

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW  
STAFF REPORT  
August 26, 2014 Meeting**

10. CAR No. 14-089 (C. Stipe)

**2723 West Grace Street  
West Grace Street Old and Historic District**

**Project Description:**

**Replace windows**

**Staff Contact:**

**J. Hill**

The applicant requests permission to replace or install ten windows and two doors at this property located in the West Grace Street Old and Historic District. The two first-floor windows on the façade (north elevation), are original. The two windows in the west elevation are missing and the openings blocked off. The three windows and one doorway on the east elevation are not visible from the public right-of-way. The basement window on the rear (south) elevation is also difficult to see from the public right-of-way. The two first floor windows on the rear elevation are replacements that were in place when the district was designated. The door on the upper level of the rear elevation appears to be original. The balcony that was in place when the district was designated is no longer in place.

The proposed replacement windows are vinyl, double-hung, one-over-one windows. Plans are to cap over the exterior framing of the window opening or to alternatively to use a “blind-stop” capping that seals the window in.

**The work proposed does not all meet the OHD Design Review Guidelines. Staff recommends partial approval of the project and offers conditions for approval of the remainder of the work.** The work covered in the application is subject to the standards for residential rehabilitation included in the *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* on page 51, “Retain original windows including both functional and decorative elements such as frames, sash, muntins, [and] glazing,” and the more detailed guidelines for windows on page 59:

- Windows should only be replaced when they are missing or deteriorated beyond repair. Any reconstruction should be based on physical evidence of photo documentation.
- The architectural character of windows should not be altered by inappropriate materials or finishes that radically change the sash, depth of reveal, muntin configuration, the reflective quality or color of the glazing or the appearance of the frame.

Staff supports the installation of the proposed windows on the west elevation in the two openings where the windows are missing. The subject window and door openings on the east elevation do not appear to be visible from the public right-of-way, and can therefore be replaced without Commission approval. Staff supports the installation of the proposed basement window on the rear elevation because of the difficulty of seeing it from the public right-of-way. Staff opposes the replacement of the original first-floor windows on the front of the house, and encourages the property owner to retain and repair these existing wood windows.

Likewise, staff opposes the replacement of the second-story door at the rear of the property. This original 15-lite wood door should be retained and repaired.

The first-floor windows on the rear elevation are six-over-six double-hung wood windows that are not original and in openings that have been modified, yet they date from the period when the district was designation and a change in material and configuration to one-over-one does not meet the *Guidelines* for window replacement. Changes to existing windows along a secondary elevation are considered by the Commission on a case-by-case basis. Staff recommends either retention and repair of the existing wood sash, or replacement of the existing sash with six-over-six wood sash. In all these instances, the applicant may add storm windows by requesting administrative review and approval by CAR staff.

Staff has offered conditions under which the work could be found to meet the City's Old and Historic District Guidelines. Otherwise, it is the assessment of staff that the application, as submitted, is not consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation outlined in Section 114-930.7(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.