



# STAFF REPORT

## Historic Preservation Commission

December 4, 2024

HPCA-24-00106

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**Case Number:** HPCA-24-00106

**Property Address:** 525 NW 27<sup>th</sup> Street

**District:** Paseo Historic District

**Owner:** Shawn Lawrence  
504 Country Club Drive  
Edmond, OK 73025

### A. CASE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Replace gutters (elective);
2. Install vertical board and batten fiber cement siding (elective);
3. Install horizontal fiber cement siding (elective);
4. Replace fence (elective);
5. Replace driveway (elective); and
6. Replace front porch columns (required).

### B. BACKGROUND

#### 1. Project Description

The applicant proposes to remodel the property, including siding replacement, new porch columns, fence and driveway. Work appears to be ongoing, but no Certificate of Appropriateness has been approved and no building permits have been issued. Staff has been informed by Development Services that a Stop Work Order has been issued.

#### 2. Location

Project site is located on the north side of NW 27<sup>th</sup> Street, mid-block between N Walker and N Dewey.

#### 3. Site History

***Date of Construction:*** 1924 (Primary Dwelling); 1965 (garage, per applicant)

***Zoned Historic Preservation/Historical Landmark:*** 1998

***National Register Listing:*** 2004

***National Register Description:***

**525 NW 27<sup>th</sup>.** 1924. This one-story Bungalow/Craftsman residence has a steep roof with no overhang. Porch gable covers western 2/3 of façade. Original columns and balustrade replaced with wrought iron. Entrance flanked by wide windows to left, paired windows to right.

*Additional Information:*

The 1922 edition of the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps illustrates only two dwellings on this block of NW 27<sup>th</sup> Street; the subject property is vacant. The 1949 edition shows a one-story, frame dwelling with partial-width front porch and shingle roof. A small “autohouse” is located on the west property line, near the rear wall of the dwelling. No changes are indicated on subsequent editions.

**1. Existing Conditions**

The primary dwelling appears to be in good condition, but has several non-historic alterations, including replacement siding and porch columns. The portion of the shared driveway located within the subject property appears to be less than eight (8) feet wide at the approach. An alley is located at the rear of the property, and appears to be actively used. The existing autohouse is presumed to have been built sometime after 1955. Work to the property is visibly under way, and may include items not addressed on this application, including placing siding over windows on the west side of the dwelling, replacing siding at the rear portion of the building, and installing new porch columns.

**2. Previous Actions**

In 2023, the applicant submitted an application to construct an accessory dwelling in the rear yard, which was subsequently withdrawn because it was not permitted by the zoning. The applicant then submitted an application to rezone the property to a SPUD; this has also been withdrawn.

**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, Replace gutters, Item 4, replace fence, and Item 5, replace driveway.**

- a. Description: The applicant proposes to install gutters, replace a fence, and replace the driveway and a portion of the sidewalk. These items typically qualify for administrative approval. The applicant has already installed gutters where they did not formerly exist on the house but has not fully described in his application where they will be installed or how they will be attached; therefore, this item cannot be approved. The applicant has not provided an accurate site plan for the fence and driveway; therefore, these items cannot be approved. In addition, the proposed location for the fence appears to be forward of the required setback. The applicant indicates that the proposed fence is going in the location of the existing fence (previously installed without a CA sometime between 2015 and 2019).

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

### 2.3 Sidewalks, Driveways, Parking Lots, Curbs and Vacant Sites

**Policy:** *Sidewalks, driveways and off-street parking should not interrupt the historic continuity of landscaped front or corner side yards. Historic concrete sidewalks and walkways should be preserved and repaired with concrete that is consistent in pattern, size, texture and color. Historic concrete driveways should be preserved and new driveways should be of concrete rather than asphalt.*

**Design Justification:** Historically, the consistency and repetition of sidewalk and driveway spacing, placement, dimension and materials create a rhythm to the street. Retaining the specific rhythm of a street is important to preserve historic character. Oklahoma City's historic districts and properties have strong visual elements of grey colored concrete for sidewalks, walkways, some streets and curbs.

**Sustainability Justification:** Existing historic concrete sidewalks, steps and driveways represent embodied energy and should be preserved. Concrete is a long-lasting sustainable material, reflects solar heat and light and should be repaired or replaced as needed with new concrete to match. New driveways should be of similar design, pattern, texture, dimensions and color as the historic driveway. The use of permeable paving for non-historic and new driveways, sidewalks and parking areas is encouraged because it helps to reduce water run-off.

- 2.3.1: Regular maintenance of site features such as walkways, sidewalks and driveways is encouraged and should employ non-abrasive methods such as sweeping and low-pressure water cleaning.
- 2.3.4: Retain and preserve historic sidewalks and driveways, including those that are shared by two adjacent properties.
- 2.3.5: Maintain the continuity of existing original or historic sidewalks and the curb cut radius or curved approach when replacing an existing driveway or introducing a new driveway.
- 2.3.6: New concrete for sidewalks, driveways, curbs, and parking lots shall match the aged appearance in design details, color and texture of the existing concrete it replaces or adjacent concrete that will remain. If new concrete is not replacing existing concrete and is not adjacent to any existing concrete it should have an aged appearance in color and finish. New concrete visible from the public right-of-way shall not be bright white in color.
- 2.3.7: All sidewalks, driveways, and curbs visible from the public right-of-way shall be constructed to maintain the continuity of materials and character present in the district.
- 2.3.8: Private sidewalks and driveways must be constructed of concrete except where historical precedent demonstrates the previous existence of

brick, stone or other materials, which may be considered appropriate for replacement.

- 2.3.12: Driveways, eight feet or less in width, may be replaced by a driveway of up to ten feet in width; width may vary as the driveway approaches the garage to correspond to the width of the garage door openings. However, property owners are encouraged to limit the quantity of impervious concrete surfaces to assist in reducing storm water runoff.

## 2.8 Fences and Walls

**Policy:** Preserve original or historic fences and fence walls. New fences should be of renewable materials such as wood, woven wire or brick. Vinyl fences are not appropriate.

**Design Justification:** Fence walls and fences historically marked property boundaries and may have shielded private areas from public view. Historic materials such as wire, wood and brick are compatible materials; vinyl materials introduce an incompatible artificial appearance.

**Sustainability Justification:** Preserving existing fences and fence walls saves resources. New wood fences constructed of lumber from managed forests represents use of a renewable resource. Petroleum-based vinyl fencing is not a sustainable material.

- 2.8.4: Fences and fence walls in back yards have more flexible requirements than those in side yards or those that are front yard facing because they are less visible from the public right-of-way.
- 2.8.5: Fences and fence walls are generally permitted in side, corner side, and back yards. Interior side and corner side yard fences and fence walls must be set back from the historic front building line by a distance not less than six feet. Depending on the materials and details of a fence and fence wall, additional requirements of this section may apply.
- 2.8.6: A fence or fence wall located on the street facing side yard of a corner property must be set back from the inner edge of a public sidewalk by a minimum distance of two feet, or six feet from the curb where there is no sidewalk.
- 2.8.7: If an adjacent corner property side yard has an existing fence or fence wall, then consideration shall be given to align a fence or fence wall to the same setback as that existing fence or fence wall of the adjacent corner property side yard.
- 2.8.8: Fences shall be located behind any open front porch of the main building AND the open front porch of the main building of any adjacent property.
- 2.8.9: Fences and fence walls shall be located at or behind the front 40% of the side yard of the main building unless the fence or fence wall is 75% transparent not including posts or columns spaced a minimum of eight feet

apart. Depending on the design and architecture of the main building, additional requirements of this section may apply.

- 2.8.10: Opaque fences and fence walls , those that are less than 75% transparent not including posts or columns space a minimum of eight feet apart, shall not obscure view of significant architectural features of the primary building on the property, such as a bay window, porte-cochere, or other significant character defining building projection or feature.
- 2.8.11: Fences and fence walls are not permitted in front yards, unless supported by historical physical or photographic evidence to the contrary. If a fence or fence wall is appropriate for the front yard, then it shall match the historical configuration and approximate the historical appearance.
- 2.8.12: Fences and fence walls shall not exceed eight feet in height at the back property line or alley.
- 2.8.13: Fences and fence walls shall not exceed six feet in height on side or front facing locations.
- 2.8.14: Chain link or twisted wire fences shall not exceed four feet in height unless historical, physical or photographic evidence to the contrary documents them to have been taller in the proposed location.
- 2.8.15: Where residential properties are adjacent to commercial or other incompatible uses, alternative fence heights may be considered for appropriateness and with respect to other City ordinances related to fences and fence walls.
- 2.8.16: Acceptable materials for fences and fence walls are wood, brick, stone, cast iron, iron, chain link, twisted wire, painted aluminum that mimics the appearance of cast iron or iron fences, or a combination of these materials. Materials for fences and fence walls should be consistent with materials historically used at each individual property or within the historic district during the period of significance.
- 2.8.17: Wood fences may be left unfinished or painted or stained in colors appropriate to the style and period of the property or the district. The exterior flat fence or fence wall surface, if painted, should be compatible with the color of the main building.
- 2.8.18: Decorative painting and murals shall not be applied to fence or fence wall surfaces visible from the public right-of-way.
- 2.8.19: Tops of new fences or fence walls may be horizontal, stepped, scooped, arched or parallel with the grade, as appropriate to the style and period of the main building or the historic district.
- 2.8.20: Chain link fences shall have a top and bottom rail and may be galvanized.
- 2.8.21: The side of a fence or wall facing the street or alley shall be the

“finished” side.

- c. Considerations: The proposed work potentially qualifies for administrative approval, but must be accurately documented and shown to meet applicable Guidelines.
- d. Recommended Specific Findings:
  1. That the installation of gutters, fencing, and driveways can potentially be administratively approved;
  2. That the applicant must provide adequate documentation for administrative approval or the Commission’s consideration;
  3. That the fence location as currently illustrated does not meet applicable Guidelines.

**2. Item 2, Install vertical board and batten fiber cement siding and Item 3, install horizontal lap, fiber cement siding.**

- a. Description: The applicant proposes to replace existing siding with fiber cement siding in a combination of configurations. The applicant proposed vertical, board-and-batten style siding at the front porch, and horizontal siding at the rest of the house. The existing siding is vinyl; the condition of any remaining siding beneath the vinyl has not been documented.
- b. References: *Design and Sustainability Standards and Guidelines for Oklahoma City Historic Districts*

**3.1 Maintenance, Preservation and Rehabilitation of Exterior Building Materials**

**Policy:** Maintain and preserve original or historic exterior finishes and materials such as wood, brick, stone and stucco. When repair or replacement of materials is needed, consideration should be given to sustainable methods and materials that also maintain the historical visual character of a building or property.

**Design Justification:** The form, materials and details of exterior walls, roofs, door and window openings, and decorative details, as well as scale, texture and variety, contribute to a building’s historic character. The texture, patterns and finishes of historic materials such as clay tile, slate, brick, stone, stucco and wood siding are important character-defining features; obscuring or removing these features diminishes the significance of historic buildings and structures.

**Sustainability Justification:** The exterior materials of a building represent embodied energy and preserving them helps maintain a building’s architectural integrity and its embodied energy. When maintained properly, these materials can last indefinitely, eliminating the need to use new resources for their replacement. When new materials are necessary, consideration should be given to sustainability, which includes the availability of raw resources, the method and energy used to extract, transport, and process the raw resources, the energy to manufacture and transport a commercial product, and longevity of installed materials.

- 3.1.1: Retain and preserve original and historic materials to sustain the

historic character of a property and the embodied energy of the materials. Historic architectural features and materials that define the historic character of a building, property, or district shall be maintained in good repair.

- 3.1.2: Original or historic wood finishes must be maintained and painted (if painted historically).
- 3.1.3: Ordinary maintenance and repair typically addresses one half (50%) or less of an original or appropriate building feature, component or material on any one building face or roof, and may involve replacement of areas or parts of the building due to damage or failure of a component or material. A Certificate of Appropriateness is not required for work that meets the requirements of “Ordinary Maintenance and Repair” (See the Municipal Code, Chapter 59, Article 2).
- 3.1.4: Repairs shall be done with like materials.
- 3.1.5: If repairs or replacement affect more than one-half (50%) of an inappropriate component or material located on any individual building face or roof, then it is strongly encouraged that all of the inappropriate components or materials be replaced with appropriate materials. A Certificate of Appropriateness is required when all of the inappropriate materials are proposed for replacement. See “Administrative Review” below.
- 3.1.11: If more than 50% of an original feature or material on any one surface of any one face of a building, including the roof, requires repair by replacement in kind, then the scope of the work exceeds the definition of ordinary maintenance and repair and a Certificate of Appropriateness is required.
- 3.1.12: If repairs or replacement affect more than two-thirds (66%) of an inappropriate component or material located on any individual building face, then all inappropriate components or materials shall be replaced with an appropriate component or material. Removal of more than 50% of an inappropriate material no longer meets the definition of ordinary maintenance and repair, and a Certificate of Appropriateness is required.
- 3.1.13: For example, on a building with vinyl siding, if over two-thirds (66%) of this siding is to be removed from the front building face and replaced due to deterioration or damage, then all of this inappropriate siding on that building face shall be replaced with an appropriate material such as wood siding or the historic material (which is likely to be historic wood siding) shall be uncovered and restored.
- 3.1.14: Remove an inappropriate component or material and restore the original or historic component or material that is revealed by such removal.
- 3.1.15: New material should match the historic in material type, dimensions, design, configuration, texture, surface coatings and visual appearance.
- 3.1.16: When a missing or severely deteriorated feature, element, or

component is replaced, it shall be replaced in-kind, that is, matching the original in dimensions, detail, size, form, material and finish.

- 3.1.17: Incompatible non-historic alterations to a historic building are encouraged to be removed, and the building restored to its original appearance during the period of significance.
- 3.1.18: Renovations previously undertaken may conceal original or historic building fabric. When altering a historic building, non-historic alterations in the area of the proposed alteration should be removed.
- 3.1.19: If original or historic materials do not remain, the original form may be reconstructed or restored based on physical, photographic, or documentary evidence.
- 3.1.25: Removal of existing synthetic materials is strongly encouraged to recover authentic historic finish and appearance of a building and its components.
- 3.1.26: Historic architectural features and materials should be retained and preserved when adapting the building to contemporary use.
- 3.1.27: If replication of original elements is not possible because of a lack of historical physical, photographic or documentary evidence, then a new design that is compatible with the original form, style, and period of the building shall be used.
- 3.1.28: An appropriate option for a replacement feature is a new design that is compatible with the remaining character-defining features of the historic building.
- 3.1.29: The new design of a missing feature shall take into account the size, scale, and materials of the historic building; should be clearly differentiated to avoid a false historical appearance; and should maintain visual attention on the authentic and historic aspects of the building.
- 3.1.30: New compatible designs for missing features should be reversible so that they can be replaced with a more appropriate design in the event that better and more accurate historical evidence becomes available.
- 3.1.33: The removal of metal or vinyl siding may allow the recovery of original or historic decorative elements such as cornices, brackets, and window and door trim that have been damaged or removed when the synthetic materials were installed. Recovery of such details should be based on physical or photographic evidence first, and based on similar details for buildings in the block or district second.
- 3.1.34: Installation of fiber cement products may be appropriate for rear or side elevations not readily visible from the public right-of-way in order to replace wood siding that is missing or deteriorated beyond repair in all districts except the Heritage Hills Historic and Architectural District. If

determined appropriate then the fiber cement siding shall be consistent with the size, pattern, shape, dimensions and texture of the historic wood siding. Fiber cement products are considered sustainable products.

- c. Considerations: The Guidelines support the removal of non-historic fabric such as vinyl siding. When vinyl siding is removed, the original wood siding is often revealed underneath and may be in a usable condition. The applicant has been encouraged to consider reuse of remaining wood siding, but that has not been pursued at this time.

If non-historic vinyl siding is to be replaced, the Guidelines state that it should be replaced to return to the historic condition, which for this property would have been a traditional, wood horizontal lap siding. Vertical board-and-batten siding is a modern trend, but was not used historically on primary dwellings in Oklahoma City's historic districts. The Guidelines do not support the use of alternative materials on primary dwellings, except for some allowances at the rear, where minimally visible.

Removal of vinyl siding and repair/replacement-in-kind of wood siding can be administratively approved.

- d. Recommended Specific Findings:
1. That the proposed siding material and design is not supported by the Guidelines, and is not appropriate to this historic property or district;
  2. That staff can administratively approve siding replacement that meets the applicable Guidelines.

### 3. Item 6, Replace front porch columns.

- a. Description: The applicant proposes the replacement of the presumed non-historic wrought-iron style porch columns with full-height wood piers.
- b. References: *Design and Sustainability Standards and Guidelines for Oklahoma City Historic Districts*

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

**Policy**: Historic porches, canopies, porte-cocheres and balconies are important features and are often the dominant characteristic of a building. These features that are visible from the public right-of-way should not be altered.

**Design Justification**: Front porches and canopies connect a building to its context by orientating the primary entrance to the street. The various components of porches, canopies, porte-cocheres, and balconies, including steps, railings and columns, provide scale and detail to historic buildings.

**Sustainability Justification**: Porches, canopies, and porte-cocheres protect entrances, provide shade, and enhance a building's energy efficiency.

- 3.3.1: Maintaining porches, canopies, porte-cocheres and balconies, preserves and sustains their embodied energy and eliminates the need for replacement with new resources.
- 3.3.2: Preserve existing historic front porches, canopies, porte-cocheres,

balconies, and their components because they are character-defining features of a building.

- 3.3.3: Ordinary maintenance and repair such as cleaning, painting, and making minor repairs through replacement in kind with like materials is encouraged and does not require review as long as less than 50% of an element or feature on any one side of the building is replaced.
- 3.3.4: Preserve historic components of porches including steps, ceiling, flooring, railings and columns.

#### **Porches and Balconies**

- 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.

#### **Porch Elements – Columns & Railings, Ceiling & Flooring, Stairs**

- 3.3.10 Routine maintenance ensures the preservation of porch elements, sustaining their embodied energy and negating the need for replacement with new resources.
- 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.

- c. Considerations: The design of the original columns at the dwelling is unknown; however, this house is one of four in a row with very similar designs that may provide reference points for an appropriate column design. All of the dwellings have gable roofs with partial-width front porches with separate gable roofs, offset to the west. At all three of the other houses, the porch roofs are supported by brick piers topped with columns. Two of the three other houses have wood battered (tapered) columns on top of the outside brick piers, with no column at the center pier that is lower in height, while the third appears to have had its wood columns replaced with wrought-iron style columns atop the brick piers.

The proposed column design does not appear to be typical for this style of dwelling, and based on the surrounding conditions at virtually identical houses on the block, staff believes a reasonable assessment can be made that the historic condition would have matched the neighboring houses.

Documentation of the proposed columns, which have already been constructed, consists of photographs. No drawings or detailed dimensions have been provided. If the proposed columns are to be approved, additional documentation is required.

- d. Recommended Specific Findings:
1. That the proposed columns have not been accurately documented;
  2. That the proposed columns are not appropriate to the style or scale of the house and are not based on historic documentation or other evidence of appropriate column design;
  3. That neighboring houses are of the same form and style as the subject property and retain their original columns;
  4. That these structures would be an appropriate reference for what is likely a more historically accurate and architecturally compatible column design.

#### **E. STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

*Staff is providing two options for motions. Should the applicant indicate a willingness to work toward items and levels of documentation that meet applicable Guidelines and can be approved, the Commission may wish to continue the application to allow additional time. Should the applicant indicate that their preference is not to work toward compliance, the Commission may wish to deny the application with prejudice at this time.*

1. **Continue HPCA-24-00106** with the specific finding that additional information is required from the applicant in order to determine whether the action requested is consistent with all relevant Standards and Guidelines and are in compliance with the relevant sections of the Municipal Code, 2020\*, as referenced in the Staff Report.

#### **Specific Findings:**

Item 1, Replace gutters, Item 4, replace fence, and Item 5, replace driveway:

1. That the installation of gutters, fencing, and driveways can potentially be administratively approved;
2. That the applicant must provide adequate documentation for administrative approval or the Commission's consideration;
3. That the fence location, as currently illustrated, does not meet applicable Guidelines.

Item 2, Install vertical board and batten fiber cement siding and Item 3, install horizontal lap, fiber cement siding:

1. That the proposed siding material and design is not supported by the Guidelines and is not appropriate to this historic property or district;
2. That staff can administratively approve siding replacement that meets the applicable Guidelines.

Item 6, Replace front porch columns:

1. That the proposed columns have not been accurately documented;
2. That the proposed columns are not appropriate to the style or scale of the house and are not based on historic documentation or other evidence of appropriate column design;
3. That neighboring houses are of the same form and style as the subject property and retain their original columns;
4. That these structures would be an appropriate reference for what is likely a more historically accurate and architecturally compatible column design.

**OR**

2. **Deny HPCA-24-00106 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: see above.**

*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](http://www.okc.gov/planning/hp/index.html) ; at Planning Department offices located at 420 W. Main, 9<sup>th</sup> floor, and each HP Commission Meeting.*

*KMF*