

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
October 27, 2015 Meeting**

4. **CAR No. 15-127** (F. Browning) **2316 West Grace Street
West Grace Street Old and Historic District**

Project Description: **Replace 2 windows on the 2nd story of the façade**

Staff Contact: **M. Pitts**

The applicant requests approval for work which includes the replacement of two historic windows on the second story of the building's façade. This application is the result of enforcement activity. The historic windows were one over one wooden windows with ogee lugs which were replaced by one over one vinyl windows without the ogee lugs.

On July 23, 2015, the property owners, Brian and Jennifer Woody, were issued a Notice of Violation for the replacement of windows without review and approval by the Commission. The applicant purchased the home from the Mr. and Mrs. Woody and was not made aware of the violation until the day of closing on August 10th.

Staff recommends denial. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* state that all original windows should be retained and only replaced when they are missing or beyond repair (pg. 65 #1, #7). As the windows were replaced without approval from the Commission, staff did not have the opportunity to determine if the windows were in poor condition and beyond repair. The *Guidelines* further state that when the severity of deterioration requires the replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture and other visible qualities and, where possible, materials (pg. 5, #6); and that any reconstruction of windows should be based on physical evidence or photo documentation (pg. 65, #7). The original windows were one over one windows with wooden sashes and ogee lugs as is currently seen in the first floor windows. Though the replacement windows replicate the one over one configuration; the architectural character of the windows is not maintained because the replacement windows do not include ogee lugs, and the meeting rails of the sashes do not appear to align and are instead offset. Additionally, the *Guidelines* state that vinyl windows are not appropriate for historic buildings in historic districts (pg. 65, #11). For these reasons, staff cannot recommend approval of this window replacement as the new windows do not match the windows which were removed.

It is the assessment of staff that the application is not consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation 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.