



**Project Name/Address:** 428 N Livingston, Davies House

**Application Type:** Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alterations of a landmark

**Legistar File ID #** [47446](#)

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

**Date Prepared:** May 25, 2017

## Summary

**Project Applicant/Contact:** James McFadden, McFadden & Company

**Requested Action:** The Applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to alter exterior features of a landmark.

## Background Information

**Parcel Location:** The subject site is a landmark site located on Lake Mendota.

### Relevant Landmarks 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.

### Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation

1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
2. The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
3. Each property will 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 elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.

4. Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.
5. Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
6. Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.
7. Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.
8. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.
9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.
10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will 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 Landmarks Commission to review the alteration request using the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. A brief discussion of the standards follows:

1. The use of the Davies House is not being changed. Some of the distinctive materials and features have previously been removed. Generally the distinctive materials and features and spatial relationships are not being affected by the proposed work.
2. The historic character of the Davies House will be retained and preserved. The proposed alterations will generally create a more appropriate appearance. There are numerous alterations of features that should be discussed including the Tuscan/Doric columns and the balconet railing.
3. Proposed alterations will not create a false history. Please see similar discussion at item 9.
4. The Davies House has seen many changes over time. The proposed alterations will generally create a more appropriate appearance.
5. Generally, the distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize this property will be preserved. There are numerous alterations of features that should be discussed including the Tuscan/Doric columns and the balconet railing.
6. The Davies House has seen many changes over time. There is a historic photo (date unknown) of the Davies House included in the submission materials that shows Ionic engaged corner pilasters and Ionic columns at the front entrance surround. The historic photo also shows the Palladian motif of the dormer, the balconet railing, the curved front porch with flared steps and related railings, and the side porch stair and railings. Currently, none of these features are in their original form. It seems that deteriorated features were removed and replaced instead of being repaired/replaced in kind. The historic photo can provide some insights and evidence into the appropriate appearance of the Davies House.
7. This standard is not applicable to the proposed work.
8. This standard is not applicable to the proposed work.
9. Generally the alterations will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property and the proposed alterations will be differentiated from the original/historic

elements while being compatible. More specifically, many of the materials and features have previously been altered. The proposed exterior alterations describe removing possible original material. An example of this would be the removal of the existing columns at the front entry surround and the replacement of these columns with new columns of the Doric order. The existing columns have been modified and no longer have their Ionic capitals and bases. Instead of removing the original columns, they could be repaired and appropriate Ionic capitals and bases could be installed. In addition, other features are being modified so that their original configuration and appearance will be obscured. An example of this would be adding Doric capitals to the engaged corner pilasters instead of replacing with capitals of the Ionic order. Because the Davies House is significant for its architecture, the proposed alterations should closely resemble the period appropriate Georgian Revival style that is documented in the nomination.

10. The proposed alterations will not affect the essential form of the property, but the integrity of the property is diminished by not retaining original fabric and by replacing elements that are not historically appropriate.

The landmarks nomination states, "The Joseph and Emlen Davies house was built in 1907. It is of significance as one of the best and most representative examples of the period at the turn-of-the-last century when Victorian design was transitioning into the more historically correct period revival styles, in this case Georgian Revival." The nomination also states, "The Davies House includes a Victorian emphasis on decoration, including a distinctly free use of classical forms in the balconet over the main entrance...and a neo-classical exterior design reflecting the Georgian Revival."

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. Alterations to designated landmark buildings and sites should be carefully evaluated to ensure appropriate treatment of the landmark and the retention of architectural, cultural or historic significance. In this case the proposed alterations will generally create a more appropriate appearance; however, replicating known historic elements would improve the integrity of the historic resource.

## **Recommendation**

Staff believes that the standards for granting the Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed alterations may be met and recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness with the following conditions of approval:

1. The decorative railing of the balconet shall be curved to match the original railing configuration.
2. The corner pilasters shall have Ionic capitals.
3. The front columns shall have Ionic capitals and bases.
4. If the front columns are approved for replacement, the new columns shall match the existing column diameter. Light fixtures shall not be installed in the columns.
5. The Landmarks Commission strongly encourages the Applicant to seek a variance for reduced railing heights.
6. The balusters shall be heavier than 1 x 1 square and a simple turned profile will be considered.
7. The box newels shall be wider to more closely match the proportion of the original features. The reduced railing height would assist in the use of the appropriate proportion at the box newels.
8. The posts in the decorative railing above the door surround shall be wider. The front elevation drawing shows the door surround too narrow which also affects the appropriate proportion of the elements.

9. The cottage style window units shall have head and jamb trim that dies into a projecting show sill. The Applicant shall confirm that once the trim is added, the window proportion will match the existing cottage style window proportion.
10. The bracket at the door surround below the balconet shall be replaced.
11. The Landmarks Commission shall discuss the use of cellular PVC and fiberglass materials.