

**COMMISSION OF ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW
STAFF REPORT
April 26, 2016 Meeting**

3. **CAR No. 16-061** (N. Monalto)

**900 North 25th Street
Union Hill Old and Historic District**

Project Description:

**Rehabilitate the front porch by
replacing the columns and railing.**

Staff Contact:

M. Pitts

The applicant requests approval to rehabilitate the front porch of an existing home in the Union Hill Old and Historic District. Currently, the porch is composed of decorative metal columns and a simple metal railing. Based on the style and age of the materials, it is apparent that they are not original to the structure. The applicant is proposing to install 6" by 6" wooden columns and wooden Richmond rail composed of 3 ¼" top and bottom rails, 1" by 2" pickets, and 4" by 4" posts.

Staff recommends approval of the project with a condition. The *Richmond Old and Historic Districts Handbook and Design Review Guidelines* note that porches should not be radically changed, and that replacements should only occur if an entire porch is missing and should match the original as much as possible (pg. 67, #4, #5). Staff has determined that the existing porch columns and railing are not original to the structure and have not acquired any significance in their own right. Unfortunately, there is no photographic evidence as to the composition of the original front porch. The Guidelines note that for an existing building which has lost its railing and for which no documentary or physical evidence survives, the balusters in traditional Richmond rail are appropriate (pg. 46, #2). Given that there is no evidence of the previous porch, staff recommends approval of the installation of the Richmond rail and simple square columns and posts in the location of the existing columns and posts with the condition that the applicant submit the proposed paint color for the porch to staff for administrative review and approval.

It is the assessment of staff that the application is consistent with the Standards for Rehabilitation 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 pages cited above, adopted by the Commission for review of Certificates of Appropriateness under the same section of the code.