

PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

July 23, 2018

PREPARED FOR THE LANDMARKS COMMISSION



Project Name/Address: 301 Forest Street

Application Type: Certificate of Appropriateness for alteration in University Heights Historic District

Legistar File ID # [52385](#)

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

Date Prepared: July 15, 2018

Summary

Project Applicant/Contact: Michael Douglas, Exterior Renovations

Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the removal and replacement of siding and trim in the University Heights Historic District

Background Information

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

Relevant State Statute Section:

Wisc SS 62.23(7)(em)2m. In the repair or replacement of a property that is designated as a historic landmark or included within a historic district or neighborhood conservation district under this paragraph, a city shall allow an owner to use materials that are similar in design, color, scale, architectural appearance, and other visual qualities.

Relevant Historic Preservation 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) Not applicable
 - (b) Not applicable
 - (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.
- 41.24 UNIVERSITY HEIGHTS HISTORIC DISTRICT.**
- (5) Standards for the Review of Exterior Alterations and Repairs in TR-C2, TR-C3, and TR-C4, Zoning Districts.

- (a) Height. Not applicable
- (b) Second Exit Platforms and Fire Escapes. Not applicable
- (c) 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.
- (d) Restoration. Projects that will restore the appearance of a structure to its original appearance are encouraged and will be approved by the Landmarks Commission if such projects are documented by photographs, architectural or archeological research or other suitable evidence.
- (e) Re-Siding. Re-siding with aluminum or vinyl that replaces or covers clapboards or nonoriginal siding on structures originally sided with clapboards will be approved by the Landmarks Commission provided that the new siding imitates the width of the original clapboard siding to within one (1) inch and provided further that all architectural details including, but not limited to, window trim, wood cornices and ornament either remain uncovered or are duplicated exactly in appearance. Where more than one layer of siding exists on the structure, all layers except the first must be removed before new siding is applied. If insulation is applied under the new siding, all trim must be built up so that it projects from the new siding to the same extent it did with the original siding.
- (f) Alterations Visible from the Street and Alterations to Street Facades. Alterations visible from the street, including alterations to the top of structures, and alterations to street facades shall be compatible with the existing structure in architectural design, scale, color, texture, proportion and rhythm of solids to voids and proportion of widths to heights of doors and windows. Materials used in such alterations 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 structure or of other structures 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 structure where the existing building materials and architectural details differ from the original. Alterations that exactly duplicate the original materials in composition are encouraged. Alterations that destroy significant architectural features are prohibited. Side alterations shall not detract from the design composition of the original facade.
- (g) Additions and Exterior Alterations Not Visible from the Street. Additions and exterior alterations that are not visible from any streets contiguous to the lot lines upon which the structure is located will be approved by the Landmarks Commission if their design is compatible with the scale of the existing structure and, further, if the materials used are compatible with the existing materials in texture, color and architectural details. Additions and alterations shall harmonize with the architectural design of the structure rather than contrast with it.
- (h) Roof Shape. Not applicable
- (i) Roof Material. Not applicable

The Applicant is proposing to remove the existing wood siding and trim and replace it with James Hardie Fiber Cement to replicate the existing appearance. The existing front door surround and soffit corbels will be removed and reinstalled.

A discussion of the applicable standards of 41.24(5) follows:

- (c) The Hardie products proposed for use will be smooth to replicate the original building materials in texture and appearance. The existing front door surround and soffit corbels will be removed and reinstalled. There are three locations where the existing appearance will not be retained in this proposal. The submission materials indicate the addition of a 10.5" high gable band at the gable bump outs on each gable and the use of a flat (not chamfered) band board above the front door at the bump out of the second floor. The introduction of the gable end band boards adds an architectural element that is not present in the existing vocabulary and should be unobtrusive. If it is necessary to add this element, it should be downplayed by being the same color as the siding instead of being the color of the trim. The band board above the front door has a chamfered detail that highlights the front door. The loss of this detail would change the appearance of the front elevation and should be retained.
- (d) This language is provided to show the intent to restore and preferably maintain the original historic appearance. Please refer to the discussion in item (c) above.
- (e) The proposed beveled siding exposure and profile appears to replicate the existing beveled siding exposure and profile. While the majority of architectural details can be replicated in Hardie Fiber Cement, there are a few exceptions noted in the submission materials which would alter the appearance of the residence. Please see the discussion of item (c) above. The installation of insulation to the exterior of the building does not seem to be part of the scope of this project.
- (f) Generally the alterations to the street facades will be compatible with the existing structure in architectural design, scale, color, and texture with the exceptions noted above in item (c). Further, the proposed Hardie Fiber Cement materials will duplicate the appearance of existing architectural details in design except as noted above in item (c). The ordinance language specifically notes that alterations that exactly duplicate the original materials in composition are encouraged and that alterations that destroy significant architectural features are prohibited. The band boards proposed in the gable ends shall be unobtrusive and the chamfered detail should be retained to meet this standard.
- (g) Please see the discussion of (f) above.

The University Heights standards for review adequately address the use of materials that are similar in design, color, scale, architectural appearance, and other visual qualities.

Recommendation

Staff believes that the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed addition may be met and recommends that the Landmarks Commission approve the request with the following conditions of approval:

1. The proposed gable band boards shall be unobtrusive and shall be the color of the siding instead of the color of the trim.
2. The band board with chamfers above the front door shall be removed and reinstalled or shall be reconstructed in wood to replicate the existing instead of being replaced with Hardie Fiber Cement material.
3. The Applicant shall confirm that the installation of insulation is not a part of this project scope.