

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
February 23, 2016, Meeting**

1. **CAR No. 16-023 (C. Rodriguez)** **1822 Monument Avenue**
Monument Avenue Old and Historic District

Project Description: **Replace asphalt and brick in rear parking area with gravel and cobblestones**

Staff Contact: **M. Pitts**

The applicant requests approval to modify the existing parking area at the rear of a home in the Monument Avenue Old and Historic District. The applicant is proposing to relocate the existing wood and brick fence and the associated stairs closer to the home to create a larger parking area. Staff has administratively approved the relocation of this fence. The application before the Commission is for a change in materials in the parking area. The parking area is currently primarily asphalt with a small brick pad for the trash cans. The applicant is proposing to replace the existing materials with gravel lined with new granite cobblestones at the edge of the property where it meets the alley. The proposed gravel will be a grey/brown color.

Staff recommends approval of the project. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* state that the removal of historic materials that characterize a property shall be avoided (pg. 4, #2). The existing asphalt pad is not an historic material and can be removed. The *Guidelines* state that site improvements should reinforce the overall historic character of the district and that granite is an appropriate choice for hardscape material in Old and Historic Districts (pg. 72). Additionally, the proposed granite cobblestones will complement the existing cobblestone alley. Also, gravel parking areas are found throughout the District including at 1812 Monument Avenue; and the proposed color is compatible with the existing cobblestones. For these reasons, staff recommends approval for the proposed change in material for the parking area.

It is the assessment of staff that the application is consistent with the Standards for Site Improvements outlined in Section 30-930.7(e) 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.