

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
August 22, 2017, Meeting**

1. **COA-021091-2017** (J. Marcus) **2211 West Grace Street
West Grace Street Old and Historic District**

Project Description: **Modify an existing rear porch.**

Staff Contact: **C. Jeffries**

The applicant requests approval to modify the first floor of an existing enclosed rear porch of a Colonial Revival brick row house in the West Grace Street Old and Historic District. The work is part of a planned renovation that also includes interior changes and exterior changes not visible from the public right of way.

Staff recommends approval of the project as submitted. The applicant is proposing to reopen the first floor of an enclosed rear porch by installing new fiberglass square Tuscan columns, new screening, and new steps and handrail. The work will be minimally visible from the public right of way due to existing garages and a privacy fence at the rear of the property. A two story rear porch is shown in the 1925 Sanborn map.

The proposal is generally consistent with the standards for rehabilitation listed on page 57 in *The Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines*. Staff does have concerns that the proposed eight inch columns are larger than the existing columns visible on the northeastern side of the porch. Six inch columns are seen throughout the district on rear porches and the existing columns may be original. However, the applicant states that the proposed columns are preferred due to the visual mass of the enclosed second story.

The proposed work will more closely match the original appearance of the first floor of the porch by removing the inappropriate enclosure. In addition, the changes are minimally visible from the public right of way and will not radically alter the public appearance of this utilitarian back porch (page 69, #4).

It is the assessment of staff that the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation outlined in Section 30-930.7(b) of the City Code, as well as with the *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines*, specifically the page cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.