

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
August 22, 2017, Meeting**

8. **COA-021096-2017** (C. Jefferson)

**812 Jessamine Street
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

Project Description:

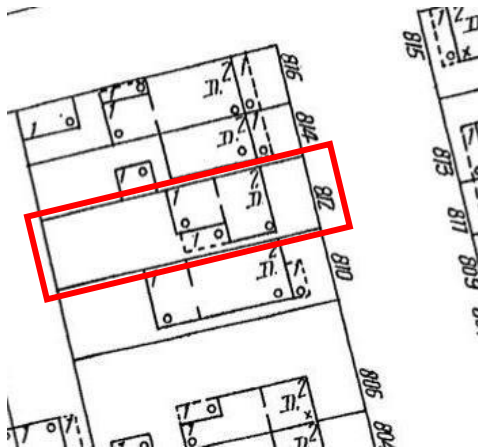
**Rehabilitate the exterior of home
and add a 2nd story rear addition.**

Staff Contact:

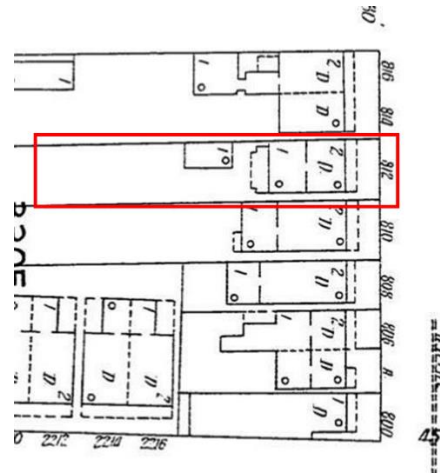
M. Pitts

The applicant requests approval to construct second story addition at the rear of a two story Greek Revival frame home in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. The applicant also proposes to rehabilitate the existing home by removing any vinyl siding and restoring the wood siding, repairing windows, and replacing the composite decking and railing with wood tongue and groove decking and Richmond rail. Though the project description indicates the project is receiving rehabilitation tax credits, no details of any approvals from the Department of Historic Resources have been provided.

The existing home is a 2-story, 3-bay shallow gable-roofed frame dwelling with a box cornice. As seen in the earliest Sanborn map from 1905, the home was a two story structure with a single story rear wing and a side porch. Staff believes the existing single story gable roof section is what is shown in the 1905 Sanborn. Later Sanborn maps show the side porch was enclosed, and it appears the bathroom which projects past the rear wall was add after 1952. Though there is no rear alley behind the structure, the rear of the home is visible from both Burton and Cedar Streets.



1905 Sanborn Map



1925 Sanborn Map

The applicant is proposing to retain the existing building walls and added a second story addition above the existing first story at the rear. The proposed addition will be clad in fiber cement siding and will have a rear facing gable roof

to be clad in dimensional shingles. The new windows will be wood windows and the applicant is proposing wooden French doors at the rear. The plans indicate the historic chimney will be retained on the interior and removed from the exterior.

Staff recommends partial approval of the project with conditions.

Siding on the Existing Structure: The proposed plans and project description are not consistent regarding the proposed siding restoration and/or replacement as the plans indicate fiber cement siding on all elevations. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* state that on existing buildings, the use of fiber cement siding should be limited to secondary elevations with limited visibility from the public right-of-way (pg. 56). Staff recommends the wood siding be restored on the façade and any fiber cement siding installed on the secondary elevations of the existing structure be smooth, unbeaded, and with a reveal consistent with the reveal.

Porch: The Commission approved the restoration of the porch with composite materials based on photographic evidence in February 2017. The Guidelines note that replacement porches should match the original as much as possible (pg. 69, #5). Staff supports the use of wooden materials for the restoration of porch with the conditions that dimensions of the proposed decking boards be provided for administrative review and approval and the balusters be turned to match those shown in the photograph of the property from 1993.



812 Jessamine Street (Historic District Survey 1993)

Addition: The *Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* state that additions should not obscure or destroy original architectural elements (pg. 47, Materials & Colors #1). Though staff recognizes the single story shed roof section which projects past the rear wall is a later modification to the home, staff finds the existing single story gable roofed section is a significant early if not original feature of the home that is visible from both Burton and Cedar Streets. Staff has concerns that the proposed addition removes all understanding of the existing single story gable roof section of the

home as the building walls align, the existing gable roof form is removed, and the building material is not differentiated. The proposed addition also removes the exterior portion of a chimney which is a significant architectural feature when viewing the house from Cedar Street as it projects well above the existing roof. Staff has concerns that even if the chimney remained and projected through the proposed roof, the visually appearance would be altered as it would no longer significantly project from the building's roof. Staff cannot recommend approval of the proposed addition at this time and recommends the applicant revise the plans to allow the existing single story portion of the structure to continue to read as a distinct element and to allow the chimney to remain.

It is the assessment of staff that, with these conditions, the application is partially 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 pages cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.