

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
May 26, 2013, Meeting**

10. **CAR No. 15-061** (J. Horn & S. Marshall) **323 North 27th Street**
Church Hill North Old and Historic District

Project Description: **Modifications to front and rear porches**

Staff Contact: **M. Pitts**

The applicant requests permission to modify the front porch of this Queen Anne style home in the Church Hill Old and Historic District by installing pedestals and new railing and altering existing columns to match the porch of the adjacent home at 323 North 27th Street. The applicant also proposes to demolish the existing rear two story porch and construct a first floor screened porch and a second story balcony on the footprint of the existing first floor porch and deck.

The proposed alterations to the front porch include installing 11" by 11" pedestals and placing the existing columns cut to the appropriate length on top of the pedestals. The applicant also proposes to add a half column and half pedestal against the wall adjacent to the window where the column is missing. The proposed railing is 32 ½ inches tall and will have a 5" hand rail and 2 ¾" by 2 ¾" turned balusters spaced 4". The applicant proposes to paint the columns, pedestals, and railings to match the neighboring porches. This includes painting the recessed panel of the pedestal and the balusters Rookwood Jade and the columns and the other elements of the pedestals and railing Rookwood Dark Green.

On the rear elevation, the applicant is proposing to install a screened porch in place of the existing porch which the applicant notes is structurally unsound. The proposed 8' by 14'-7" porch will occupy the footprint of an earlier porch that ran along the width of the structure, will match the existing porch height and include a balcony on the second floor. The applicant proposes to use Richmond rail for both the upper balcony and the screened porch. The proposed screened porch is designed with 4 bays on the rear elevation and two bays on the sides and the screens will be located on the inside of the structure. The applicant proposed to also install a 5" aluminum ogee gutter.

Staff recommends approval of the project with a condition. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* state that when replacing a railing on a historic building which has lost its railing to look at documentary evidence and physical evidence for the historic appearance of the railing (pg. 67, #7). There appears have previously been a pedestal with a column on top similar to the one proposed on the front porch as is evident by the painted outline present on the building's façade adjacent to the front window. Though there is no documentation or physical evidence of the type of railing on the structure, the proposed railing will match the railing on the adjacent two

homes. The subject home and the two adjacent homes are all brick Queen Anne style homes built around 1900. The proposed modifications to the front porch are consistent in design and materials with the porches of the neighboring properties and are compatible with porches in the district.

The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* recommends against radically changing entrances and porches important in defining a building's overall character (pg. 67, #4). As with the front porch, the applicant states that the porches in the rear are not original to the structure. The ghosting on the brick wall indicates that there was historically a different configuration to the rear of the structure. *The Guidelines* state that new construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district (pg. 44). The new porches reflect a building form which is prevalent in the historic district of two story porches which span the width of the structure. This design can also be found at the rear of the two adjacent homes. Additionally, the proposed Richmond railing is more appropriate for the District than the current railing form. Staff recommends using a screening material that is as transparent as possible so that the porch conveys the appearance of a traditional open porch.

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