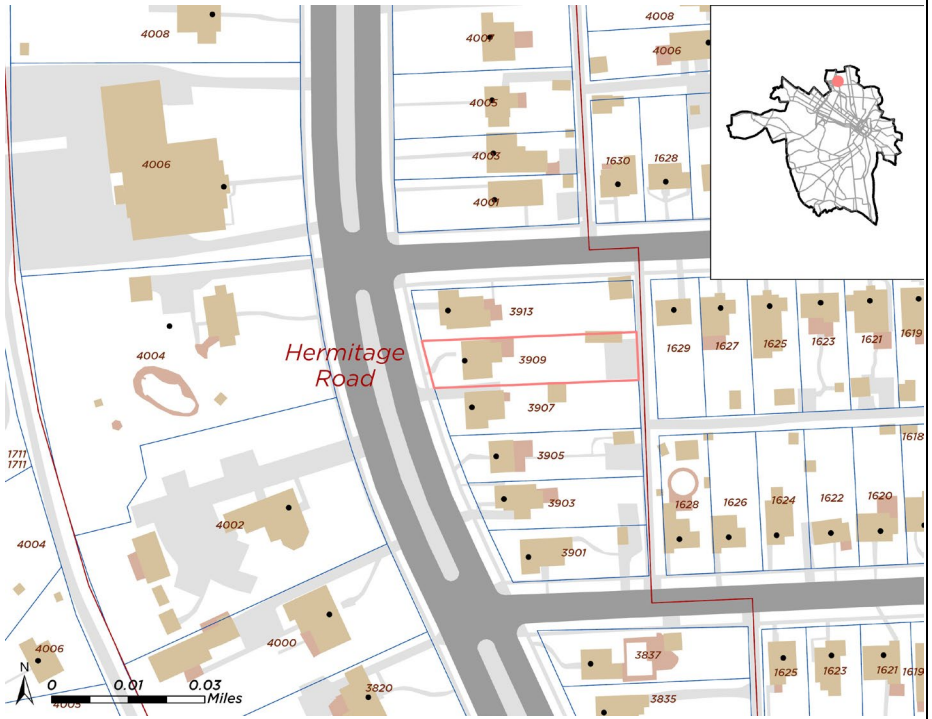




Commission of Architectural Review

4. COA-128332-2023	Final Review	Meeting Date: 5/23/2023
Applicant/Petitioner	Kimberly Graziano	
Project Description	Construct a front yard asphalt driveway.	
Project Location		
Address: 3909 Hermitage Road		
Historic District: Hermitage Road		
High-Level Details: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Retroactive approval for a driveway in the front yard.• Driveway is made of black asphalt.• Structure was built circa 1924/1925 primarily with brick in the colonial revival style. The structure is contributing to the district. <p><i>This application is a result of a notice of violation issued on 2/22/2023</i></p>		
Staff Recommendation	Denial	
Staff Contact	Samantha Lewis, Samantha.lewis@rva.gov , 804-646-5207	
Previous Reviews	<p>This application was deferred by the Commission at the April 25th, 2023 meeting to allow the applicant additional time to revise the submitted plans to be a design and material more compatible with the district, or to provide additional information that justifies the retention of the non-conforming driveway.</p> <p>Since the last review, CAR staff has met with the City of Richmond's Department of Public Works who has stated that they would not permit a new curb cut in this location based on the City's Driveway Ordinance and underlying zoning.</p> <p>Applicant wishes to apply for a Special Use Permit approval from the Planning Commission and City Council to waive underlying zoning requirements. Given that DPW will not permit a new driveway in this location and the lack of support by CAR staff, Land Use Administration staff would not support an SUP for a driveway.</p>	
Staff Recommendations	None	

Staff Analysis

Guideline Reference	Reference Text	Analysis
Standards for Site Improvements, p. 77, #10	<i>For existing buildings, the development of front yard hardscaped areas, where such elements did not exist historically, are discouraged</i>	3909 Hermitage Road did not historically have any front yard hardscaping. Alley access is provided for the building.
Standards for Site Improvements, p. 77, #11	<i>In instances where physical or documentary evidence does not exist, the proposed front yard landscaped area should be compatible in design, materials, and location, and should look to precedent on the block face or the block face opposite, or within the district, but not outside the district.... In any event, the non-historical over-development of front yards should be avoided.</i>	<p>The current driveway is made of asphalt, which is not a historic material and is generally not allowed in historic districts as a front hardscaping material. The location of the driveway, in the front of the house, is not historically compatible.</p> <p>Other existing driveways on the block and on the street are sited so that the primary parking location is adjacent to a secondary elevation, under a carport. Staff notes those properties have appropriate curb cuts and aprons to be classified as a driveway and were constructed prior to the 1970s zoning district code.</p> <p>There are examples within the district of driveways in front of primary buildings; however, these examples are associated with large estate homes and are part of a larger site plan.</p>
City of Richmond Code section 30-410.8		<p>Staff notes that the underlying zoning for this property is R-5. City of Richmond Code section 30-410.8 states this zoning district does not allow for front driveways because there is alley parking available. 3909 Hermitage has alley access.</p> <p>Other driveways on the subject block were existing prior to the creation of the City's driveway ordinance referenced above. Existing driveways are also sensitive the primary building on site, being located in a side yard or leading to an area underneath a side canopy adjacent to a secondary entrance.</p>
127-6076 Hermitage Road Historic District		Hermitage Road Historic District nomination form states the property at 3909 Hermitage is part of the Virginia Place plat which was laid out in 1911 and its prominence along Hermitage Road adds to the vista of deeply

		<p>setback homes with landscaped front gardens. This setting was intended to be 'park-like' and was a core tenant of the 'City Beautiful' movement that was alive in Richmond at the time the Hermitage Road area was developed. The nomination form writes that this pattern along Hermitage Road "embodies the archetypal characteristics of an early twentieth century residential suburban development." (section 7, page 5). This property was platted with a 15-foot alley in the rear. This development pattern was followed for the other blocks that make up the Virginia Place development. Further the nomination form writes that the district has a high degree of integrity. The installation of a front driveway, location, and material compromises the districts integrity.</p> <p>Staff notes the applicant has not submitted a new application as the Commission had asked for at the April 25th meeting.</p> <p>Staff recommends denial of the application.</p>
--	--	---

It is the assessment of staff that, with the conditions above, the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation and New Construction 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.

Figures

Figure 1. Existing Driveway at 3909 Hermitage Road.



Figure 2. Existing Driveway at 3909 Hermitage Road.



Figure 3. Driveway associated with estate home at 4010 Hermitage Road.



Figure 4. Driveway leading to rear carriage house in side yard. 4002 Hermitage Rd.



Figure 5. Driveway in side yard leading to covered carport.



Figure 6. Neighboring Driveway located at 3907 Hermitage Road. Driveway located in narrow side yard.



Figure 7. 4001-4005 Hermitage Rd.
No Driveway Access.



Figure 8. 3835-3837 Hermitage Rd. No Driveway Access.

