

PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

August 12, 2019

PREPARED FOR THE LANDMARKS COMMISSION



Project Name/Address: 116 E Gilman Street
Application Type: Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alterations in a historic district
Legistar File ID # [56857](#)
Prepared By: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner, Planning Division
Date Prepared: August 5, 2019

Summary

Project Applicant/Contact: Dennis Scherr – Zilber Property Group
Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alterations for the replacement of a lobby door, canopies and a front walk.

Background Information

Parcel Location: The subject site is located in the Mansion Hill historic district.

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.

41.22 MANSION HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT.

- (4) Standards for Review of Development in the Mansion Hill Historic District.
 - (a) Any new structure located within two hundred (200) feet of other historic resources shall be visually compatible with those historic resources in the following ways:
 1. Height.
 2. Gross Volume.
 3. In the street elevation(s) of a structure, the proportion of width to height in the facade(s).
 4. The proportions and relationships of width to height of the doors and windows in street facade(s).

5. The proportion and rhythm of solids to voids created by openings in the façade.
- (b) All street facades shall blend with other structures via directional expression. When adjacent structures have a dominant vertical or horizontal expression, this expression should be carried over and reflected.

Analysis and Conclusion

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to make alterations to the façade of the building at 116 E Gilman; modify the hardscape and landscaping for the pedestrian entry to the building; replacement of the canopy on the rear entrance; and replacement of screens on some windows. The Haase Tower Apartments building was constructed in 1960 and is outside of the period of significance for the Mansion Hill Historic District (1850-1930).

Hardscape/Landscape

The hardscape alterations to the entry for the building will create a space that is more in keeping with the character of the building and site. This area has evolved over time and there are safety issues due to the changes in grade. Replacing the contemporary drystack garden beds with concrete retaining walls and enclosing the perimeter with cable railing will create period appropriate aesthetics while addressing the safety issues. The cable railing, while being a contemporary alteration is a minimal design that will read as being a new alteration and not create a false sense of history. The proposed landscaping alterations will complement the grounds of the building and appear to be designed in a way that will not overwhelm the character of the building and will not introduce maintenance problems for the building

Main Entrance

The current entry door does not appear to be historic and the proposed replacement will not change the door configuration. The panels to the right of the door (east) were likely another type of material and replaced either ca. 1970s or 1980s with the existing pebble-dash panels. The applicant is proposing to cover those panels with architectural tiles, which will introduce a horizontal building material that is both architecturally appropriate and in keeping with the horizontal orientation of the historic building materials on the façade, while differentiating from the historic materials.

To the left (west) of the entrance door, the applicant is proposing to introduce new windows to allow more light into the entry space. The proportion of the windows do not replicate dimensions elsewhere on the façade and staff recommends that the windows either be clerestory windows of a size replicating the dimensions of the small panels on the façade curtain wall, or a full length window to match the height of the adjacent door.

The earliest photos of the property (ca. mid-1970s) show that the original horizontal canopy was already covered by awnings. The original canopy is deteriorated and the fabric awning makes the entrance dark. The applicant is proposing to replicate the location and dimensions of the historic canopy, but will be clad with black metal fascia and a glass canopy to allow light to penetrate the entranceway.

Curtain Wall

The existing curtain wall on the façade has heat transfer and maintenance issues. The applicant is proposing to replace the existing with a new curtain wall that will have aluminum framing and low-e vision glass. The drawings show a different curtain wall design than the original. The original curtain wall design replicates the proportions of design elements on the building and staff recommends that if the applicant is going to replace the curtain wall, they should replicate the original design.

Signage

The applicant is proposing to remove the existing wall signage and replace it with new ground signage. The applicant is working out details with zoning and staff's recommendation is for the commission to review the signage as a potential future design element. Ground signage would need Comprehensive Design Review in this zone.

Other Alterations

The applicant is also proposing to replace the existing rear canopy with materials-in-kind. The balconies on the units are proposed to be repaired and repainted. The applicant is also proposing to replace any missing or damaged screens on unit windows. The applicant's narrative discusses replacing the parking surface, but there are no plans for that improvement. As long as the parking area is remaining approximately the same, staff recommends that this review be completed as part of Zoning's Site Plan process, with the new parking surface complying with zoning requirements.

A discussion of the relevant ordinance sections 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.

- (1) New construction or exterior alteration. The Landmarks Commission shall approve a certificate of appropriateness for exterior alteration or construction only if:
 - (a) N/A.
 - (b) N/A.
 - (c) See discussion of Mansion Hill standards below.
 - (d) This building is a part of the Mansion Hill Historic District, but it is outside of the period of significance. The materials the applicant is proposing to alter are either failing or replace previous alterations that were out of character with the property. The commission will need to decide if replacing the original curtain wall frustrates the public interest in the same fashion as replacing historic, old growth wood windows does.

41.22 MANSION HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT.

- (4) Standards for Review of Development in the Mansion Hill Historic District.
 - (a) This proposal is for alteration to an existing building, not new construction.
 - (b) The adjacent buildings are the landmark property at 104 E Gilman (Kendall Residence) and the 1950s apartment building at 122 E Gilman. The street façade of 122 E Gilman (Lake Shore Apartments) has a similar blend of horizontal design elements on a vertical form. As those two buildings are contemporaneous, the subject property continues to blend with that adjacent property. The landmark at 104 E Gilman was constructed in 1855 and the architectural expression on that building is very different than on the subject property. Staff does not believe that it would serve the public interest to introduce directional expression from that building into the subject property.

Recommendation

Staff believes that the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness can be met and recommends that the Landmarks Commission approve the project with the following conditions:

1. Approval of entranceway replacement with new windows either being clerestory or full length, new architectural tile installed over existing pebble-dash panels with color to be approved by staff, and replacement of door as proposed.
2. Approval of curtain wall replacement with new curtain wall to replicate original design, utilizing aluminum framing and low-e glass with low iron content.

3. Refer decision on signage for a future submission, or administrative approval by the Preservation Planner.
4. Approval of new parking lot surfacing as complies with other City requirements.