

Protest of Administrative Approval
of a revision to an addition at 700 NW 40th St (HPCA-23-00117)

Submitted June 5, 2024

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My name is Benjamin Cowley. My wife, Nicole Cossaart, and I reside with our 16 year old daughter and 10 year old son at 704 Northwest 40th Street in Oklahoma City. We would like to officially protest the administrative approval of a revised addition at 700 Northwest 40th Street. Specifically we object to the new location of a window facing west overlooking our backyard. The original plan (Approved by the Historic Preservation Commission in October, 2023; Exhibit 1 below) had a window which was mainly obscured by a chase on the house at 700 Northwest 40th street. This window has now been moved to the middle of the addition (Exhibit 2 below) at 700 Northwest 40th Street and directly overlooks our back patio and backyard. We think that this window damages the historic nature of our back patio and back yard; that historic nature in large part consists of privacy.

As an example of how this will adversely affect our privacy, my wife, Nicole Cossaart, has a mutation in the BRCA1 gene which increases her risk of breast cancer. Several of her family members have suffered from breast cancer and some have died. In response to this my wife underwent prophylactic bilateral mastectomies, followed by reconstructive surgery. Her reconstructed, prosthetic breasts are uncomfortable and manually repositioning them relieves the discomfort. In addition her nipples have tenuous blood supply, and exposure to the sun increases their viability. The repositioned window at 700 Northwest 40th Street, directly overlooks our back patio and backyard where my wife would be sitting.

Another example of how our privacy will be affected, our 16 year old daughter likes to sunbathe in the backyard. She sometimes undoes the strap on her back. When she repositions she may expose her breasts. Once again the window in question at 700 Northwest 40th Street directly overlooks the backyard where my daughter will be sunbathing.

I would note that our neighbor who has lived in the neighborhood since she was a child indicates that, in the past, additions to the posterior aspect of houses were limited to one story to avoid this type of privacy invasion. We have included examples from Crown Heights of additions that include no lateral windows (Exhibit 3); numerous other examples exist within our neighborhood. Thus the proposed window at 700 NW 40th is not historic, and it damages the historic nature (i.e. – privacy) of our property at 704 NW 40th Street.

Finally the repositioned window in question at 700 Northwest 40th Street will adversely affect the resale value of our home due to the obvious privacy invasion.

For all the reasons above, we object to the repositioned window and formally protest the revision, which was approved administratively. For all the reasons above, we hope that the Historic Preservation Commission will agree that the repositioned window damages the historic nature of our property and reconsider the administrative approval of the repositioned window.

We would be happy to discuss potential alternatives to the repositioned window. We look forward to your response to our appeal.

Of note, the owner of 700 NW 40th Street, per the Oklahoma County Assessor's website, is SK Investment Properties LLC. The property is currently occupied by Corinne Greenfield; the application for a revision to the proposed addition was submitted by Hollie Hunt, an architect intern at HJH Design.

Respectfully submitted,
The Cowley family

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Exhibit 1 (Plan as originally approved by HPC in October, 2023)

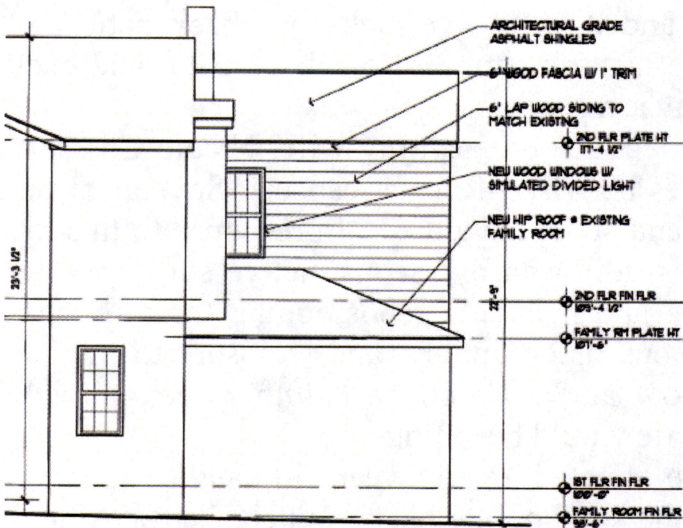


Exhibit 2 (Under construction with revised position of window; revision approved administratively on March 4, 2024)



Exhibit 3 (Examples of existing additions in Crown Heights WITHOUT WINDOWS)

