

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

1. **COA-021095-2017** (Homes REI)

**727 North 22<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

**Project Description:**

**Construct a two-story addition,  
restore front porch.**

**Staff Contact:**

**C. Jeffries**

The applicant requests approval to restore the front porch and front door and construct a two story addition at the rear of this structure in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. The applicant proposes to demolish an existing one-story rear addition and construct a new addition that includes a small two-story porch.

The Commission deferred this application on August 22, 2017 to allow the applicant the opportunity to explore revising the plans to limit the second floor to the footprint of the the existing first floor and to propose an alternate design that does not include the enclosed porch. In response to the Commission's concerns, the applicant modified the plans as follows:

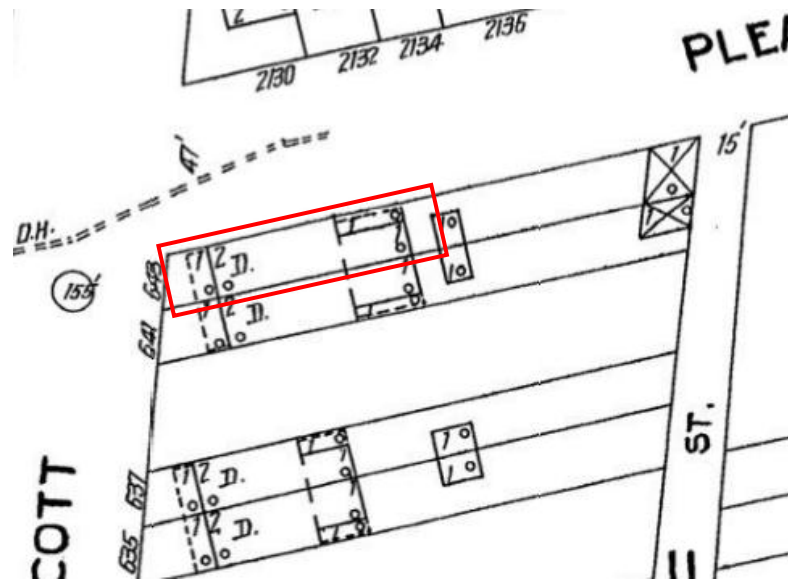
- Lowered the roofline of the proposed addition.
- Eliminated the enclosed porch design.
- Added a small two-story side porch.
- Increased the setback of the addition from the main body of the structure on the north elevation.
- Removed one proposed new window opening on the main body of the structure.

**Staff recommends partial approval of the project, with conditions.**

**Front porch and door:** The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* note that original features and materials should be retained and not radically altered (pg. 57). In addition, the *Guidelines* state that a primary entrance should not be altered to give an appearance that was not originally intended (pg. 69). The applicant is proposing to retain the original porch elements while restoring the wooden steps and double wood front door. It is clear that these elements have been altered and the proposed changes match the attached home. Staff recommends approval of the restoration of the front porch and door, with the condition that any proposed paint colors be submitted to staff for administrative review and approval.

**Window opening:** The applicant is proposing to add one window opening on the second floor of the north elevation of the main structure. The *Guidelines* state that the addition of new windows along a secondary elevation will be considered by the Commission on a case-by-case basis. As the North elevation fronts on Cedar Street and is highly visible, staff recommends denial of the proposed new window opening.

**Rear addition:** Staff continues to have concerns regarding the demolition of a portion of the existing structure and the proposed addition. However, the Commission did not voice similar concerns but rather wished to see the addition stay within the footprint of the existing structure. The *Guidelines* state that additions should not obscure or destroy original architectural elements (pg. 45, Materials & Colors #1) and that fundamental architectural features should not be removed (pg. 57, #9). The applicant is proposing to demolish the existing rear additions, a portion of which appears in the 1905 Sanborn map.



Sanborn Map, 1905

The Guidelines for New Construction also state that additions should be subordinate in size and as inconspicuous as possible (pg. 44 #1). Though the proposed addition is large it is subordinate to the main structure. As the revised design does not fully address the Commission's comments staff recommends denial of the proposed addition. Based on the Commission's comments staff recommends the size of the addition be further reduced to fit within the footprint of the existing rear addition, not to include the existing side porch, by aligning the proposed building wall with that of the existing building wall. Staff recommends a horizontal element be added to visually separate the first floor from the second to reference the presence of the historic first story addition.

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