

PLANNING DIVISION STAFF REPORT

September 16, 2019

PREPARED FOR THE LANDMARKS COMMISSION



Project Name & Address: 1917 Regent Street

Application Type(s): Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alterations in the University Heights historic district

Legistar File ID # [53750](#)

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Date Prepared: September 10, 2019

Summary

Project Applicant/Contact: Sam Breidenbach – TDS Custom Construction

Requested Action: The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the modification of a dormer window.

Background Information

Parcel Location/Information: 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 Ordinance Sections:

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. No alterations shall be higher than the existing structure; however, if the existing structure is already a nonconforming one, alteration shall be made thereto except in accordance with Section 28.192. Roof alterations resulting in an increased structure volume are prohibited unless they meet the requirements in Sec. 41.24(4)(a)5. and are permitted under Chapter 28, or approved as a variance pursuant to Sec. 28.184 or approved as a conditional use or as part of a planned residential development.
 - (b) Second Exit Platforms and Fire Escapes. Second exit platforms and fire escapes shall be invisible from the street, wherever possible, and shall be of a plain and unobtrusive design in all cases. In instances where an automatic combustion products detection and alarm system is permitted as an alternative to second exits, use of such a system shall be mandatory.
 - (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. The roof shape of the front of a structure shall not be altered except to restore it to the original documentable appearance or to add a dormer or dormers in a location and shape compatible with the architectural design of the structure and similar in location and shape to original dormers on structures of the same vintage and style within the district. Alterations of the roof shape of the sides or back of a structure shall be visually compatible with the architectural design of the existing structure.
- (i) Roof Material.
 - 1. If the existing roof is tile, slate or other material that is original to the structure and/or contributes to its historic character, all repairs thereto shall be made using the same materials. In addition, in all cases any such roof must be repaired rather than replaced, unless the documented cost of repair exceeds the documented cost of re-roofing with a substitute material that approximates the appearance of the original roofing material as closely as possible, in which case re-roofing with a material that approximates the appearance of the original roofing material as closely as possible will be approved by the Landmarks Commission.

2. If the existing roofing material is asphalt shingles, sawn wood shingles or a nonhistoric material such as fiberglass, all repairs shall match in appearance the existing roof material; however, if any such roof is covered or replaced, re-roofing must be done using rectangular sawn wood shingles or rectangular shingles that are similar in width, thickness and apparent length to sawn wood shingles, for example, 3-in-1 tab asphalt shingles. Modern style shingles, such as thick wood shakes, Dutch lap, French method and interlock shingles that are incompatible with the historic character of the district are prohibited.

3. Rolled roofing, tar and gravel and other similar roofing materials are prohibited except that such materials may be used on flat or slightly sloped roofs which are not visible from the ground.

Analysis and Conclusion

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to modify an existing dormer on the east side of the house and increase the size of the cricket on the adjacent chimney to better divert water. The dormer is located on a narrow span of wall near the front of the house. The space between the intersecting side gable and the chimney traps water and ice, which is causing interior and exterior damage. The project also includes repairs to the window located within the dormer.

A discussion of the relevant ordinance sections follows:

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. While not changing the overall height of the building, the proposed alteration will change the height of the side wall near the side of the house, and increase the dimensions of the cricket located behind the chimney. However, given the limited span of this alteration, it will be minimally visible. As the modified roof area will utilize the same roofing materials as the rest of the roof, it meets the requirements in Sec. 41.24(4)(a)5.
 - (b) Second Exit Platforms and Fire Escapes. N/A
 - (c) Repairs. In essence, this alteration will repair an ongoing roof drainage problem. At the moment, the minimal space for water and ice to move on either side of the dormer create ice dams and traps water both behind the chimney and in the minimal spaces on either side of the dormer. The new wall area will utilize similar brick and the chimney cricket will replicate the existing roofing. The window in the dormer will be repaired.
 - (d) Restoration. N/A
 - (e) Re-Siding. N/A
 - (f) Alterations Visible from the Street and Alterations to Street Facades. This alteration will be visible from the street, but the proposal allows for a minimal area of change while in keeping with the character of the structure, utilizing the same architectural design and materials. Staff suggests investigating creating a slight step back in the brick for the new portion of wall to provide evidence of where the dormer was previously located. This would be in keeping with architectural details in the brick found elsewhere on the structure while not detracting from the design composition of the original façade.
 - (g) Additions and Exterior Alterations Not Visible from the Street. N/A
 - (h) Roof Shape. This project will alter the shape of the roof on a small section of the side of the structure by making all of the span between the side gable and the chimney a shed

roof. However, it will blend with the gable roof and both maintain the pitch of the original narrow dormer and reference the wider dormer on the opposite side of the house.

(i) Roof Material.

1. N/A
2. The proposed replacement shingles all meet Landmarks requirements.
3. EPDM roofing is being proposed for flat or very low pitched areas.

Recommendation

Staff believes that the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness can be met and recommends the Landmarks Commission approve the proposal with the following condition:

1. A step back in the brick for the new wall area to provide a recessed frame from the historic top of the former dormer.