



Staff Report  
City of Richmond, Virginia



Commission of Architectural Review

1.COA-137318-2023	Final Review	Meeting Date: 10/24/2023
Applicant/Petitioner	Robert Ries	
Project Description	Alter an existing front façade door opening.	
Project Location		
Address: 411 Brook Road		
Historic District: Jackson Ward		
<p><b>High-Level Details:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Applicant requests approval to alter the primary entrance of a mixed-use, Italianate building ca. 1880.</li> <li>The first-floor storefront has been previously altered and the front door and door jamb does not appear to be original to the building.</li> <li>The front door will be raised eight to ten inches, the vestibule floor being raised by installing wood or stone.</li> </ul>		
Staff Recommendation	Approval, with Conditions	
Staff Contact	Alex Dandridge, (804) 646-6569, <a href="mailto:alex.dandridge@rva.gov">alex.dandridge@rva.gov</a>	
Previous Reviews	<p>The Commission reviewed and approved the reopening of a rear window on this property in May 2023.</p> <p>Staff administratively approved the reconstruction of a rear door and transom window in November 2022. Door opening location and dimensions were not altered.</p>	
Staff Recommendations	<p>Staff Recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If a new front door is installed, it meets the administrative approval guidelines for front door replacement and be submitted for administrative review and approval.</li> <li>Final step material (wood, stone, concrete) be submitted for administrative review and approval.</li> </ul>	

## Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
<p><b>Building Elements, Porches, Entrances &amp; Doors, Porch and Entrance Repair</b></p>	<p><i>4. Do not remove or radically change entrances and porches important in defining the building's overall historic character.</i></p> <p><i>11. A primary entrance should not be altered to give an appearance that was not originally intended...</i></p> <p><i>14. Do not remove original doors and door surrounds.</i></p>	<p>The primary entrance of 411 Brook Road has been significantly altered and does not feature original materials or its original configuration. While Staff was not able to find documentation for the storefront alterations, it appears the storefront windows were reconstructed to match the neighboring buildings. Based on historic photographs, the original storefront likely matched that of the attached building at 415 Brook Road.</p> <p>The storefront at 415 Brook Road does not appear to be as significantly altered, and does not feature a vestibule. Staff believes the vestibule/recessed entrance at 411 Brook Road is not based-off of the original configuration. Photographic documentation of 411 &amp; 415 Brook Road supports this.</p> <p>The applicant does not plan to alter the existing storefront configuration.</p> <p>An 8-10" wood or stone step will be added to the floor of the recessed entrance, raising the door. Other properties on the subject block feature either a wooden or concrete step within their primary entrance.</p> <p>Staff does not believe that the installation of a wooden or concrete step would significantly alter the visual appearance of the building, and will not impact the integrity of the building. <u>Staff recommends approval of the installation of a wooden or stone step within the recessed primary entrance.</u></p> <p><u>While not specifically mentioned in the application, Staff recommends that if a new front door is installed, it meet the administrative approval guidelines for front door replacement and be submitted for administrative review and approval.</u></p> <p><u>Staff recommends that the final step material (wood, stone, concrete) be submitted for administrative review and approval.</u></p>

# Figures

Figure 1. 411 Brook Road, approximately 1955, City of Richmond Assessors Office. Some original components/materials of the storefront are present.



Figure 2. 411 Brook Road, 1997. Storefront infilled with brick. Poor condition. Original materials and configuration have been removed/altered.



Figure 3. 411 Brook Road, existing conditions 2023. Google Street view 2023, accessed October 20, 2023.



Figure 3. Primary entrances along Brook Road that feature a wooden, stone, or concrete step.

