

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW  
STAFF REPORT  
August 26, 2014 Meeting**

7. **CAR No. 14-084** (B. Gould)

**315 N. 22<sup>nd</sup> Street  
St. John's Church Old and Historic District**

**Project Description:** **Replace wood siding with cementitious siding  
and a single window on alley elevation**

**Staff Contact:** **W. Palmquist**

The applicant requests approval to replace deteriorated wood siding on the alley elevation of the structure with fiber cement siding, as well as to replace the 1<sup>st</sup> floor alley-facing window. The entire alley (north) elevation would be replaced on the main portion of the house, as well as the siding approximately 7' from the ground up of the alley elevation on the rear portion of the house. The replacement siding would be of similar width and reveal as the existing wood siding, and would be painted to match. Fiber cement siding has many advantages over wood siding, including cost, longevity, and maintenance, and would allow the property owner to replace all the deteriorated siding at once.

The applicant requests approval to replace the 1<sup>st</sup> floor alley-facing window which appears to be deteriorated beyond the point of repair. The applicant has provided photographs from the house's interior which show significant deterioration and rot of the window's upper and lower sashes, jambs, and framing. The applicant proposes to replace this with a double-hung aluminum-clad six-over-six wood window with simulated divided lites.

**Staff recommends approval of the project.** The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* states that, "Fiber cement siding is an option that has limited application for use on historic properties. Advertised as an alternative to vinyl or wood products, the application of these products in City Old and Historic Districts should be restricted to new freestanding buildings, secondary elevations with limited visibility from public right-of-way, new additions with limited visibility from public right-of-way, and new outbuildings" (pg. 52). While the façade in question faces a public right-of-way, it is a secondary elevation of the house. The Commission has approved fiber cement siding in the past, on a case-by-case basis, and staff finds the substitution acceptable given that the width and reveal of the new siding will match that of the existing.

The *Guidelines* states that, "Windows should only be replaced when they are missing or beyond repair" (pg. 59 #6). The applicant has provided photographic evidence documenting the significant level of deterioration and rot of the existing window, which demonstrates that it is beyond the ability to be repaired. The applicant has proposed the installation of an appropriate replacement window which is comparable to the existing window.

It is the assessment of staff that the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation outlined in Section 114-930.7(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.