



STAFF REPORT

Historic Preservation Commission

August 7, 2024

HPCA-24-00007

Case Number: HPCA-24-00007

Property Address: 3233 N Harvey Pkwy

District: Edgemere Park Historic District

Owner: Brandon Wesbury
3233 N Harvey Pkwy
Oklahoma City, OK 73118

A. CASE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

3. Construct attached pergola with cover, fans, and light fixtures (elective).

B. BACKGROUND

1. Project Description

The applicant proposes the removal of a quarter pie shaped brick patio, landscape border, and brick walls and columns at the rear of the dwelling. A new patio of stamped and colored concrete is proposed, with an attached pergola and outdoor kitchen.

This proposal was reviewed by the Historic Preservation Commission on May 1, 2024. No representative was available to discuss the proposal at the meeting. Staff requested from the owner an additional illustration of the construction as attached to the historic, load bearing wall. Additional documentation was not presented, but the owner has indicated the contractor is working to acquire it.

2. Location

Project site is located on the west side of N Harvey Parkway, between NW 30th and NW 32nd Street.

3. Site History

Date of Construction: 1934

Zoned Historic Preservation/Historical Landmark: 1977

National Register Listing: 1980

Additional Information:

The 1949 edition of the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps is the first illustration of residential development at this site. The map illustrates a 2-story dwelling with brick veneer at the 1st floor, and a 2-story brick projection at the center third of the front (east) façade. A 1-story “autohouse” with brick veneer is attached at the northern projection on the rear (west) façade of the dwelling. A tile firewall is indicated between the dwelling and the garage. All roofs are indicated with shingle, likely wood. No changes are evident in subsequent editions.

4. Existing Conditions

The building appears to retain its original form.

Various colors of red brick comprise different brick features of the property. Fences, walls, sidewalk, landings, and patio are similar in color to that of the dwelling, but varied brick patterns may be found in landscape features including the rear patio, fences, and yard walls.

The brick of the driveway deviates in color tone, but like the rear patio, has its own unique design component in the alternately laid brick pairs to produce a basket weave checkerboard.

Concrete paving exists at the apron to the driveway and at an infilled circle in the rear patio.

The applicant has indicated that the rear patio has deteriorated and is causing drainage issues near the primary dwelling.

5. Previous Actions

On May 1, 2024, the Commission approved removal of the rear patio and walls and installation of a new patio and walls with various outdoor kitchen components.

C. ITEMS IN COMPLIANCE

*Unless noted below in Section D., Issues and Considerations, all other case items of this proposal comply with the Design and Sustainability Standards and Guidelines for Oklahoma City Historic Districts, and with all relevant sections of the Oklahoma City Municipal Code, 2020.**

None.

D. ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS

This proposal may not comply with the Design and Sustainability Standards and Guidelines for Oklahoma City Historic Districts, and with all relevant sections of the Oklahoma City Municipal Code, 2020 as referenced below:*

1. Item 3, Construct attached pergola with cover, fans, and light fixtures (elective).

- a. Description: The applicant proposes a covered, wood, pergola over the rear patio location. The structure follows the curve of the existing and proposed patios. Various short, brick walls and piers have been approved for the patio which the pergola is proposed to accompany.

The structure is constructed of wood with wood posts, beams, and joists. The entire feature will be covered in a ribbed, dual panel, polycarbonate roof system with a slight slope to the west, and with connective in ridges installed counter (north south) to the direction of roof slope. Three ceiling fans with light fixtures are proposed. The feature is proposed to attach to the west wall of the house at 9.5 feet over finished floor height.

The pergola has a very large flat roof, measuring approximately 23 by 31 and over 700 square feet.

Two methods of attachment have been proposed, both relying upon the west wall of the historic dwelling for support of the east half of the pergola with five posts spaced out to support the remainder of the roof.

The first method of construction proposes the introduction of three beams at the west wall of the dwelling to access structural support at the top plate of the first floor. It remains unclear whether the proposal intends the introduction of openings into the wall, or the use of joist hangers attached to the wall. The alternate method of construction proposes relocation of a post to directly abut historic fabric of the southwest corner of the west wall of the dwelling and the installation of a wood strip or lip horizontally along the siding of the west wall. It appears that the roof form of the pergola will rest on this for structural support.

- b. References: *Design and Sustainability Standards and Guidelines for Oklahoma City Historic Districts*

2.5 Landscape & Landscape Elements

- 2.5.19: Adding a pergola (see also 3.4, Pergola or Freestanding Trellis) to a back elevation can help shade an outdoor space and can offer some degree of shade to the interior, which means added energy efficiency. Do not add a pergola or trellis to a prominent elevation where none historically existed. Reconstruction of a missing pergola or trellis should be based on accurate evidence of the original design.
- 2.5.20: New pergolas, not visible from the public right of way, may be constructed in back yards, at rear elevations or at accessory structures.
- 2.5.21: New pergolas shall be compatible with the building to which they relate in proportion, size, scale and material.
- 2.5.22: New pergolas constructed as an attachment to a primary or accessory structure shall be reviewed as a building addition and shall not damage or obscure historic character defining features.
- 2.5.23: New pergolas shall not be constructed in such a manner that abutment or attachment to an existing structure will allow for the pooling of moisture against or the infiltration of moisture into an existing structure.
- 2.5.24: The bottom of the canopy of a new pergola shall not exceed eight (8) feet above the finished floor height of the structure to which it relates, and the overall height of a pergola should not exceed nine (9) feet and shall be compatible with the building to which it relates in proportion, size, scale and material.
- 2.5.25: Freestanding pergolas may have concrete floors; however, permeable flooring materials are recommended. Posts may be set in concrete.
- 2.5.26: Pergolas shall be constructed of wood or sustainable alternative materials that closely resemble wood and may have decorative functional metal elements such as wrought iron where appropriate. Synthetic materials that do not closely replicate historic fabric, such as plastic and vinyl, are prohibited.
- 2.5.27: Pergolas with columns or walls constructed of permanent building

materials such as brick, stucco, or stone shall be reviewed as new construction.

Definitions

- **Pergola** means an open grid, supported by rows of columns, for growing vines; most often a series of wood beams supporting narrow boards supported by wood columns; may be attached to a building or covering a garden or walkway.

4.3 Building Additions

Policy: Additions should complement and not detract from the overall historic character of the historic district.

Design Justification: The way in which a historic building and an addition to it relate is important in protecting the integrity of the historic property and district. An addition directly affects the integrity of the building as a whole. Building additions should not detract from the historic character of the historic building or district.

Sustainability Justification: New construction should adhere to principles of sustainability in their materials, design and energy efficiency. If construction of additions results in the removal of original fabric, consideration should be given to maximizing the retention or re-use of existing historic features, details and materials.

- 4.3.1: Additions must be compatible in design, proportion, size, texture, color, and detail to adjacent buildings and streetscapes, and should be appropriate to the architectural style of the existing building. The incorporation of existing architectural features with new design elements can contribute added interest and compatibility.
- 4.3.2: New additions must be planned so that they are constructed to the back of the property or on a non-character-defining elevation preferably not visible from the public right-of-way. Character-defining features of buildings should not be radically changed, obscured, damaged or destroyed by an addition. The existing historic building fabric should not be damaged by the installation of a new addition.
- 4.3.3: It is not appropriate to alter the overall character of historic districts by substantially reducing the ratio of open space to built space on any site through new construction, additions or introduction of surface paving or other hardscape feature.
- 4.3.4: New additions shall not exceed 50% of the square footage of the footprint of the existing historic structure (enclosed space only), or 750 square feet, whichever is larger, and shall be no taller, no wider, and no deeper than the existing historic structure.
- 4.3.5: Additions to historic or non-historic buildings should relate to and complement the style of the main building, and may relate to the general style of the streetscape.

- 4.3.6: An addition to a historic building must be designed to be visibly distinguishable from the original historic building.
 - 4.3.7: Additions to historic buildings should be designed so that connections between new construction and historic structures are clearly discernible. A clear definition of the transition between the new addition and the historic structure should be established and maintained.
 - 4.3.8: An addition may be differentiated from the historic building by connecting the two with a modest connector, designed to be as transparent and unobtrusive as possible.
 - 4.3.9: Historic details in the coping, eaves and parapet of the historic building may be continued at the point where the historic structure connects to the addition.
 - 4.3.10: Additions should be clearly secondary to and distinct from the original building. This can be accomplished by providing a clear visual break between the historic building and the addition, by setting the façade of the addition back from that of the historic building, or by constructing a recessed area at the point at which the addition and the historic building join together.
 - 4.3.11: Use of different but compatible materials or different (simplified) detailing is also appropriate to differentiate a new addition from the historic building.
 - 4.3.12: The design of a new addition must consider and respect the massing, roof shape, bay spacing, cornice lines and materials of the building to which it is being added.
 - 4.3.15: Facades of additions facing an alley or rear property line may be simplified and secondary in design to that of facades that are more visible from adjacent properties or the streetscape public right-of-way. The same materials should be used for alley-facing facades as that of the other facades unless this varies from the typical historic condition within the district.
- c. Considerations: The proposed pergola with various brick components and attachment to the dwelling is constructed in such a way as to appear to be a permanent attachment to the primary structure and is reviewed as a building addition.

Per the Standards and Guidelines, new construction shall not damage or obscure historic character-defining features. The proposed covered pergola will obscure historic, character defining openings and transoms. However, this is the rear of the dwelling and the most appropriate location for new features or alterations.

As a pergola, the feature is very large compared to historic pergolas. As an addition, the structure is less than 50% of the footprint of the dwelling and less than 750 square feet. Additions, by nature, obscure or remove existing fabric. However, standard construction methods of additions with typical roofs must meet building code requirements and generally include appropriate structural support, flashing, and drainage that are presumed to protect abutting fabric.

Pergola style structures, even small ones, when attached to historic dwellings have been shown to be detrimental to the health of the wall to which they are attached. New pergolas shall not be constructed in such a manner that abutment or attachment to an existing structure will allow for the pooling of moisture or the infiltration of moisture into an existing structure. All points of attachment and abutment, regardless of the type of hanger, provide for moisture infiltration. Points of abutment are points of friction and moisture infiltration as well as provide barriers to maintenance. Whether it be the method of attachment, lack of sufficient structural support, or difficulty in accessing the historic wall, maintenance is a potential issue and a variety of features at the wall may be vulnerable to water infiltration.

It is typically not necessary to attach to or intrude into the historic wall to acquire the added benefits of a pergola at the rear of a dwelling. Added posts and detachment from the wall of the historic structure would eliminate new points of entry for moisture and free the wall from additional weight. A detached structure would have limited adverse effects on the primary structure, though proximity could continue to limit the ability to maintain the historic wall.

Pergolas, as defined in the Guidelines, are open air structures that provide for vines and shade via the beams and joists. These are typically composed of wood, a fairly transient and biodegradable resource. Overall, the proposal is a pergola. However, the introduction of polycarbonate roofing material transitions the proposal to either an accessory structure (detached) or an addition. As previously noted, polys, plastics, and vinyls though having longevity and resistance to fire, are hazardous in production, leach hazardous chemicals particularly in warm temperatures (approximately 82 degrees) and in sunlight, and release toxic gases and fumes when burned or exposed to flame.

d. Recommended Specific Findings:

1. That the rear is the most appropriate location for additions and pergolas;
2. That new pergolas shall not be constructed in such a manner that abutment or attachment to an existing structure will allow for moisture to accumulate against or infiltrate the existing structure;
3. That attaching the proposed large pergola to the dwelling has potential to damage the wall and structure to which it is attached and limit ability to maintain the historic wall.

E. HPCA-24-00007 STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

1. **Deny Item 3**, construct attached pergola with cover, fans, and light fixtures, **with Prejudice** with the specific finding that the proposed work will have an adverse effect on the historic character of the district or property; is not consistent with the provisions of the Standards and Guidelines and is not in compliance with the relevant sections of the Municipal Code, 2020*, as referenced in the specific findings in the Staff Report.

Specific Findings:

1. That the rear is the most appropriate location for additions and pergolas;

2. That new pergolas shall not be constructed in such a manner that abutment or attachment to an existing structure will allow for moisture to accumulate against or infiltrate the existing structure;
3. That attaching the proposed pergola to the dwelling has potential to damage the wall and structure to which it is attached and limit ability to maintain the historic wall;
4. That a detached pergola with its own structural support would have less adverse effect on the primary historic dwelling.

Note: Staff recommendation does not constitute Commission action.

**Relevant Sections of Chapter 59 the Oklahoma City Municipal Code governing HP/HL Districts are: §59.3300.1-5; §59.4150.4; §59.4250; §59.7250.1-4; §59.7300.1-7; §59.12200.1-4; §59.13300.1-6.*

Copies of the Standards/Guidelines and Relevant Sections of the Oklahoma City Municipal Code, 2020, are available online at www.okc.gov/planning/hp/index.html ; at Planning Department offices located at 420 W. Main, 9th floor, and each HP Commission Meeting.

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