

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
May 26, 2015 Meeting**

17. **CAR No. 15-069** (J. Ukrop)

**201 W. Broad Street
Broad Street Old and Historic District**

Project Description: **Alterations to previously approved plans to include new door design, changes to the rooftop elements and the installation of a blade sign**

Staff Contact:

M. Pitts

The applicant requests permission to alter previously approved plans for the renovation of the buildings located at 201-207 West Broad Street in the Broad Street Old and Historic District. At the Commission's meeting on June 24, 2014, the Commission approved plans for the redevelopment of 201 and 207 W. Broad Street as the Quirk Hotel and Quirk Gallery. The applicant proposes to change the approved plans for the work at the large, Italian Renaissance Revival-style building at the corner of Broad and Jefferson Streets (201 W. Broad Street) by scaling down the proposed mechanical equipment, glass rail for the rooftop bar and glass storefront at the penthouse addition and by installing a new lighted blade sign. The change to the previously approved plans for the smaller, adjacent building at 207 W. Broad is the storefront door will now be constructed of wood rather than the previously approved all glass door.

Staff recommends approval of the project with a condition.

Rooftop Addition:

The Standards for New Construction outlined on pages 44 of the *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guideline* note that new additions should be subordinate in size to the main structure and as inconspicuous as possible. The applicant proposes to reduce the footprint and height of the rooftop addition while using the same materials previously approved by the Commission. By reducing the footprint the proposed rooftop addition, the structure is less visible, and the visual impact to the historic structure is reduced. As the proposed alterations are in substantial conformance with the approved plans and reduce the visual impact of the proposed rooftop addition, staff recommends approval of these changes.

Signage

The previous plans were approved with the condition that the applicant must return to the Commission for review and approval of the exterior signage. The applicant is proposing to install a projecting wall sign with the name of the hotel on it at the corner of W. Broad Street and N. Jefferson Street. The Guidelines state that signs should be located in traditional sign placement areas such as the cornice, sign-band, transom or window display (pg. 71). The building does not have a conventional signboard location, therefore the applicant opted to propose

a blade sign. The proposed sign type is appropriate for the district as blade signs are historically used along the Broad Street commercial corridor. The applicant has differentiated the proposed sign from historic signs in the District through the use of a Roycroft Rose background color which was not typical for historic signs. The *Guidelines* state that a projecting wall sign should be mounted at least 8 feet above the sidewalk, should project from the building façade no more than 4 feet and should not obscure the storefront display area (pg. 70). The applicant proposes to mount the sign approximated 15 feet above the sidewalk, and the sign will project 4 feet from the corner of the building. The applicant has presented two options for how the sign could be lighted. The *Guidelines* state that signs should not be internally illuminated (pg. 71), and the applicant is conforming to this requirement as both options for lighting involve the external illumination of the lettering with either red neon lighting or white marquee lights. Staff recommends approval of the sign with either lighting scheme as the sign is easy to read and is an appropriate sign type for the historic district.

Entrance Door

As part of the previous approval, the Commission approved the installation of a new glass storefront at 207 West Broad Street with a glass door. The applicant is currently proposing to replace the glass door with a solid wood door. The proposed door will be made of oak with a gray stain with the boards running horizontal. The applicant revised the door design as they would like to differentiate the gallery entrance from the hotel entrance through the use of different materials. The *Guidelines* state that exterior alterations should be differentiated from the old and compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and the district (pg. 5, #9). Along Broad Street, one can find examples of storefronts with recessed wooden doors though these doors are typically single lite or 6 panel doors. Though the proposed door is wooden, it is clearly a contemporary installation as is apparent through its horizontal design. Additionally, the horizontal design acknowledges the horizontal elements of the historic storefront. Staff recommends approval for the proposed change in materials of this storefront door.

It is the assessment of staff that the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation and New Construction outlined in Section 114-930.7(b) and (c) of the City Code, as well as with the *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines*, specifically the pages cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code. Staff recommends that any additional changes requested by the Department of Historic Resources or the National Park Service for tax credit purposes be deferred to Commission staff for final review and approval.