

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
August 28, 2018 Meeting**

3. **COA-039288-2018** (J & L. Sodell)

**2717 West Grace Street
West Grace Street Old and Historic District**

Project Description:

**Remove 2nd story rear porch and
construct a 2-story rear porch structure.**

Staff Contact:

C. Jeffries

The existing structure is a 2 ½-story brick Colonial Revival home. At the rear of the home is a 2nd story porch constructed of pressure treated wood. This application is the result of enforcement activity as the porch was constructed without prior approval. An existing wood 2nd story porch was demolished to construct the new porch.



Google Street View, 2011

The new structure is 8' by 16' with 3' wide stairs and will not have a roof. The existing porch does not have stairs that access the ground but the plans indicate that stairs will be constructed at the rear of the existing structure. The structure has been constructed of treated wood with a typical deck railing with nailed-up

pickets. Zoning staff has indicated that the structure may not meet setback requirements as built.

Staff recommends approval of the project with conditions.

Removal of the Existing Porch: The *Guidelines* note that demolition of historic elements is discouraged though it can be permitted when the element is deemed to not be a contributing part of the historic character of the District (pg. 82). A rear porch does not appear on the Sanborn maps or assessor's card for the property dating from the 1950s to the 1980s. Staff does not find that the prior porch was a character defining, contributing feature to the historic structure and recommends approval of the demolition of this element.

New 2-Story Porch: The *Guidelines* state that new construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the historic district (pg. 46, Form #1). The 2-story rear porch structure is a form found in the district. The proposed structure is consistent with the Commission's guidelines for decks (pg. 51) as it is in the rear and small in scale. Staff recommends that Richmond rail be installed to replace the nailed-up pickets and the structure be painted or opaquely stained a neutral color that complements one or more of the colors found on the main structure.

It is the assessment of staff that, with these conditions, 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 pages cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.