



Project Name/Address: 2131 Chadbourne Avenue

Application Type: Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alterations in historic district

Legistar File ID # [37498](#)

Prepared By: Amy L. Scanlon, Preservation Planner, Planning Division

Date Prepared: April 20, 2015

Summary

Project Applicant/Contact: Tracy & Cayle Tompkins

Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alterations involving the conversion of a sleeping porch and the front porch and other items in the University Heights Historic District

Background Information

Parcel Location: The subject site is located in the University Heights Historic District.

Relevant Landmarks Ordinance Sections:

33.19(12)(d) Criteria for the Review of Additions, Exterior Alterations and Repairs in TR-C2 and TR-C3 and TR-C4 Zoning Districts.

3. Repairs. Materials used in exterior repairs shall duplicate the original building materials in texture and appearance, unless the Landmarks Commission approves duplication of the existing building materials where the existing building materials differ from the original. Repairs using materials that exactly duplicate the original in composition are encouraged. (Renum. by ORD-08-00122, 11-22-08)
6. Additions Visible from the Street and Alterations to Street Facades. Additions visible from the street, including additions to the top of buildings or structures, and alterations to street facades shall be compatible with the existing building in architectural design, scale, color, texture, proportion of solids to voids and proportion of widths to heights of doors and windows. Materials used in such alterations and additions shall duplicate in texture and appearance, and architectural details used therein shall duplicate in design, the materials and details used in the original construction of the existing building or of other buildings in University Heights of similar materials, age and architectural style, unless the Landmarks Commission approves duplication of the texture and appearance of materials and the design of architectural details used in the existing building where the existing building materials and architectural details differ from the original. Additions and exterior alterations that exactly duplicate the original materials in composition are encouraged. Additions or exterior alterations that destroy significant architectural features are prohibited. Side additions shall not detract from the design composition of the original facade.

Analysis and Conclusion

This staff report relates to the appearance of the front porch only.

As described in the staff report for 3-16-15, the front porch was probably originally open with columns and a low wall or guardrail. The original roof was "flat" with a decorative railing as it currently exists. The hipped roof was likely added to attempt to remedy water drainage issues. The stucco portions of the upper rail seem to terminate into the wall in a way that would be unlikely as a later modification. In addition, the column bases tie into the brick foundation detail which indicates the square stucco columns are original. Given the likelihood that the upper stucco portions of the railing and the porch columns are original, it is very possible that the stucco low wall of the front porch is also original.

The contractor has photos of existing physical evidence that show the stucco elements of the parapet were constructed in the same way that the columns were constructed at the sleeping porch. The sleeping porch columns were constructed with minimal studs wrapped in wire lath without sheathing. The studs were placed on top of a rolled membrane roof of low pitch at the garage. This evidence was used with evidence of cut rafters to conclude that the sleeping porch structure was altered and was not original to the construction of the house. Due to the similar construction of the stucco elements on the parapet, one could use this evidence to conclude that the sleeping porch construction and front porch parapet construction occurred at similar times. This would also mean that if the sleeping porch was a later addition, then the parapet of the front porch is also a later addition.

After reviewing the evidence on site, staff believes the evidence of the sleeping porch may have been misinterpreted. Staff believes that the sleeping porch and front porch parapet were realized during the original construction campaign and that the evidence is not conclusive. The front porch parapet is an architectural feature that should be retained. Because the physical evidence is not conclusive and leaves many unanswered questions, the removal of the architectural feature would result in conjecture and is not warranted.



Wisconsin Historical Society, reference #75212.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed removal of the front porch parapet are not met and recommends that the Landmarks Commission deny the request.

The other items will be reviewed at a future meeting.