

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

7. **CAR No. 16-026** (G. Venters) **2705 East Franklin Street**  
**St. John's Church Old and Historic District**

**Project Description:** **Install front doors to create an entrance vestibule.**

**Staff Contact:** **M. Pitts**

The applicant requests approval to install paired doors at the front of a home in the St. John's Church Old and Historic District to create an entrance vestibule. Currently, the home has a vestibule which is not enclosed. The applicant is proposing to install two wooden doors with single lites to match the existing front doors of the home. Above the doors, the applicant is proposing to install a single lite transom.

**Staff recommends denial of the project.** The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* note that entrances should not be radically changed and that primary entrances should not be altered to give an appearance that was not originally intended (pg. 67, #4, 11). Though there is precedent in the district for indoor vestibules including at the adjacent property, staff was unable to find photographic evidence that the vestibule for this property was previously enclosed. Additionally, staff was unable to view physical evidence of doors and a transom at this location. The physical evidence which would have indicated doors at this location would include evidence of hinges, stops, and possibly pin locks. Also, the physical evidence of a previous transom would include an indication in the jamb molding of the door head as is seen in the neighboring property which is not present in the subject property. As staff is unable to confirm the previous existence of these proposed doors, staff cannot recommend approval of the alteration to this primary entrance.

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