

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
October 25, 2016 Meeting**

3. **CAR No. 16-144** (R. Taranto) **2423 East Grace Street
St. John's Church Old and Historic District**

Project Description: **Remove the eastern handrail on the 1st story of the rear porch and install lattice to the height of 5'-10".**

Staff Contact: **M. Pitts**

The applicant requests approval to remove the existing handrail and install lattice to the height of 5'-10" on the east end of a porch in the St. John's Church Old and Historic District. The applicant is proposing to replace the existing Richmond rail with square lattice to increase the privacy of the porch which addresses North 25th Street and to reduce vehicle exhaust residue from accumulating on the porch.

Staff recommends approval of the project with conditions. *The Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* state entrances and porches should not be radically changed or stripped of historic material and details (pg. 67, #8). Though the existing railings may not be the original material; the Richmond rail-form was likely part of the original porch design and therefore staff recommends this not be removed. Additionally, though lattice is a material found in the district, its application is typically beneath porches and is not used to enclose porches. Staff recommends approval of the enclosure of the east end of the existing porch with the condition that the existing hand rail remain and full-height, wooden, louvered-shutters be installed behind the rail to provide the desired privacy in a form that is characteristic of the district, as shuttered porches can be found within the district.

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