

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

7. **CAR No. 14-49** (M. Farley)

**610 N. 21st Street
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

Project Description:

Expand rear porch

Staff Contact:

C. Easterling

The applicant requests permission to expand the rear porch at a residential property located in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. The applicant proposes to retain the existing roof structure, but extend the decks an additional two feet. The applicant has informed staff that the porch deck and railing will be constructed from pressure treated wood. The porch extension will bring the deck out to the point where it is recessed approximately one foot from the adjacent rear addition. The applicant also requests permission to reconfigure the egress stair so that it runs parallel to the deck. A scaled site plan was not included in the application packet, but the applicant has clarified for staff that the reconfigured stair will have a 3' x 4' landing.

Staff recommends approval of the project with conditions. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* notes that the Commission of Architectural Review may approve decks at the rear of properties in Old and Historic Districts, provided that the decks complement the character of the main building and do not alter or destroy significant site elements on the property (Decks, pg. 49). The current decks, railing, and stair are constructed from pressure-treated wood, and the replacement of these non-historic elements should not alter the historic character of the building. Staff recommends that the applicant utilize a more finished style of railing (such as Richmond Rail) for the decks so that the project is more in keeping with the character of rear porches in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. Additionally, staff recommends that the porch should be painted or stained a neutral color that complements in the house, in accordance with the guidelines for deck construction outlined on page 49 of the *Guidelines*. Though the applicant did not supply detailed drawings for the application, the applicant will need to submit these drawings when applying for the necessary building permit.

It is the assessment of staff that, with the conditions noted above, the application is consistent with the Standards for New Construction outlined in Section 114-930.7(c) 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.