

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW  
STAFF REPORT  
September 23, 2014 Meeting**

13. **CAR No. 14-105** (S. Hodges)

**2241 W. Grace Street  
West Grace Street Old & Historic District**

**Project Description:**

**Replace windows**

**Staff Contact:**

**W. Palmquist**

The applicant requests approval to replace all five windows at the front of this structure within the West Grace Street Old & Historic District. The applicant received a Certificate of Appropriateness in July 2014 to replace all windows on the house. The rear and side windows were allowed to remain as is, but the front windows were to be replaced with one-over-one, wood or aluminum clad wood windows, with true or simulated divided lites. The applicant requests approval to use a six-over-one grid pattern for these front replacement windows in place of the one-over-one grid pattern previously approved, in order to match the other six-over-one windows found at the sides and rear of the house.

The applicant has not provided, and staff was unable to find any historic photographic evidence for the existence of six-over-one windows at this property. Based on a photographic survey completed throughout the district at the time of its designation in 1996, the structure had one-over-one windows (photograph attached). However, it is unclear whether these were original to the structure or not. As the house appears to be standalone construction, not designed and built in a row with similar designs, it is not possible to divine historic elements from adjacent properties. Many houses on this block of West Grace Street have one-over-one windows at the front elevation, and this would be a fairly common grid pattern found throughout the district historically.

**Staff recommends denial of the project.** The window guidelines outlined on page 59 of the *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* emphasize the need to retain and repair all original windows, but provides guidance concerning the style of replacement windows if original windows are missing or deteriorated beyond repair:

- Original windows should be repaired by patching, splicing, consolidating or otherwise reinforcing them.
- Windows should be replaced only when they are missing or beyond repair. Any reconstruction should be based on physical evidence or photographic documentation.
- Changes to existing windows or the addition of new windows along a secondary elevation will be considered by the Commission on a case-by-case basis.
- The architectural character of windows should not be altered by inappropriate materials or finishes that radically change the sash, depth of reveal, muntin configuration, the reflective quality or color of the glazing or the appearance of the frame.

- Do not replace multi-paned sash windows with new thermal sash windows that use false muntins.

Due to the lack of photographic or physical evidence documenting the existence of six-over-one windows at this property, staff feels that their installation would be false historicism. One-over-one windows were a fairly common window grid pattern for this era of construction and is prevalent throughout the district, as well as being a good, default grid pattern when the original grid pattern of a structure cannot be determined. The applicant already has a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace the front windows of the house with one-over-one, wood or aluminum-clad wood windows with true or simulated divided lites.

It is the assessment of staff that the application is not 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 pages cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.



Photograph of 2241 W. Grace Street from 1996 Photographic Survey.