

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

10. COA-022899-2017 (S. Tuttle)

**2320 Venable Street  
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

**Project Description:** Rebuild side and rear wall of a single family home.

**Staff Contact:** M. Pitts

The applicant requests approval to modify plans for the rehabilitation of a single family residential structure in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. The existing structure is a 2-story Italianate brick home with an English basement. The adjacent structure was demolished leaving an exposed party wall on the east elevation. On April 25, 2017, the Commission approved the rehabilitation of the façade of the home by restoring the windows and doors, the reconstruction of the demolished front porch, and a small three story addition at the rear of the structure. The applicant has determined that the side and rear walls of the existing structure are structurally deficient and cannot be stabilized. The existing side wall consists of brick and parged brick, and the rear wall is constructed of brick. On the side elevation, the parging technique has trapped water within the wall and compromised the footings. The applicant has provided a letter from a structural engineer noting the walls should be replaced. The applicant is proposing to remove both the side and rear walls. The portion of the side wall that is currently parged brick will be reconstructed with concrete masonry unit. The remainder of the side wall will be reconstructed in brick. For the rear wall, the portions of the building wall which will be visible after the approved addition is constructed will be constructed in brick. The applicant is pursuing rehabilitation tax credits for this project. The applicant has not obtained Part II approval for this project at the time of the application submittal.

**Staff recommends approval of the project with conditions.** The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* note that demolition is to be considered an option of last resort (pg. 82). The applicant has provided documentation to note that the existing walls are deteriorate beyond repair and that the footings have been impacted by the deterioration. Staff recommends that the existing brick be salvaged for reuse on the structure. The *Guidelines* note that materials in new construction should be compatible with materials in the district. Staff does not find that CMU is an appropriate cladding for a visible side elevation. Staff recognizes that the side wall was a party wall, but it will now function as an exterior wall. No plans have been submitted for the development of the adjacent lot, and development on this lot would be required to meet side yard setbacks. Staff recommends the side wall be reconstructed in brick or a brick veneer be applied to the CMU to be consistent with the construction of existing structure. Staff recommends that if the proposed rear

addition is not constructed, then the entire rear wall should be constructed in brick.

The Commission's approval should be conditioned upon the work being performed in conformance with a Part II Tax Credit application approval and conditions. In addition, the applicant should submit any additional conditions subsequently imposed by DHR or the National Park Service to CAR staff for administrative review and approval.

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 Sections 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 page cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.