

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

3. **CAR No. 16-020** (D. Tupponce)

**2224 Jefferson Avenue
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

Project Description:

**Construct a carport
at the rear of an existing structure**

Staff Contact:

M. Pitts

The applicant requests approval to construct a carport at the rear of a home in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. This application is the result of enforcement activity as the approximately 12' by 14' wooden carport was constructed without a Certificate of Appropriateness or a building permit. The applicant is proposing to add a railing to the top of the carport to match the existing railings which consist of pickets on the outside of handrails. With the installation of the proposed railing, the applicant is attempting to create the appearance of the carport as a deck, but there will not be access to this deck from inside the home. The applicant is proposing to paint the railing and the roof of the carport to match the existing porches at the rear of the property.

Though the carport/deck is located at the rear of the property, it is highly visible from the public right of way. The structure can be seen from the adjacent alley, East Leigh Street, and North 23rd Street.

The applicant has not provide a site plan for the structure. For this reason, zoning staff was unable to provide guidance as to whether the structure meets the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

Staff recommends denial of the project. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* note that new construction should use a building form compatible with that found elsewhere in the district (pg. 44). Though there are decks constructed throughout the district including multiple within the surrounding blocks which were constructed prior to the establishment of the district, carports are not a typical building element found within the district. Decks of this height and width typically have patios underneath, not parking. As the applicant would like the proposed structure to be considered a deck, staff reviewed the project through the lens of the "Standards for New Construction: Decks" on pages 48 of the Guidelines. The proposed deck meets some of the guidelines because it is located at the rear of the dwelling and does not alter, damage or destroy significant site elements of the property. The *Guidelines* note that deck sub-decking should be screened with wood lattice work or with brick piers (pg. 48, #4). The applicant is proposing wooden piers and cannot install wood lattice as it would impede the ability to park under the structure; and therefore, this application does not meet this requirement for decks. As a carport is not an appropriate building element in the Old and Historic

District, and the structure does not meet the requirements in the Guidelines for a deck; staff cannot recommend approval of the project as submitted.

It is the assessment of staff that the application is not consistent with the Standards for New Construction outlined in Section 30-930.7(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.