

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

3. **COA-022630-2017** (J. & N. Williams) **3207 ½ Monument Avenue  
Monument Avenue Old and Historic District**

**Project Description:** **Enclose rear porches, construct a terrace roof.**

**Staff Contact:** **M. Pitts**

The applicant requests approval to modify the rear of a home which was constructed in 2010 in the Monument Avenue Old and Historic District. The existing home is a three story brick structure with a two story rear section which was approved by the Commission in 2008 with modifications approved in 2009 and 2010. The existing rear portion which is to be altered consists of a first story screened porch and a second story clad in lap siding with a recessed porch and a rooftop deck. The applicant is proposing to modify the rear of home as follows:

- First Story – Enclose the existing screened porch with fiber cement siding. The applicant proposes to install 6/1 windows on the rear and transom windows on the side elevation. A full lite door will be installed on the rear elevation in an inset landing.
- Second Story – Enclose the existing open area with fiber cement siding and install 6/1 windows on the side and rear elevations.
- Rooftop – Alter the openings into the rear of the 3-story portion of the home by removing the existing doors, installing 3 full lite sliding doors centered on the building wall, and infilling the existing openings with fiber cement siding. The existing rooftop railing will be removed and replaced with fiber cement wrapped half walls and a metal and composite railing system. The applicant is proposing to install a metal compound roof structure with visible metal trusses. Decorative PVC screens will be installed at the sides of the proposed roof.

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

**1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Story Modifications:** Though the applicant is proposing to enclose porches at the rear of the structure, staff did not review this work under the *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines'* standards for porch enclosures as these Guidelines are intended for application to modifications to historic porches not new construction. Instead, staff has reviewed these changes under the Standards for New Construction and Additions. The *Guidelines* note that new construction should use materials visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district (pg. 47, Materials & Colors). The proposed fiber cement siding is compatible with frame structures in the District and consistent with the siding on the existing structure. Staff recommends the siding be smooth, unbeaded, and with a reveal consistent with the existing siding. The *Guidelines* note that the size proportion and spacing

patterns of door and window openings on a new addition should follow patterns established by the original building (pg. 49, Doors and Windows #1). The 6/1 windows are consistent with the existing windows on the structure and the grouped windows on the first floor are consistent with the grouping of windows on adjacent properties. Staff recommends the windows be true or simulated divided lite windows with interior and exterior muntins and a spacer bar. The existing 2<sup>nd</sup> story rear elevation is characterized by transom windows which were approved by the Commission in 2010. Staff recommends this window pattern be continued on the 2<sup>nd</sup> story and a transom window consistent with the existing windows be installed in the new bay.

**Modifications to Existing Openings:** Though the Guidelines note that the original openings should be maintained, the proposed modifications to the rear wall of the 3-story portion of the structure do not alter historic material as the structure is newly constructed. Staff supports the proposed changes to the openings as they are minimally visible from the public right of way.

**Rooftop Terrace:** Staff cannot recommend approval of the proposed rooftop terrace at this time. The Guidelines note that new construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district (pg. 46, Form #1). Staff has concerns that though there are a variety of roof forms found in the district and also open pergolas; the proposed compound roof shape and partially open design is not consistent with roof forms found in the district. Staff has concerns with the solid half wall, decorative screens, and the roof structure; the home will appear more massive than the adjacent homes along the alley. The existing design is consistent with the adjacent historic 3-story homes which have 2-story rear sections. Staff recommends the applicant revise the plans to include a more transparent design to minimize the massing and an alternate roof form.

In summary, staff recommends partial approval of the application. Staff recommends approval of the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> story modifications and the changes to the openings on the 3<sup>rd</sup> story rear building wall with the following conditions:

- The siding be smooth, unbeaded, and with a reveal consistent with the existing siding.
- The windows be true or simulated divided lite windows with interior and exterior muntins and a spacer bar.
- A transom window consistent with the existing windows on the 2<sup>nd</sup> story be installed in the new bay.

Staff recommends denial of the proposed rooftop terrace and recommends the applicant revise the plans to include a more transparent design to minimize the massing and an alternate roof form.

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.