



# Commission for Architectural Review Application for Certificate of Appropriateness

900 E. Broad Street, Room 510  
Richmond, VA 23219 | (804)-646-6569

[www.rva.gov/planning-development-review/commission-architectural-review](http://www.rva.gov/planning-development-review/commission-architectural-review)



## Property (location of work)

Address: 1500 North Lombardy Street, Richmond Virginia 23220

Historic District: City of Richmond Old and Historic District

## Applicant Information ☒ Billing Contact

Name: Dale Mullen

Email: dmullen@wtplaw.com

Phone: 804-799-7854

Company: Whiteford, Taylor & Preston L.L.P.

Mailing Address: 1021 E. Cary Street, Suite 170  
Richmond, VA 23219

Applicant Type: ☐ Owner ☒ Agent ☐ Lessee

☐ Architect ☐ Contractor

Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

## Owner Information ☒ Billing Contact

☐ Same as Applicant

Name: David E. Gordon

Email: degordon@VUU.EDU

Phone: 804-638-0185

Company: Virginia Union University

Mailing Address: 1500 North Lombardy Street  
Richmond, Virginia 23220

**\*\*Owner must sign at the bottom of this page\*\***

## Project Information

Project Type: ☒ Alteration ☐ Demolition ☐ New Construction (Conceptual Review Required)

Project Description (attach additional sheets if needed):

Addition of signs to existing historic Vann Tower.

## Acknowledgement of Responsibility

**Compliance:** If granted, you agree to comply with all conditions of the certificate of appropriateness (COA). Revisions to approved work require staff review and may require a new application and approval from the Commission of Architectural Review (CAR). Failure to comply with the conditions of the COA may result in project delays or legal action. The COA is valid for one (1) year and may be extended for an additional year, upon written request and payment of associated fee.

**Requirements:** A complete application includes all applicable information requested on checklists available on the CAR website to provide a complete and accurate description of existing and proposed conditions, as well as payments of the application fee. Applications proposing major new construction, including additions, should meet with staff to review the application and requirements prior to submitting an application. Owner contact information and signature is required. Late or incomplete applications will not be considered.

**Zoning Requirements:** Prior to Commission review, it is the responsibility of the applicant to determine if zoning approval is required an application materials should be prepared in compliance with zoning.

Signature of Owner

David E. Gordon

Date

4/29/22





VIRGINIA UNION UNIVERSITY  
VANN TOWER



# HISTORIC SIGNIFICANCE

“The Pavilion, although clearly more restrained when it came to external decoration than most American civic buildings of its scale, did not exhibit any Art Déco or modern styling. Its contrapunctual volumes sat solidly on their site.”

All the individuals involved in the design, fabrication, and construction of the Pavilion were Belgian, and their nationality and cultural roots are reflected in the use of local materials, as explicitly identified in literature circulated at the Fair. Expanses of plate glass represented the Walloon provinces. The outer walls were clad in purplish-red terra cotta tiles chosen to represent Flanders.

The tall carillon tower that soared above the composition, as well as the window casings and lower walls, were clad in a slate-black schist representing the Ardennes. The 165-foot tall tower was illuminated from within every evening, from its base to its belfry, drawing further attention to the 35-bell carillon at its apex. On the engineering level, this building is significant due to its foreign prefabrication. It also represents a rare and early use of metric steel sections in the United States. The building's significance is further reinforced through its structural efficiency and construction, although designed as a temporary structure with prefabricated parts for rapid assembly and disassembly.”



Bryan Clark Green

# WRITTEN DESCRIPTION

## EXISTING CONDITIONS

Vann Memorial Tower, so named to honor Robert L. Vann, an illustrious alumnus of Virginia Union University, and being the same institutional building defined and described in the Deed of Easement as the “Belgian Building”

## PROPOSED WORK

Four (4) 295.2-square-foot, lighted signs, in the shape of VUU’s logo, attached to the exterior of the 165-foot tower (a.k.a. the Vann Tower) rising from the center of the Belgian Building, one sign on each of the Belgian Building’s four sides.

## CURRENT BUILDING MATERIAL CONDITIONS

The Belgian Friendship building is steel frame construction with red and grey terra cotta tiles. Many of these tiles, especially near the ground are cracking and show signs of wear.

Plate glass picture windows are in fair condition, but show signs of age.

The tower itself has been reclad with cementitious siding panels and these remain in good condition.

The peak of the tower is capped with an steel structure cap with aluminum louvers. Before installation of the signage, a number of these had been damaged but are concealed by the signage.

## PROPOSED NEW MATERIAL DESCRIPTION

5” anodized aluminum sign box with .177mm lexan facing. Sign box is attached to new steel structure with 3/8” stainless allthread. New steel frame bolted to existing frame via flanges welded to existing steel framing.



# HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHS

# PHOTOGRAPHS

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*Historic American Buildings Survey Photograph*





*Historic American Buildings Survey Photograph*



*View of Vann Tower before sign installation (DHR)*



# PHOTOGRAPHS OF PROPOSED WORK



*View from East*



# PHOTOGRAPHS

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*East Exterior*





*View from Southeast*





*View from West*





*View from Northwest*





*Southeast Detail*





*North and West Exterior Detail*





*View of Interior Peak*





*View of Interior Peak*



## PHOTOGRAPHS

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*Connection Details*





*Existing and New Connection Details*





*Interior*

# DRAWINGS















