

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
September 22, 2015 Meeting**

8. **CAR No. 15-119** (C. Weiner)

**901-903 N. 24th Street
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

Project Description:

**Enclose existing rear porch,
replace basement windows,
rehabilitate garages**

Staff Contact:

K. Chen

The applicant requests approval to enclose an existing rear porch, replacement basement windows, and rehabilitate a garage located in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. The applicant is proposing to enclose the one-story porch on the east (rear) elevation of the house that has limited visibility from North 24th and O streets, and from an alley to the east. The yard will be enclosed with a 6-foot board privacy fence that was administratively approved on August 10, 2015.

Porch

The existing porch possesses little historic fabric and will be enclosed to provide bathrooms for the two units. The floor and roof lines of the existing porches will be retained. The posts will be wrapped with smooth, cementitious trim. The area between the posts will be in-filled with board and batten smooth, cementitious panels at the base, smooth cementitious panels, above, and vinyl, fixed light transom windows at the roof line. There will be steel, two-panel, nine light doors centered in each section of the porch. The board and batten panels will be painted SW #0050 Classic Light Buff and the smooth panels will be painted SW#2811 Downing Stone – numbers 41 and 4 on the paint palette from pages 60 and 61 of the *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines*.

The Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines state that solid materials are not recommended for use in enclosure projects since they radically alter the historic appearance of a porch. Glass enclosures which reveal decorative porch elements are strongly preferred (pg. 67). This is a utilitarian rear porch with very little historic fabric or architectural character, that is minimally visible. The use of the full width awning windows with solid panels and board and batten below, and the retention of the box beam and vertical posts, conveys the character of a porch. The *Guidelines*, page 65, #11, discourage the use of vinyl windows.

Basement Windows

There boarded openings in the basement on all four elevations of the house. The ones on the front and rear are recessed under the porches and minimally

visible. The first two windows on the north elevation are visible as is the one window on the south elevation. There are currently no windows in these openings. The applicant proposes to install fixed single light, vinyl windows in the openings. All of the windows on the property have been replaced with vinyl.

The proposed window replacements are in keeping with page 65 of *The Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* because the sash is missing and the replacement will not altered the size or location of the windows. The *Guidelines* discourage the use of vinyl windows.

Garage Rehabilitation

The existing garage is located on east property line facing the alley and nearly fill the width of the property – north to south. The bays of the garage are defined by brick demising walls and the openings have been in-filled with concrete block or wood framing. The block and frame infill will be removed and the brick walls retained. New overhead garage doors will be installed on the east elevation and two doors will be installed on the west elevation. The remainder of the opening will be in-filled with frame construction and cementious panels. A new 5v-crimp metal roof will be installed.

The proposed garage rehabilitation is in keeping with the Standards for Rehabilitation – Residential Construction page 55 of *The Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* because it will not result in the loss of historic or character defining materials or features.

Staff recommends approval of the project with the condition that pvc windows be used. The Guidelines discourage the use of vinyl windows and pvc windows can better accept paint for future maintenance. It is the assessment of staff that with the applicant's acceptance of the above condition the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation outlined in Section 114.930.7(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 code.