

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
May 27, 2014 Meeting**

10. **CAR No. 14-41** (E. Berman)

**604 W. 20th Street
Springhill Old and Historic District**

Project Description:

Replace decking and front steps

Staff Contact:

C. Easterling

The applicant requests approval to replace the front steps and porch decking at a residence located in the Springhill Old and Historic District. The existing wood tongue-and-groove decking is deteriorated, and the applicant proposes replacing it with a comparable composite tongue-and-groove decking in a slate grey color. The existing steps are cement block with a stone cap, and they are in a significant state of deterioration. The applicant proposes replacing the steps with poured concrete steps that will have a stone cap to match the thickness and appearance of the current stone cap. The color of the stone cap will closely match the color of the new decking.

Staff recommends approval of the project as proposed. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* notes that synthetic tongue-and-groove decking may be a reasonable substitute for the use of wood porch decking (pg. 53). The Azek brand of tongue-and-groove decking has routinely been found to be an appropriate replacement product when the existing decking on a porch is found to be significantly compromised.

The existing front steps at the property appear to be quite hazardous, and they are not original to the property. The applicant proposes to replace the steps to match the configuration of the existing steps, but intends to use poured concrete instead of cement blocks. The proposed change does not affect the historic character of the property.

It is the assessment of staff that the work outlined in the proposal complies 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 page cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.