

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW  
STAFF REPORT  
September 26, 2017, Meeting**

5. **COA-019859-2017** (Platinum Premier Properties) **409 West Clay Street  
Jackson Ward Old and Historic District**

**Project Description:** **Remove small second story addition,  
construct rear deck stairs.**

**Staff Contact:** **C. Jeffries**

The applicant requests approval to remove a small second story addition and construct stairs to an existing second-story deck on this brick Late Victorian Italianate home in the Jackson Ward Old and Historic District. The applicant is also proposing to replace the doors of a one-story brick garage in the rear of the property.

**Staff recommends approval of the project, with conditions.**

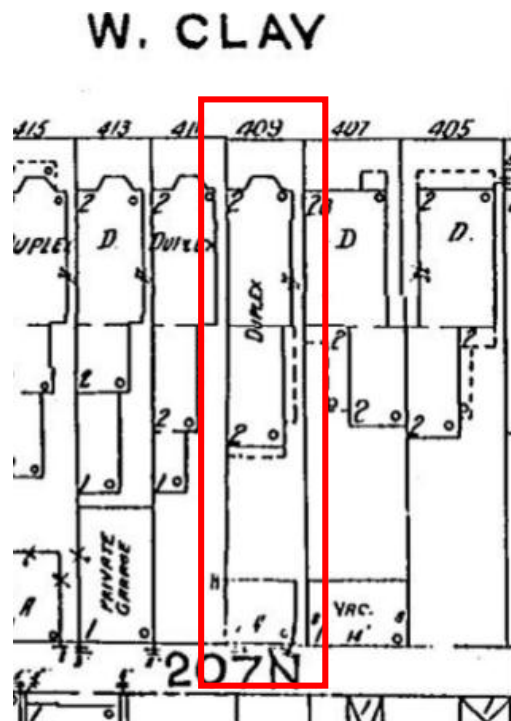
**Garage doors:** The Commission reviewed the proposed garage door replacement in July, 2017. The Commission deferred the application to allow the applicant the opportunity to provide additional information on the proposed doors. The applicant has submitted additional information regarding the design of the doors, which are proposed to have short panels and no glazing, in a standard white color. In addition, the applicant proposes to install two separate doors in the existing openings.

While the *Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* note that deteriorate historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced (pg. 5, #6), the applicant has indicated the garage doors need to be replaced. Staff supports the replacement door as it is differentiated from the historic structure and compatible with its simple design. Staff notes that the proposed door system has a faux wood grain finish and recommends that the applicant try to find a door with a smooth finish. In addition, as the *Guidelines* note that exterior alterations should not destroy historic features (pg. 5, #9), staff recommends the approval of the new garage door with the condition that the installation of the door does not require altering or damaging the two historic openings.

**Rear addition:** The applicant proposes to remove a small frame rear addition, to return the structure to its original configuration. The addition appears to be a later alteration as the window does not match other windows in the home and it is constructed of a different material. In addition, the applicant has informed staff that there is an existing exterior window behind the addition. Staff is supportive of the proposed alteration and recommends approval of the removal of the addition. Once the addition is removed the applicant proposes to rebuild the wall flush with the first story, and clad the entire wall in hardiplank siding, painted to match the

existing green color. Staff recommends the fiber cement siding be smooth and unbeaded. The applicant is also proposing to reuse the window in the addition if possible. The window is damaged, but may be able to be repaired. The *Guidelines* state that original windows should be retained (pg. 57 #5). Though the window was likely added later, it is not a modern window. Staff recommends the applicant work with staff to evaluate the condition of the window once it is removed to determine if it can be reused. There is no evidence of the original window that existed before the addition was constructed. The *Guidelines* note the architectural appearance of original windows should be used as a model for new windows (pg. 69 #10). The structure contains windows with a variety of muntin configurations including 1/1, 6/6, 4/4, and 9/9. If the existing window cannot be reused, staff recommends the new window be a wood or aluminum clad wood window of a similar size as the adjacent windows with a 1/1 configuration, to differentiate it from the historic windows.

**Deck stairs:** *The Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* recommend against radically changing entrances and porches (pg.69, #4). The applicant is proposing to add stairs to access a second story deck in the rear of the structure. The proposed stairs will alter the appearance of the deck however the new portion of the structure will be partially obscured by the existing garage and privacy fence in the rear yard. Also, it appears that the deck is not original to the structure as the 1952 Sanborn map depicts a narrow porch in the rear. The applicant is proposing a wood railing in a Richmond Rail design, to be painted to match the current deck. Staff recommends approval of the railing as proposed.



Sanborn map, 1952

It is the assessment of staff that the application, with the noted conditions, is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation outlined 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.