

Regarding: **517 South Baldwin – Third Lake Ridge Historic District –
INFORMATIONAL REVIEW – Exterior alteration
alternatives
(Legistar #20242)**

Date: October 13, 2010
Prepared By: Amy Scanlon

General Information

The Applicant requested an informational appearance before the Landmarks Commission to discuss five improvement options for the residence at 517 South Baldwin in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District. The options are described as follows:

Option A – The existing structure remains in its existing location. A new foundation for the existing structure would be constructed. The first floor elevation would be raised. A second story would be added to the c.1880 kitchen wing. Presumably this would be a half story to allow the new roof height to die against the existing ridge height of the c.1868 portion. The front porch would be altered.

Option B – The existing structure would be moved toward Baldwin Street to locate it on a newly constructed foundation at a higher elevation. The front porch would be altered.

Option C – The c.1868 structure would be moved toward Baldwin Street. A new foundation for the existing structure would be constructed. The first floor elevation would be raised. The c.1880 kitchen wing would be demolished and a new 2 story kitchen wing would be constructed. Presumably this would require that a full second story would be added to the c.1868 portion also. The front porch would be altered.

Option D and E – Demolish the existing house in its entirety. Construct a new house of similar typology closer to Baldwin Street.

Relevant sections of the Landmarks Ordinance

33.19(11)(h) Guideline Criteria for New Development in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District - Parcels Zoned for Residential Use.

1. Any new structure shall be evaluated according to all criteria listed in Sec. 33.19(11)(f). *(included below)*
2. The directional expression of any new structure shall be compatible with those of the buildings and environment within its visually related area.
3. The materials, patterns and textures of any new structure shall be compatible with those of the buildings and environment within its visually related area.

4. The landscape plan of any new structure shall be compatible with that of the buildings and environment within its visually related area.

33.19(11)(f) Guideline Criteria for new Development in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District - Parcels Zoned for Commercial Use.

1. Any new structures shall be evaluated according to both of the criteria listed in Sec. 33.01(11)(d) (*included below*); that is, compatibility of gross volume and height.
2. The rhythm of solids and voids in the street facade(s) of any new structure shall be compatible with the buildings within its visually related area.
3. The materials used in the street facade(s) of any new structure shall be compatible with those used in the buildings and environment within its visually related area.
4. The design of the roof of any new structure shall be compatible with those of the buildings and environment within its visually related area.
5. The rhythm of building masses and spaces created by the construction of a new structure shall be compatible with the existing rhythm of masses and spaces for those sites within its visually related area.

33.19 (11)(d) Guideline Criteria for new Development in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District - Parcels Zoned for Manufacturing Use.

1. The gross volume of any new structure shall be visually compatible with the buildings and environment within its visually related area.
2. The height of any new structure shall be visually compatible with the buildings and environment within its visually related area.

33.19 (11)(i) Guideline Criteria for Exterior Alteration in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District - Parcels Zoned for Residential Use.

1. Alteration of any existing structure shall be evaluated according to all criteria listed in Sec. 33.19(11)(g). (*included below*)
2. Alteration of the surface material, pattern and texture in the facade(s) of any existing structures shall be compatible with the original or existing historical finishes.
3. Alteration of any existing structure shall retain or be compatible with the original or existing historical rhythm of masses and spaces.
4. Alteration of any existing structure shall retain the existing historical landscape plan or shall develop a new plan which is compatible with the plans of the buildings and environment within its visually related area.
5. Alteration of the street facade(s) of any existing structure shall retain the original or existing historical proportional relationships of door sizes to window sizes.

33.19(11)(g) Guideline Criteria for Exterior Alteration in the Third Lake Ridge Historic District - Parcels Zoned for Commercial Use.

1. Alterations of the height of any existing structure shall be visually compatible with the buildings and environment within its visually related area.
2. Alterations of the street facade(s) of any existing structure shall retain the original or existing historical rhythm of solids and voids.
3. Alterations of the street facade(s) of any existing structure shall retain the original or existing historical materials.
4. Alterations of the roof of any existing structure shall retain its existing historical appearance.

33.19(5)(c)3 Standards (*for demolition*) In determining whether to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for any demolition, the Landmarks Commission shall consider and may give decisive weight to any or all of the following:

- a. Whether the building or structure is of such architectural or historic significance that its demolition would be detrimental to the public interest and contrary to the general welfare of the people of the City and the State;
- b. Whether the building or structure, although not itself a landmark building, contributes to the distinctive architectural or historic character of the District as a whole and therefore should be preserved for the benefit of the people of the City and the State;
- c. Whether demolition of the subject property would be contrary to the purpose and intent of this chapter as set forth in Sec. 33.19 and to the objectives of the historic preservation plan for the applicable district as duly adopted by the Common Council; (*staff note: this section is included below*)
- d. Whether the building or structure is of such old and unusual or uncommon design, texture and/or material that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced only with great difficulty and/or expense;
- e. Whether retention of the building or 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;
- f. Whether the building or structure is in such a deteriorated condition that it is not structurally or economically feasible to preserve or restore it, provided that any hardship or difficulty claimed by the owner which is self-created or which is the result of any failure to maintain the property in good repair cannot qualify as a basis for the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness;
- g. Whether any new structure proposed to be constructed or change in use proposed to be made is compatible with the buildings and environment of the district in which the subject property is located.

33.19 (1) Purpose and Intent (*of the Landmarks Commission Ordinance*) It is hereby declared a matter of public policy that the protection, enhancement, perpetuation and use of improvements of special character or special historical interest or value is a public necessity and is required in the interest of health, prosperity, safety and welfare of the people. The purpose of this section is to:

- (a) Effect and accomplish the protection, enhancement and perpetuation of such improvements and of districts which represent or reflect elements of the City's cultural, social, economic, political and architectural history.
 - (b) Safeguard the City's historic and cultural heritage, as embodied and reflected in such landmarks and historic districts.
 - (c) Stabilize and improve property values.
 - (d) Foster civic pride in the beauty and noble accomplishments of the past.
 - (e) Protect and enhance the City's attractions to residents, tourists and visitors, and serve as a support and stimulus to business and industry.
 - (f) Strengthen the economy of the City.
 - (g) Promote the use of historic districts and landmarks for the education, pleasure and welfare of the people of the City.
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Staff Comments

City staff met with the Applicants before they purchased this property. At that time, City staff agreed that there would need to be considerable work done to the property to remedy the significant condition issues. The Applicants are interested in understanding the current opinion of the Landmarks Commission to guide their design proposal.

Although this is an informational presentation, staff thought it appropriate to note the following issues for consideration by the Commission:

1. While not clearly identified on all options, it is possible that each option involves adding a second story to the c.1868 portion of the house. In all cases staff believes this would necessitate the removal of the existing roof structure and the significant alteration or removal of existing exterior wall framing at the upper half story, thus, the remaining historic fabric would be limited to some windows, first floor framing members and interior elements possibly including doors, flooring and trim.
2. Staff has concerns about the introduction of the massing and material of a silo element and vertical board and batten siding material in the urban environment of the Third Lake Ridge Historic District. Staff appreciates the creative use of salvage materials and encourages the Applicants to reuse historic materials in their design proposal while relating the exterior design to the visually related area as described in the Landmarks Ordinance.