

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
July 25, 2017, Meeting**

7. **COA-019801-2017** (A. Hinnant, Jr.)

**522 North 21st Street
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

Project Description:

**Rehabilitate a single family home
and construct a rear addition.**

Staff Contact:

M. Pitts

The applicant requests approval to rehabilitate the front porch, replace a window and door, and enclose the area beneath a rear addition of a Late Victorian home in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. The existing 1 story, 3-bay porch has modern wrought iron posts and rail and a simple wood cornice. The applicant is proposing to replace the modern railing and posts with wooden Richmond rail and a porch design similar to 520 North 21st to include turned posts, scroll-sawn brackets, and spindle work frieze. The applicant is proposing to replace the existing modern replacement front door with a wooden door with oval glazing. On the alley adjacent elevation, the applicant is proposing to replace the existing replacement door with a half lite wooden door and resize an existing window opening to accommodate a smaller 1/1 wood window. The rear of the structure has been altered over time to include a 2nd story addition. The applicant is proposing to infill the area beneath the 2nd story addition and clad the new addition in fiber cement siding.

Staff recommends approval of the project with conditions.

Front Porch: The existing metal columns and railing are contemporary additions, therefore staff supports their removal. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* note that when reconstructing a missing element; pictorial, historical, or physical documentation should be used as a basis for the design and materials (pg. 55, #7). Staff has been unable to locate pictorial or physical evidence of the historic porch. As the Guidelines note that for an existing building which has lost its railing and for which no documentary or physical evidences survives, balusters in traditional Richmond rail are appropriate (pg. 46, Porches and Porch Details #2); staff recommends approval of the proposed railing. Staff has concerns that the design of the proposed columns, brackets, and frieze is not based on evidence of the historic design of the porch and conveys a historic appearance that may not be accurate to the building. Staff recommends the applicant install simple square columns in a design to be reviewed and approved by staff rather than the proposed columns, brackets, and frieze as the simple design is compatible with porches in the district and does not convey an inaccurate historic appearance.

Doors: Staff supports the removal of the replacement doors which do not effectively convey the appearance of wooden doors. Staff recommends the approval of the installation of proposed wooden half lite doors with the condition that the glazing be rectangular as oval glazing is not found on doors in the district.

Window: The Guidelines note that the Commission will consider changes to existing windows along a secondary elevation on a case-by-case basis (pg. 65, #8). Staff supports the replacement of the existing replacement window with a new smaller window as the window is located on a secondary alley elevation which has been altered over time, and the replacement window is proposed to be a more appropriate material.

Addition: The Guidelines state that addition should be subordinate to the size of the main structure and as inconspicuous as possible (pg. 44, Siting #1). Staff finds the proposed addition is small and located on a secondary elevation. Staff recommends the fiber cement siding be smooth and without a bead and that paint colors be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval. To differentiate the addition from the historic structure, staff recommends the existing corner board detail remain.

It is the assessment of staff that, with the conditions noted 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.