

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
July 24, 2018 Meeting**

7. **COA-037930-2018** (A. Swartz)

**2401 E. Broad Street
St. John's Church Old and Historic District**

Project Description: **Install a condensing unit on the rear of a secondary building with screening.**

Staff Contact: **K. Chen**

Proposal: The applicant requests approval to install a condensing unit on a mid-twentieth century building on the grounds of St. John's Church. The building is located near the southeast corner of the property adjacent to the entrance from East Grace Street. The church yard is enclosed by a brick wall that varies between 10 and 14 feet above the sidewalk. The unit will be located on the east elevation of the building between the existing door and the brick wall approximately 15 inches above the ground. The connections between the interior and exterior units will be concealed in a copper pipe similar to the copper gutters and downspouts utilized on the building. The unit will be screened by a painted wood enclosure, like screening found on other secondary buildings on the property. The window unit will be removed as a result of this project.

Staff recommends approval of the project with a condition.

The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* state that new units should be placed in side or rear yards as far away from the front of the building as possible (pg.68, #1). The unit is being placed on a secondary elevation of the building away from the primary entrance that is located on the northwest corner of the building. The *Guidelines further* state that equipment on the ground should be appropriately screened with fencing or vegetation (pg. 68, #3). The unit will be screened from the public-right-of-way by the brick wall that encloses the church yard. The unit will be visible from the metal gate and internal stairs and sidewalk that access the church yard from the intersection of Grace and 25th streets. A painted wood enclosure is proposed to screen the unit from view within the church yard. The paint color for the enclosure should be submitted for administrative review and approval.

It is the assessment of staff that the application, with the noted condition, is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation outlined in Section 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.