



**Project Name/Address:** 423 N Carroll

**Application Type:** PUBLIC HEARING  
Certificate of Appropriateness for demolition of garage and other exterior alterations in historic district

**Legistar File ID #** [39043](#)

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

**Date Prepared:** July 6, 2015

## Summary

**Project Applicant/Contact:** Dan Seeley, Steve Brown Apartments

**Requested Action:** The Applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of an existing garage structure in the Mansion Hill Historic District.

## Background Information

**Parcel Location:** The subject site is located in the Mansion Hill Historic District.

### Relevant Landmarks Ordinance Sections:

33.19(10)(d) Regulation of Construction, Reconstruction, Exterior Alteration and Demolition.

The Commission shall act in these matters specifically as they regard the Mansion Hill Historic District in the manner specified by Madison General Ordinance, Sections 33.19(5)(b) and (c).

### Related to the demolition of the existing garage

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;
- 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 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.

33.19(5)(b) Regulation of Construction, Reconstruction and Exterior Alteration.

- 4. Upon filing of any application with the Landmarks Commission, the Landmarks Commission shall determine:
  - a. Not applicable
  - b. Not applicable
  - c. Whether, in the case of any property located in an Historic District designated pursuant to the terms of Subsection (6)(d) hereunder, the proposed construction, reconstruction or exterior alteration does not conform to the objectives and design criteria of the historic preservation plan for said district as duly adopted by the Common Council.

## **Analysis and Conclusion**

The Applicant is requesting two Certificates of Appropriateness from the Landmarks Commission and each action will be discussed separately below.

### **Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the existing garage**

A discussion of the demolition standards 33.19(5)(c)3. follows:

- a. The existing garage is not of any architectural or historic significance and its demolition would not be detrimental to the public interest and not contrary to the general welfare of the people of the City and the State;
- b. The existing garage does not contribute to the distinctive architectural or historic character of the District as a whole;
- c. The existing garage is not a cultural resource. The demolition of the existing garage would result in an appearance that is more historically and architecturally appropriate in the historic district and would more closely align with the purpose and intent of the Ordinance;

- d. While the existing garage appears to be old, its age is not related to its character as a cultural resource which is what the language of this standard is referencing.
- e. The retention of the existing garage would not 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. The applicant is claiming that the condition of the garage is poor and that this situation is due to the lack of maintenance by the previous property owner.
- g. The new garage proposed to be constructed in this location is compatible with the buildings and environment of the district.

#### **Certificate of Appropriateness for the exterior alterations**

In addition to the demolition of the garage, this request proposes four exterior alterations as follows:

- 1. The garage roof provides the egress platform for an upper level unit. With the removal of the garage, the egress platform will be enlarged to tie the two platforms together.
- 2. Reconstruct the front porch to replicate the existing conditions, size, and details with the exception of the use of historically appropriate round columns instead of tapered square columns.
- 3. Remove later "breezeway" addition on the rear and repair any exterior exposed surfaces.
- 4. Remove concealed gutter and downspout system and install half round gutters and round downspouts.

A discussion of the exterior alteration standards 33.19(5)(b)4. follows:

The Mansion Hill Historic District Preservation Plan provides design standards for exterior alterations and new construction. The standards are more relevant to new construction issues and include gross volume, proportion between width and height of the façade, proportions and relationships between doors and windows, rhythm of solids and voids, directional expression, rhythm of masses and spaces, height, materials, texture, colors and patterns, roof design, landscape plan and architectural details. The plan states (page 18), "In all matters regarding the issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness the Landmarks Commission shall act to work in the best interests of the existing structures in the Historic District..."

The proposed exterior alterations are largely in the best interest of the existing structure in the historic district.

## **Recommendation**

#### **Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the existing garage**

Staff believes that the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the existing garage are met and recommends approval by the Landmarks Commission.

#### **Certificate of Appropriateness for the construction of a new garage**

Staff believes that the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the exterior alterations are met and recommends approval by the Landmarks Commission with the following conditions of approval:

- 1. The existing engaged round column should remain in place and be used to determine the dimensions and details of the replacement columns.
- 2. The applicant shall provide front porch cornice and dentil detail for staff review and approval. The appropriate dentil proportion should be determined by historic photos and traditional details.
- 3. The applicant shall provide staff with the locations of downspouts.
- 4. The gutters and downspouts shall be painted.
- 5. The applicant shall provide staff with images of the existing conditions of the egress platform structures.
- 6. The applicant shall document any physical evidence uncovered during the removal of the front porch and breezeway structures. Staff is interested in understanding if there was originally a small porch or hood over the exterior door at the breezeway that should be reconstructed.