

## PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

April 15, 2024

PREPARED FOR THE LANDMARKS COMMISSION



**Project Name & Address:** 2003 Van Hise Avenue

**Application Type(s):** Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition and new construction

**Legistar File ID #** [82588](#)

**Prepared By:** Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner, Planning Division

**Date Prepared:** April 9, 2024

### Summary

**Project Applicant/Contact:** Jeannie Kowing, Jeannie Kowing Design

**Requested Action:** The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of a garage and construction of a new garage.

### Background Information

**Parcel Location/Information:** The subject property is in the University Heights historic district.

#### Relevant Ordinance Sections:

#### 41.18 STANDARDS FOR GRANTING A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

A certificate of appropriateness shall be granted only if the proposed project complies with this chapter, including all of the following standards that apply.

- (1) New Construction or Exterior Alteration. The Landmarks Commission shall approve a certificate of appropriateness for exterior alteration or construction only if:
  - (a) In the case of exterior alteration to a designated landmark, the proposed work would meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
  - (b) In the case of exterior alteration or construction of a structure on a landmark site, the proposed work would meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
  - (c) In the case of exterior alteration or construction on any property located in a historic district, the proposed exterior alteration or construction meets the adopted standards and guidelines for that district.
  - (d) In the case of any exterior alteration or construction for which a certificate of appropriateness is required, the proposed work will not frustrate the public interest expressed in this ordinance for protecting, promoting, conserving, and using the City's historic resources.
- (2) Demolition or Removal. In determining whether to approve a certificate of appropriateness for any demolition or removal of any landmark or structure within a historic district, the Landmarks Commission shall consider all of the following, and may give decisive weight to any or all of the following:
  - (a) Whether the structure is of such architectural or historic significance that its demolition or removal would be detrimental to the public interest and contrary to the general welfare of the people of the City and the State.

- (b) Whether a landmark's designation has been rescinded.
- (c) Whether the structure, although not itself a landmark structure, contributes to the distinctive architectural or historic character of the historic district as a whole and therefore should be preserved for the benefit of the people of the City and the State.
- (d) Whether demolition or removal of the subject property would be contrary to the policy and purpose of this ordinance and/or to the objectives of the historic preservation plan for the applicable historic district as duly adopted by the Common Council.
- (e) Whether the structure is of such old and unusual or uncommon design, method of construction, or material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty and/or expense.
- (f) Whether retention of the structure would promote the general welfare of the people of the City and the State by encouraging study of American history, architecture and design or by developing an understanding of American culture and heritage.
- (g) The condition of the property, provided that any deterioration of the property which is self-created or which is the result of a failure to maintain the property as required by this chapter cannot qualify as a basis for the issuance of a certificate of appropriateness for demolition or removal.
- (h) Whether any new structure proposed to be constructed or change in use proposed to be made is compatible with the historic resources of the historic district in which the subject property is located, or if outside a historic district, compatible with the mass and scale of buildings within two hundred (200) feet of the boundary of the landmark site.

Prior to approving a certificate of appropriateness for demolition, the Landmarks Commission may require the applicant to provide documentation of the structure. Documentation shall be in the form required by the Commission.

#### **41.27 STANDARDS FOR NEW STRUCTURES.**

(1) General

(a) Primary Structures

The design for a new structure in a historic district shall be visually compatible with other historic resources within two hundred (200) feet in the following ways:

1. Building Placement. When determining visual compatibility for building placement, the Landmarks Commission shall consider factors such as lot coverage, setbacks, building orientation, and historic relationships between the building and site.
2. Street Setback. When determining visual compatibility for street setbacks, the Landmarks Commission shall consider factors such as the average setback of historic resources on the same block face within two hundred (200) feet, and the setback of adjacent structures.
3. Visual Size. When determining visual compatibility for visual size, the Landmarks Commission shall consider factors such as massing, building height in feet and stories, the gross area of the front elevation (i.e., all walls facing the street), street presence, and the dominant proportion of width to height in the façade.
4. Building Form. When determining visual compatibility for building form, the Landmarks Commission shall consider factors such as building type and use, roof shape, symmetry or asymmetry, and its dominant vertical or horizontal expression.
5. Architectural Expression. When determining visual compatibility for architectural expression, the Landmarks Commission shall consider factors such as the building's

modulation, articulation, building planes, proportion of building elements, and rhythm of solids to voids created by openings in the façade.

- (b) Accessory Structures
  - 1. Comply with requirements for new primary structures with other historic accessory structures serving as comparables.
  - 2. Minimally visible from the developed public right-of-way, or be minimally visible from the front of the property for corner lots.
  - 3. Clearly be secondary to the primary structure.
- (3) Exterior Walls
  - (a) General
    - 1. Materials used for new structures shall be similar in design, scale and architectural appearance to materials that date to the period of significance on historic resources within two hundred (200) feet, but differentiated enough so that it is not confused as a historic building.
- (4) Roofs
  - (a) Form
    - 1. Roof form and pitch shall be similar to the form and pitch of the roofs on historic resources within two hundred (200) feet.
  - (b) Materials
    - 1. Roof materials shall replicate materials found on historic resources within two hundred (200) feet.
- (5) Windows and Doors
  - (a) General
    - 1. Door and window styles should both match the style of the new structure and be compatible with those on historic resources within two hundred (200) feet.
  - (c) Entrance Doors and Storm Doors
    - 1. Sliding glass doors shall not be installed on the ground floor elevation along any street frontage.
  - (f) Garage Doors
    - 1. Garage doors shall be similar in design, scale, architectural appearance, and other visual qualities prevalent within the historic district.
- (7) Building Systems
  - (c) Lighting and Electrical Systems
    - 1. Decorative light fixtures shall be compatible in style and location with the overall design of the building.

## Analysis and Conclusion

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to demolish an existing garage and to construct a new garage. The principal building on the lot was constructed in 1916 for John G. Kessenich, a bookkeeper for First National Bank. The next resident was Harry O. Teckmeyer, vice president of Teckmeyer Candy Company. The Craftsman-style house was designed by architect August Beckman. The existing garage is located on the rear of the lot and is of a simple utilitarian design, which is typical of garages in the district. The small structure does not accommodate current vehicles and the proposal is to construct a new two-car garage. The garage itself does not appear to be historically or architecturally significant for the property or the district. The replacement garage will largely replicate the appearance of the existing. Staff recommends no faux hardware on the vehicle door as replicating the appearance of operable carriage doors is out of character with garages in the district and updating the window choice to one without exterior vinyl cladding.

The proposal is essentially the same as the previous project that the Landmarks Commission approved in 2021. The existing Certificate of Appropriateness and any possible 1 year extension have expired since the previous approval and the applicant is resubmitting in order to proceed with completing the work. The proposed replacement garage largely replicates the appearance of the existing, but at a larger scale. Additionally, though, the new project is subject to the updated ordinance, so the Landmarks Commission's review is through the lens of a different set of standards of approval for the new construction.

A discussion of relevant standards follows:

**41.18 STANDARDS FOR GRANTING A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS.** A certificate of appropriateness shall be granted only if the proposed project complies with this chapter, including all of the following standards that apply.

- (2) Demolition or Removal. In determining whether to approve a certificate of appropriateness for any demolition or removal of any landmark or structure within a historic district, the Landmarks Commission shall consider all of the following, and may give decisive weight to any or all of the following:
  - (a) The garage is not architecturally or historically significant.
  - (b) N/A
  - (c) The existing garage does not contribute to the overall character of the district.
  - (d) The demolition of the garage is not contrary to the purpose of the historic preservation ordinance and is in keeping with Landmarks Commission for modifications to a property to allow for ongoing residential use.
  - (e) The existing structure is not significantly old or of an unusual design.
  - (f) Retention of the existing structure would not benefit the public's understanding of American history.
  - (g) N/A
  - (h) The replacement garage will read as new, but be of a new design that accommodates current vehicle sizes.

Staff does not believe that additional photographic documentation of the garage beyond what is included in the application is necessary.

**41.27 STANDARDS FOR NEW STRUCTURES**

(1) General

(a) Primary Structures

The design for a new structure in a historic district shall be visually compatible with other historic resources within two hundred (200) feet in the following ways:

1. Building Placement. The new garage will be located on the rear of the property in approximately the same location as the existing garage. Applicant acknowledges that this will require a Zoning variance.
2. Street Setback. The garage is similarly set back from the street as other accessory structures in the district.
3. Visual Size. The new accessory structure is larger than the existing, but is visually compatible with the principal structure and of a similar scale to other new garages constructed in the district.
4. Building Form. The hipped roof and rectangular form largely replicate the existing garage style.
5. Architectural Expression. The architectural details on the garage will replicate the character of the existing garage.

(b) Accessory Structures

1. The new accessory structure appears to comply with the standards for primary structure.

2. Located at the rear of the lot, the garage will be minimally visible from the developed public right-of-way.
  3. As it is located at the rear of the property and is of a much smaller scale, it is clearly secondary to the primary structure.
- (3) Exterior Walls
- (a) General
1. The materials for the garage are similar in design, scale and architectural appearance to materials that date to the period of significance on historic resources within two hundred (200) feet, but differentiated enough so that it is not confused as a historic building. The applicant needs to specify the reveal of the smooth fiber cement board in order to verify that the reveal will replicate that of historic materials in the district.
- (4) Roofs
- (a) Form
1. The form and pitch of the roof is similar to that of the historic structure and of other historic resources in the vicinity.
- (b) Materials
1. The roof of the garage is proposed to have similar to those on the house, but the applicant needs to specify which product is proposed.
- (5) Windows and Doors
- (a) General
1. Door and window styles both match the style of the new structure and be compatible with those on historic resources within two hundred (200) feet, however the window product will need to have a material that replicates the appearance of wood on the exterior and the current proposed product does not.
- (f) Garage Doors
1. The garage doors are similar to others found in the district, but the door should not have the faux carriage door hardware as that was not typical in the district.
- (7) Building Systems
- (c) Lighting and Electrical Systems
1. The decorative light fixtures appear to be compatible in style and location with the overall design of the building.

## Recommendation

Staff believes that the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness could be met and recommend that the Landmarks Commission approve the proposal with the following conditions:

1. No faux hardware on the garage's vehicle door
2. Submit updated window, exterior cladding, and roof shingle specifications to meet standards, with approval by staff.