR No. 16-116** (J. Salaam)

2300 Venable Street Union Hill Old and Historic District

Project Description: Install fiber cement siding on the east elevation.

Staff Contact: M. Pitts

The applicant requests approval to install fiber cement siding on the east elevation of an existing Colonial Revival commercial structure in the Union Hill Old and Historic District.

In the spring of 2014, the owner received approval to replace all existing T1-11 vertical siding in-kind. T1-11 existed on all elevations of the building except for the east elevation. This elevation was clad in asbestos lapboard siding with the original wood lapboard siding beneath. Work was done beyond what was approved which included the replacement of the asbestos and wood lapboard siding with T1-11 siding, as well as the removal and reconstruction of the storefront cornice. After the owner was cited for these violations, the storefront cornice was rebuilt to a dimension more similar to that of the historic cornice, but lacking the details found on the original cornice.

The applicant came before the Commission on January 27, 2015 for the replication of the historic cornice on the storefront and the replacement of the wood siding. The Commission deferred the application to provide the applicant with the opportunity to provide an architectural drawing of the proposed storefront cornice and specific material and reveal dimension for the siding. The applicant submitted an architectural drawing of the proposed cornice and details of the siding for staff review in October of 2015. Staff determined the proposed cornice and wood siding qualified as in-kind replacement, and therefore the work was administratively approved.

This application is before the Commission as the applicant wishes to install fiber cement siding rather than the approved wood siding. The approved wood siding was 5/16" in thickness and 8.25 inch width installed with 7" exposure. The proposed fiber cement siding is to be 5/16" in thickness and 8.25 inch width installed with 7" exposure.

Staff recommends approval of the project with conditions. 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). Though the eastern elevation is visible due to the adjacent vacant lot, the elevation is a secondary elevation. Staff supports the installation of the fiber cement siding with the following conditions: the siding be smooth and unbeaded and the proposed paint color be submitted to staff for administrative review and

<u>approval.</u> Staff notes that in order for all the violations at the property to be abated the applicant must install the siding and restore cornice as approved.

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