



Project Name & Address: 2450 Atwood, St. Bernard's Catholic Church

Application Type(s): Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alterations on a landmark site

Legistar File ID # [51828](#)

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Summary

Project Applicant/Contact: Jason Krause

Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alterations including waterproofing of masonry, and installation of light fixtures and storm panels on a landmark site.

Background Information

Parcel Location/Information: The landmark site is located at 2450 Atwood Avenue.

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) NA
 - (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.

Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.
2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.
3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.
8. Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Analysis and Conclusion

41.18 (1)(a) instructs the Commission refer to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. A brief discussion of the applicable standards for waterproofing follows:

7. Incorrectly applied or specified waterproofing can cause irreversible damage to masonry buildings. The specification sheet that was included with the submission materials indicates that the proposed coating is typically used for concrete structures. The chemical makeup of concrete is different than limestone and the waterproofing product should be selected for the substrate it will be protecting. The reason for waterproofing the building has not been conveyed. Water infiltration to interior spaces should be remedied by proper pointing and stone repair methods. Waterproofing products can cause damage to the stone. Silanes can be effective sealers, but are not appropriate for every application and are not reversible. At a minimum, the product should be tested in a small area and observed for a few months to determine the effect.

A brief discussion of the applicable standards for the installation of light fixtures and storm panels follows:

2. The bell tower and the large stained glass windows of St Bernard's are distinctive architectural features. The installation of light fixtures at the top of the bell tower is inappropriate and negatively impacts the character of the property. The installation of storm panels may protect the windows, but the glass is not clear and the dark muntins take away from the stone work beyond which negatively impacts the character of the property.
3. The selected light fixture is industrial in appearance and the appearance and location of the fixture changes the character of the property.
9. The selected light fixture and locations are not compatible with the style of the landmark building. The introduction of light to the bell tower should be done by fixtures that are minimal and mounted in a place that is not readily visible so that the integrity of the property and its environment are maintained. The storm panels should have clear glass and have muntins that are stone colored so that the panel blends into the historic character instead of contrasting with it.



41.18(1)(d) instructs the Landmarks Commission to determine if the alteration request frustrates the public interest expressed in this ordinance for protecting, promoting, conserving, and using the City's historic resources. The alterations made to landmark structures should be carefully evaluated to ensure the long-term retention of historic significance and character. Protecting the historic resource means using appropriate materials in appropriate locations to maintain its character and integrity.

This item was on the agenda for review at the June 4 Landmarks Commission meeting. The Commission referred the review of the item to a future meeting to allow the applicant to provide additional materials to address the staff report recommendations and to be in attendance to answer questions. The applicant indicated that they did not have any additional materials to provide, but would be able to attend the July 9 meeting.

Recommendation

Staff believes that the standards for granting the Certificate of Appropriateness for the waterproofing and the installation of light fixtures are not met and recommends that the Landmarks Commission deny the requests.

Staff believes that the standards for granting the Certificate of Appropriateness for the installation of storm panels may be met and recommends that the Landmarks Commission approve the request with the following conditions of approval:

1. The storm panel shall have clear glass and stone colored muntins so that it blends with the historic character of the building.
2. The applicant shall provide information about how the panels are affixed to the building and the Commission can then determine appropriateness.