

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW  
STAFF REPORT  
June 23, 2015 Meeting**

5. **CAR No. 15-072** (S. Simon)

**605 N. 21<sup>st</sup> Street  
Union Hill Old & Historic District**

**Project Description:**

**Replacement of windows and  
construction of new shed**

**Staff Contact:**

**W. Palmquist**

The applicant requests approval for the replacement of windows and the construction of a shed in the rear yard of this property in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. This application is the result of enforcement activity. Other components of the application, including painting and the installation of a privacy fence were administratively approved.

The applicant states that the previous windows were in poor condition and not original to the house. She states that the replacement windows, which are vinyl, were chosen as a high-quality, in-kind replacement.

The applicant is also seeking approval for a 10'x16' utility shed which is located in the rear of the property behind a privacy fence. The shed has off-white colored siding, a gray, metal roof, and double-doors which open to the interior of the lot. The shed is relatively simple with no windows or adornments, with the exception of a "G" stenciled letter near the shed's peak.

**Staff recommends approval of the project.** *The Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* state that, "Windows should only be replaced when they are missing or beyond repair. Any reconstruction should be based on physical evidence or photo documentation," and that, "Because the material cannot be manufactured to model effectively the appearance of historic windows, vinyl windows are not appropriate for historic buildings in historic districts" (p. 65 #7 & 11). Typically, staff would not recommend the installation of vinyl windows on an historic structure. However, given the fact that the previous windows were not original to the property and were vinyl themselves, coupled with the replacement windows having no grids similar to the previous windows, staff views the work as more-or-less an in-kind replacement which resulted in no loss of historic value or character.

In regards to the installed utility shed, the *Guidelines* note that outbuildings such as sheds or garages should be compatible with the main building on the site in terms of roof slope and materials and be located to the rear and/or side of the property to emphasize their character as secondary structures (p. 49). The Guidelines also state that while prefabricated yard structures are discouraged, the presence of screening will be considered as a mitigating factor in their approval (p. 49). The installed shed appears to be consistent with the *Guidelines* in terms of its design, siting, and visibility. The shed has a peaked, metal roof

similar to that of the main structure, is located at the rear of the property, and is partially screened with an existing privacy fence.

It is the assessment of staff that the application is consistent with the Standards for New Construction and the Standards for Rehabilitation outlined in Sections 114-930.7(b)(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.