



STAFF REPORT

Historic Preservation Commission

Deember 4, 2024

HPCA-24-00076

Case Number: HPCA-24-00076

Property Address: 2215 NW 25th Street

District: Shepherd Historic District

Applicant: Living Spaces
Jonathan Reinke
2304 NW 26th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73120

Owner: Stuart Maier
12932 Green Valley Drive
Oklahoma City, OK 73120

A. CASE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Enclose a balcony by adding roof, screen and posts (elective).

B. BACKGROUND

1. Location

Project site is located on the north side of NW 25th Street, mid-block between N Barnes Ave and N Youngs Blvd.

2. Site History

Date of Construction: 1937

Zoned Historic Preservation/Historical Landmark: 1998

National Register Listing: 1997

Additional Information:

The 1950 edition of the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps illustrate a two-story brick-veneered dwelling, with one-story side porch almost centered on the east façade. A one-story frame “autohouse” is indicated close to the western property line with the front face back nearly three-fourths ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the property depth from the front property line. All structures have shingle roofs.

3. Existing Conditions

The existing enclosed side porch was not originally enclosed with a balcony, and the date when it was enclosed is not known. In addition, there was previously a canvas canopy that provided cover for the balcony. The canopy has been removed recently due to damage.

4. Previous Actions

Previous applications for Historic Preservation Certificate of Appropriateness (HPCA)

filed for this property include:

Case Number	Date	Owner	Decision
HPCA-19-00028	06-20-2024	Stuart Maier	Approved
1) Replace fence at west edge of district (multiple properties) (elective); 2) Repair/replace driveways and sidewalks in the right of way as part of water line replacement (elective).			

Other actions, such as variances, other approvals, citations could also be described here.

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 1, Enclose a balcony by adding roof, screen and posts (elective).

- a. Description: The applicant proposes the construction of an enclosed porch on an existing balcony. The balcony measures 8' by 16', and the enclosed balcony is to be constructed of wooden balusters and railings, with a fiberglass mesh screen, and wood posts with smooth finish fiber cement trim. The roofing material is proposed as shingle. The proposed enclosed balcony is located on the east elevation and is plainly visible from the public right-of-way.
- b. References: *Design and Sustainability Standards and Guidelines for Oklahoma City Historic Districts*

Section 3.3 Porches, Canopies, Porte-Cocheres, & Balconies

- 3.3.5: Enclosing a historic front porch significantly alters the character of a building and is not permitted. Creating a false historical appearance through the application of new elements and details to a porch or balcony is inappropriate. Reopening and restoring an enclosed front porch is encouraged.
- 3.3.6: Enclosing a historic side porch or balcony with screen panels to create a "screened in porch" was frequently done to create spaces that could be used year-round and provide some privacy and protection from insects. Such enclosures may be allowed if designed in a manner that is compatible with the style of the building and if important character defining historic fabric is not obscured.
- 3.3.7: Enclosing historic side or back porches or balconies with glazing changes the historic character of a building and should be avoided. However, while not encouraged, such enclosures at side or back porches not connected to a front or

primary porch or balcony may be allowed. The details of such enclosures must be minimal and not obscure or detract from the historic details of the porch or building.

- 3.3.8: Reconstruction of a missing porch, canopy, porte-cochere or balcony is encouraged and must be based on accurate physical evidence of the original or historic configuration, placement and detail of the feature and supplemented with historic photographs that show the original feature.
- 3.3.9: If no photographs or other documentation exist, the design of a replacement porch should be compatible with the historic building in height, proportion, style, roof shape, material, texture, detail and color. Buildings of a similar architectural style can provide examples of appropriate design.
- 3.3.11: If more than 50% of a material or component is deteriorated beyond repair, replacement may be required. When new materials may be introduced, there are likely sustainability considerations.
- 3.3.12: New or replacement columns should be of materials appropriate to the style and design of the building including the porch. Replacement columns should match the original or historic columns in size, design, scale, massing, materials and details.
- 3.3.13: The dimensions and proportions of replacement balusters must match the historic porch. The spacing and height of railing balusters is important to the character of the historic building with typically closely spaced balusters and relatively low railings (30" or less in height). Although this height may not conform with current codes, existing historic railings are permitted to remain until they are too deteriorated to be retained and repaired, therefore it is critical to retain the historic porch balustrade and railings.
- 3.3.14: The use of alternative materials for porch columns on primary facades such as fiberglass may be approved by the Commission if the finished appearance will be indistinguishable from the appearance, design, and texture of the original or historic columns.
- 3.3.15: Porch columns of vinyl or hollow core aluminum, or wrought iron are not appropriate unless historic documentation demonstrates otherwise.
- 3.3.21: Replacement wood porch flooring must closely match the details and dimensions of the historic wood flooring. For example, do not use over-sized materials such as two-inch thick boards for porch floors that would have historically been ¾" to 1" thick tongue-and-groove boards.
- 3.3.22: Alternative materials such as plastic-wood composites may be appropriate for porch floors. Although derived from plastic, many companies use substantial amounts of recycled plastic and these materials often have lengthy warranties. The appropriateness of composite floors will be dependent upon their visibility from the street and ability to match the color, texture and dimensions of the original or historic porch surface materials. Composites will

only be considered for back and side porches set back more than 60% of the length of the side of the building. Composites for porch flooring are not permitted in the Heritage Hills Historic and Architectural District.

- 3.3.27: Canopies, projecting roof structures that project from a building and shelter entrances, are usually supported by metal rods, chains, wires, or columns of wood or metal. They are historically important, character-defining features and they are appropriate for use in Oklahoma City's historic districts.
 - 3.3.28: Routine maintenance ensures the preservation of canopies and reduces the need for replacement with new resources.
 - 3.3.29: Property owners are encouraged to maintain canvas canopies and ordinary maintenance and repair does not require review. Metal canopies added in the mid- to late-20th century should also be maintained.
 - • 3.3.30: Treated acrylic fiber canvas canopies can last more than 10 years, compared with 3-5 years for polyester or vinyl. Unlike metal canopies, canvas canopies can be of retractable design, allowing sunlight through windows for passive heat during winter.
 - 3.3.31: Metal canopies may be added at back or side elevations not readily visible from the street.
 - 3.3.32: Reconstruction of a missing canopy should be based on accurate evidence of the original configuration, placement and detail and supplemented with historical photographs.
 - 3.3.33: If no documentation is available, a new design that is compatible with the historic building in height, proportion, style, roof shape, material, texture, detail and color is appropriate.
 - 3.3.34: Buildings of similar architectural style can provide examples of appropriate new canopy design.
- c. Considerations: The Guidelines do support the enclosure of historic side porches, with the conditions that the enclosed side porch be of a compatible design with the historic structure to which it relates, be constructed with appropriate materials, and that the enclosed porch must not conceal important architectural details of the historic structure. However, in this case the historic side porch has already been enclosed, and the Guidelines only mention the enclosure of historic side porches and balconies. The Guidelines do not have provisions for the enclosure of a feature created by the previous enclosure of a historic side porch.

The enclosure of the balcony implies that the historic condition of the side porch is enclosed. However, the historic condition of the side porch was already altered when it was originally enclosed. Therefore, further alterations to the side porch should be as minimal as possible.

One such alternative would be the addition of a canvas canopy. There was a canopy previously on the balcony, although the date of the installation of the canopy is not known. The canopy was metal and canvas. Section 3.3.29 of the Guidelines supports

the preservation of metal canopies that were installed in the mid to late 20th century, and the Guidelines do further support the addition of canopies. The canopy should be installed in such a way as it can be easily removed with minimal damage to the historic structure.

The applicant provided a survey of several properties with varying changes to their side porches and porte-cocheres, with some side additions as well. The documentation provided does show that some historic properties have seen changes to their side elevations in a similar fashion to the proposed work. However, this survey does not capture a lot of the context for these additions and alterations to historic structures. Many of these changes likely happened before the creation of historic districts, and many such alterations to a primary elevation would not be supported by the current Guidelines.

The Historic Preservation Commission previously heard this case at the August Historic Preservation Commission meeting. It was also continued from November to this meeting. Therefore, this case is out of continuance requests.

d. Recommended Specific Findings:

1. That the historic side porch has already been enclosed;
2. That the Guidelines do not support the enclosure of a non-original balcony on a prominent elevation;
3. That the balcony previously featured a canvas and metal canopy; and
4. That the Guidelines support the installation of a canopy.

E. HPCA-24-00076 STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

1. **Deny Item 1, Enclose a balcony by adding roof, screen and posts 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 historic side porch has already been enclosed;
2. That the Guidelines do not support the enclosure of a non-original balcony on a prominent elevation;
3. That the balcony previously featured a canvas and metal canopy; and
4. That the Guidelines support the installation of a canopy.

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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