



**Project Name & Address:** 710 Orton Court  
**Application Type(s):** Certificate of Appropriateness for an addition and exterior alterations  
**Legistar File ID #** [77226](#)  
**Prepared By:** Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner, Planning Division  
**Date Prepared:** April 25, 2023

## Summary

**Project Applicant/Contact:** Andrew Rubsam  
**Requested Action:** The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a dormer addition and replacement of existing asphalt shingles.

## Background Information

**Parcel Location/Information:** The subject property is in the Third Lake Ridge Local 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.

#### 41.26 STANDARDS FOR ADDITIONS

- (1) General
  - (a) General
    2. A new addition shall be designed to be subordinate and compatible with the character of the structure.
    3. The addition shall be visually separated from the principal building.
    4. The alignment, rhythm, and size of the window and door openings of the new addition shall be similar to those of the historic building.

5. Rooftop additions, decks, terraces, and mechanical and service equipment shall be located to be set back from elevations visible from the developed public right-of-way in order to minimize its visibility and impact on the historic character of the building.
- (b) Materials and Features
  1. A new addition shall be constructed on a secondary or non-character defining elevation so that historic materials and features are not obscured, damaged or destroyed.
  2. New additions that destroy significant historic materials or character-defining features are prohibited.
- (2) Building Site
  - (a) General
    1. Exterior additions to historic buildings shall be designed to be compatible with the historic character of historic resources within two hundred (200) feet and to maintain the pattern of the district.
- (3) Exterior Walls
  - (a) General
    1. Materials used for exterior walls of the addition shall be similar in design, scale, architectural appearance, and other visual qualities of the historic building, but differentiated enough so that it is not confused as historic or original to the building.
  - (b) Wood
    1. Products that replicate wood shall have a smooth surface without textured faux wood grain.
- (4) Roofs
  - (a) General
    1. The form and pitch of the addition roof shall be similar to and compatible with the existing roof form and pitch.
  - (b) Materials
    2. Any roofing materials shall be permitted on flat or slightly sloped roofs not visible from the developed public right-of-way.
- (5) Windows and Doors
  - (a) General
    1. Openings and the windows or doors in them shall be compatible with the overall design of the historic building.
    2. The new openings shall have similar dimensions, operation, components, and finish as the historic windows or doors of the structure.

## Analysis and Conclusion

The proposed project is to do an addition to the back of the house at 710 Orton Ct. the two-story house was constructed in 1914 and is a simple side-gabled structure with an Arts & Crafts front porch. The original siding is currently covered in wide-exposure vinyl siding.

The project proposal says that it is for a dormer addition. The letter of intent also discusses two variances that the applicant is asking for. The application form did not check that it is asking for a variance and the discussion of both of the variances does not specify what standards this project would need a variance for and instead justifies that the project does meet all of the applicable standards. As this application did not ask for a variance and the letter of intent does not follow the variance standards by specifying what standard(s) this project needs a variance from in order to accomplish the project, staff is reviewing just the requested alteration as specified on the application form.

For the alteration, while the letter of intent describes this as a dormer addition, as it covers more than 50 percent of the roof plane, Zoning defines this as a 3<sup>rd</sup> story. Per Zoning standards, houses in this Zoning district cannot be three stories tall. Staff has advised the applicant that they must secure a Zoning variance for this project. Additionally, staff has worked with the applicant and advised that their proposed addition does not meet the historic district standards. It dramatically changes the roof form on this historic resource, would be highly visible

from the developed public right-of-way, and does not have precedent for the types of alterations we see on historic resources within the vicinity during the period of significance for the district. Staff's recommendation was to explore a rear-facing gable or two smaller gabled dormers rather than the largely flat-roofed rectangular addition to the back of the house.

A discussion of relevant standards follows:

#### **41.26 STANDARDS FOR ADDITIONS**

- (1) General
  - (a) General
    2. The addition is not compatible with the character of the structure or subordinate the resource. This type of alteration aligns with the reasons for design standards in historic districts to prevent such out of character changes to the historic buildings.
    3. The change in roof plane does visually separate the addition from the principal building.
    4. The side windows on the addition are not in keeping with the historic size of the historic windows on the structure and the enlargement of the gable-end window changes the character of that original feature. The windows on the rear are largely of the alignment, rhythm, and size of the window openings on the historic building.
    5. This addition to the roof set back 1'-6" from the end of the roof, which does not minimize the visibility, thereby having a negative impact on the historic character of the building.
  - (b) Materials and Features
    1. The addition is proposed to be located on the rear of the structure, but does significantly alter the roof form of the house.
    2. The alteration of the gable-end windows is out of character with the building and the style of side-gabled roof is a character-defining feature of this building.
- (2) Building Site
  - (a) General
    1. While the applicant has provided examples of significant shed-roof additions to historic resources in the vicinity, these are largely all later alterations that are out of character with the historic structure. The one exception is 1049 Rutledge where it appears to be part of the original design of the Tudor Revival house. Again, these types of out of character alterations were the reason for the creation of the design standards for the historic district in order to alterations to be in keeping with the historic architectural character of the historic buildings.
- (3) Exterior Walls
  - (a) General
    1. The applicant proposes a material to replicate the appearance of the vinyl siding and has not verified the width of the historic clapboards underneath. Staff would recommend that if there is an addition, that it be clad in materials that replicate the historic rather than a nonhistoric alteration that is removable (the original siding remains intact underneath the vinyl).
  - (b) Wood
    1. The proposed materials have options that would adequately replicate wood.
- (4) Roofs
  - (a) General
    1. The form and pitch of the addition roof is not similar or compatible with the existing roof form and pitch.
  - (b) Materials
    2. The proposed roofing materials are permitted as this would be a nearly flat roof.
- (5) Windows and Doors
  - (a) General
    1. The windows on the back of the addition are largely symmetrical. They do not align with the openings on the first and second stories. The side windows on the addition to not have a historic precedent for the shape and size on the structure. The alteration of the square

gable-end windows on the side changes the character of what had been intended to show that this was an attic space.

2. The windows on the back of the house have similar dimensions, operation, components, and finish as the historic windows or doors of the structure. The windows on the side do not.

## **Recommendation**

Staff believes that the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness are not met and recommends the Landmarks Commission refer the project to a future meeting for the applicant to redesign the addition.