

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
June 24, 2014 Meeting**

5. **CAR No. 14-65** (A. & L. Davis)

**520 N. 27th St
Church Hill North Old and Historic District**

Project Description: **Modify window openings and rear roof**

Staff Contact: **W. Palmquist**

The applicant requests permission to make a number of modifications at the rear of the property, most of which are to improve emergency egress at a bedroom located at the rear of the property. These proposed changes including modifying the roofline of a rear addition, enlarging a window opening for emergency egress, installing a new crawl space access door in an existing opening, relocating a window from the side elevation to the rear, and installing a smaller vinyl window in its place, as well as associated siding, soffit, gutter, and downspout installation.

Currently, the rear, non-historic addition of the house has a butterfly style roof facing the rear of the property, with an atypical gutter system. A small single-hung window is located on the rear façade of this addition which is not code compliant for emergency egress. The applicant proposes reconfiguring the roof line with a more traditional straight roof edge and installing new vinyl siding to match the existing vinyl siding of the structure. A new soffit would be installed along the building's west elevation and north (rear) elevation to replace the existing gutter. A new gutter and down spout would be installed along the roof and building edges and a new TPO roof over tapered insulation would be installed over the rear addition.

In order to make the rear of the addition code compliant for emergency egress, an existing double-hung vinyl window on the building's east elevation would be moved to the rear of property and installed on the north (rear) façade. The existing window opening would be enlarged to accommodate this regular-sized window. The applicant then proposes to replace the window on the east elevation with a smaller double-hung vinyl window within the existing opening. In addition to these changes, a new crawl space access door would be installed in the existing opening. The crawl space access is not visible from the public right-of-way.

Staff recommends approval of the project with a condition. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* state that, "The number, location, size or glazing pattern of windows should not be changed by cutting new openings, blocking out windows or by installing replacement sash that do not fit the original window. Changes to the existing windows or the addition of new windows along a secondary elevation will be considered by the Commission on a case-by-case basis" (pg. 59 #7). For this reason, staff would

recommend a condition that the new window on the east façade match the existing opening. While this side of the home is not highly visible from the public right-of-way, if the existing window opening is historic it should be preserved. Staff has no objection with enlarging the existing small window opening at the rear of the property as this addition and the associated single-hung window is not historic to the structure. If the window opening on the side of the property is not original to the building, the modification to the size of the opening is appropriate.

It is the assessment of staff that, with the condition noted above, the application is 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 page cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.