



Commission of Architectural Review

7.COA-132790-2023	Final Review	Meeting Date: 7/25/2023
Applicant/Petitioner	JP DiMarco	
Project Description	Remove a deteriorated front porch; reconstruct to match using substitute materials.	
Project Location		
Address: 2210 Jefferson Avenue		
Historic District: Union Hill		
<p>High-Level Details:</p> <p>Applicant proposes to remove deteriorated portions of a semi-original front porch on a detached, frame, heavily altered Italianate dwelling ca. 1895.</p> <p>The porch decking, railings, and square posts are not original to the building; however the porch cornice and roof do appear to be original. The Union Hill National Register Nomination Form describes the building as having a, “one-story, 2-bay porch” that, “has sawn brackets and a circle motif in the frieze.</p> <p>The applicant will replace existing wooden square posts with new pressure treated square posts clad in a PVC wrap. Railings will be replaced with composite wood railings of a similar design, and the decking will be replaced with composite wood decking boards.</p> <p>Existing metal roof will be removed and replaced with a similar design and material.</p>		
Staff Recommendation	Approval, with Conditions	
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, alex.dandridge@rva.gov , (804) 646-6569	

Previous Reviews	None.
Conditions for Approval	<p>Staff Recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new metal roof be flat-lock and be painted a color found on the Commission's approved color pallet; final materials and color submitted for administrative review and approval. • The original roof structure be retained and its form not be altered. • Composite decking boards be installed perpendicular to the face of the building. • A composite front porch rail be used that does not feature bulky connectors. Staff recommends that the applicant work with staff on choosing an appropriate substitute rail material and design.

Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
Roofs, Roof Replacement/ Reconstruction, pg. 66	<i>5. The historic front and rear porches of many historic Richmond houses -particularly in the Jackson Ward and St. John's Church Old and Historic Districts- have shallow pitched metal roofs with flat seams (also called flat-lock seams). Flat seam metal roofs have a more homogenous appearance than the more typical standing seam metal roofs found on steeper slopes of the main roof.</i>	While a majority of the existing front porch is not original to the dwelling, the front porch roof and cornice are original. The applicant proposes to replace the existing roof in-kind. Staff supports this alteration. <u>Staff recommends that the new metal roof be flat-lock and be painted a color found on the Commission's approved color pallet; final materials and color submitted for administrative review and approval.</u>
Building Elements, Porch and Entrance Repair, pg. 71	<i>1. Elements that are damaged or loose should be repaired to match the detail of the existing original fabric.</i>	<p>The applicant has expressed that the front porch decking, wooden posts, railings and stairs are deteriorated beyond repair and are in need of replacement. The applicant proposes to demolish these deteriorated elements and reconstruct in-kind; however with substitute materials for some elements.</p> <p>The existing 4x4 wooden posts will be replaced with 6x6 pressure treated wooden posts and wrapped with a paintable PVC material. Staff supports this alteration.</p> <p>Front porch wooden decking will be replaced with 1"x 3" tongue and groove composite decking with a light texture. The existing decking isn't original and is not tongue and groove. Staff finds that the design of the composite decking will be more</p>

		<p>compatible with the historic decking found in the Union Hill district. Furthermore, the Administrative approval guidelines for front porch decking allows for the installation of synthetic decking when the original is missing or deteriorated beyond repair. Staff recommends approval of the composite decking with the condition that <u>the composite decking boards be installed perpendicular to the face of the building.</u></p>
<p>Building Elements, Entrance and Porch Removal, Replacement and Reconstruction, pg. 71</p>	<p><i>4. Do not remove or radically change entrances and porches important in defining the building's overall historic character. Front and side porches are architecturally more ornate than utilitarian back porches.</i></p> <p><i>5. The entire porch should only be replaced if it is too deteriorated to repair or is completely missing; replacements should match the original as much as possible.</i></p> <p><i>6. When restoring a railing or balustrade there may be difficulty in maintaining the original height while meeting current building code. Always consult with the building department.</i></p> <p><i>7. When replacing a railing on a historic building which has lost its railing, the first step is to look for documentary evidence which records the appearance of that railing. If no documentary evidence survives, look for physical evidence (this may benefit from the help of a design professional).</i></p> <p><i>8. Do not strip entrances and porches of historic material and details that should be retained in any repair or partial replacement.</i></p> <p><i>9. Existing entrances or porches should not be removed when an historic structure has been reoriented to accommodate a new use.</i></p> <p><i>10. The addition of a new entrance to a primary dwelling elevation is strongly discouraged.</i></p> <p><i>11. A primary entrance should not be altered to give an appearance that was not originally intended, such as adding a pediment to a simple vernacular entrance.</i></p>	<p>The front porch of 2210 Jefferson has been radically altered over the years. Very little original fabric remains. The only original element of the front porch is the roof structure. The applicant proposes to retain the roof structure and install a new metal roof. <u>Staff recommends that the original roof structure be retained and its form not be altered.</u></p> <p>The applicant proposes to remove the non-original wooden front porch railings and to replace them with the “grab-and-go deckorators composite railings.” Staff supports the use of a composite railing in this location, however is concerned about the visual appearance of the brackets that will be used to join the railings together, as they appear quite bulky. The applicant did not provide specific detail on the connector pieces/brackets, but staff was able to find images online (see figure 5). Bulky connectors do not adequately resemble historic railing configurations. <u>Staff recommends that a composite front porch rail be used that does not feature bulky connectors. Staff recommends that the applicant work with staff on choosing an appropriate substitute rail material and design.</u></p>

It is the assessment of staff that, with the conditions above, the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation and New Construction outlined in Section 30-930.7 (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.

Figures

Figure 1. Image of original front porch (2007) with circle motifs in the frieze. Sawn pickets appear to have been removed by this time. *Google street view, accessed 7/12/2023*



Figure 2. Existing porch.



Figure 3. 2212-2208 Jefferson Ave.



Figure 4. Existing porch roof condition.



Figure 5. Grab and Go Deckorators Brackets

