



# STAFF REPORT

## Historic Preservation Commission

February 22, 2021

HPCA-20-00120

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**Agenda Item:** VI.D.2.

**Case Number:** HPCA-20-00120

**Property Address:** 621 NW 25th Street

**District:** Paseo Historic District

**Applicant:** L.D. Construction Inc  
Luis Hernandez  
215 S Miller, Ste B  
Oklahoma City, OK 73108

**Owner:** Amaro and Eufemia Montoya  
621 NW 25th Street  
Oklahoma City, OK 73103

### A. CASE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Reconstruct front porch and steps (required); and
2. Construct brick arches at front porch (required).

### B. BACKGROUND

#### 1. Project Description

This proposal is to remove the existing, modest, bungalow style decorative components of the historic front porch, make repairs to the porch, replace concrete floor, construct Tudor revival style porch components, and replace concrete steps with brick steps.

#### 2. Location

Project site is located on the north side of NW 25<sup>th</sup> Street, mid-block between Lee and Dewey.

#### 3. Site History

*Date of Construction:* 1915

*Zoned Historic Preservation/Historical Landmark:* Paseo 1998

*National Register Listing:* Paseo 2004

*Description from National Register Nomination Intensive Level Survey:*

621 Northwest 25th, 1915. This one-story Bungalow/Craftsman residence has nonoriginal asbestos siding and a stuccoed foundation. Front porch has scalloped brackets under the eaves. Front windows are arranged in threes. A concrete block garage replaced the original frame building at the rear.

***Additional Information:***

The 1922 edition of the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps illustrates a modest, one-story frame dwelling with an inset, one-story front porch extending the west half of the front (south) façade. The roofs are indicated as shingle, typically wood. A back porch is indicated at the NW corner of the dwelling and spans half the width of the dwelling. A one-story frame “autohouse” is indicated the 1950 edition toward the west property line and approximately half-way back of the property depth from the front property line. The back porch is illustrated as enclosed. All structures are indicated with composition roof at that time. The 1955 edition illustrates no changes.

**4. Existing Conditions**

This work has been initiated but must be reviewed as if it had not.

**5. Previous Actions**

This proposal was heard by the Commission in September 2020 and continued as requested by the applicant a second time. No continuances remain available. Staff has had conversations with the daughter of the owner and the owner regarding alternative proposals, and new documentation. The documentation provided was not to scale, did not accurately illustrate existing or proposed conditions, and did not appear to provide a proposal consistent with the historic character of the structure. The owner did take the drawings and reach out to someone for assistance, but no drawings have been provided at this time.

Previous applications for Historic Preservation Certificate of Appropriateness (HPCA) filed for this property include:

| Case Number                            | Date       | Owner         | Decision  |
|--|------------|---------------|-----------|
| HPCA-02-127                            | 01/10/2003 | Amaro Montoya | withdrawn |
| Construct shed and infill garage door. |            |               |           |

**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, Reconstruct front porch and steps (required); and 2, Construct brick arches at front porch (required).**

- a. Description: The applicant proposes removal of the existing lattice, brackets, porch floor and porch steps and replacement with brick arches, brick veneer, brick steps and new concrete floor.

- 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.

#### **Ceilings & Floors**

- 3.3.16: Preserve and maintain original or historic porch ceiling and flooring materials. Ordinary maintenance and repair (less than 50% replacement of an element) do not require review.
- 3.3.17: Ceilings and soffits were often finished with painted beaded board or other types of tongue and groove boards. These historic materials provide important scale and detail and must be preserved and maintained. Common colors for porch ceilings were "sky blue" or white.
- 3.3.18: Preserve and maintain original or historic porch floors such as wood, concrete or tile. Do not paint, stain or cover original porch floors with "wall-to-wall" or glued down carpet or other surface materials. Area rugs may be used and are non-permanent as long as they are not permanently affixed.
- 3.3.19: Previously painted porches may be repainted. Property owners should photo-document existing porch before repainting so as to maintain a continuous record of the property.
- 3.3.20: If more than 50% of a porch ceiling, soffit or floor requires repair by replacement, use materials to match the historic materials in all details, dimensions, and configuration and first consider replacement in kind for a new porch floor.
- 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.

### Stairs

- 3.3.23: Preserve and maintain existing historic stairs leading to porches. Ordinary repair that involves replacement in kind for less than 50% of a particular type of feature or material does not require review as long as the replacement parts match in all aspects the deteriorated materials.
- 3.3.24: Whether concrete, brick, wrought iron or wood, regular maintenance of original or historic stairs will prevent the need for review and replacement.
- 3.3.25: Replacement equates with removal of more than 50% of the original or historic material of any porch element. Replacement materials must be in-kind, for example use wood to replace wood stairs and concrete to replace concrete stairs.
- 3.3.26: Original or historic porch stairs should not be removed. If repair by replacement is needed because the stairs are deteriorated beyond repair, replacement should be in kind. New porch stairs should match the original as closely as possible in appearance, design, size, detail and materials. If new stairs are needed where not located originally, the design should be modest and be appropriate for the style of the building.

## 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.
- 3.1.6: Peeling, flaking or failing paint should be removed from historic wood and masonry surfaces by the gentlest means possible to protect the integrity of the historic surface. Acceptable methods for paint removal include scraping, sanding, thermal removal or mild chemical strippers.
- 3.1.7: The original natural finish of brick and stone is historically important and must be preserved. Cleaning must only be undertaken to halt masonry deterioration.
- 3.1.8: The use of any abrasive, strong chemical, sandblasting or high-pressure cleaning method is not permitted, as these permanently damage the finished material surfaces and accelerate deterioration of historic masonry and wood.
- 3.1.9: Previously painted masonry surfaces may be repainted.
- 3.1.11: If more than 50% of a 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.
- 3.1.15: 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.
- 3.1.20: Original or historic masonry or stone surfaces must be maintained and not be painted, unless severe deterioration of the brick or stone can be shown to require painting and other consolidation or stabilization methods cannot be shown to be appropriate.
- 3.1.21: If masonry was previously painted, it is often not appropriate or possible to remove paint, and appropriate repainting must be considered. If color or texture of replacement brick or stone cannot be matched with existing material, as a last resort, painting may be an appropriate treatment.
- 3.1.22: Repair masonry by replacement or patching with in-kind or similar material. When this is not possible, new materials matching in texture, color and detail should be used.
- 3.1.23: New mortar used in re-pointing must match the color and composition of the original. Incompatible mortar, too high in Portland cement content, may exceed the strength of historic brick and result in acceleration of deterioration of brickwork.
- 3.1.24: Sandblasting, high pressure power washing, the use of blow torch methods and any abrasive cleaning or stripping methods must never be used

because of the resultant permanent damage.

- 3.1.25: Removal of existing synthetic materials is strongly encouraged to recover authentic historic finish and appearance of a building and its components.
- c. Considerations: The Standards and Guidelines allow for repair in kind of historic fabric where necessary due to deterioration; replacement of non-historic features to match a documented historic condition where historic features are missing, or installation of a new feature compatible with the historic character of the structure where historic conditions are unknown. The criteria indicate replacement in kind for steps or stairs, ceilings and floors, and columns and railings based on the historic condition.

Section 3.1 addresses repair, maintenance, and reconstruction when an historic feature is missing, or components are inappropriate non-historic components. No historic photos of the property have been provided. It has not been established that the porch was non-historic or deteriorated beyond repair though various components appear atypical.

- d. Recommended Specific Findings:
  1. That historic components that are documented as deteriorated beyond repair may be replaced in kind via administrative approval;
  2. That non-historic components may be replaced with a compatible feature based on historic documentation of the feature or historic conditions at similar structures;
  3. That the Tudor style arches of the proposed porch rehabilitation have not been documented to be consistent with the structure or similar structures in the area;
  4. That the porch floor is proposed in concrete but has not been illustrated; and
  5. That replacement of concrete steps with brick steps may not be consistent with the historic character of the structure or similar structures.

#### **E. HPCA-20-00120 STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

1. **Deny with Prejudice Items 1 and 2, to reconstruct front porch and construct brick arches at the front porch with brick veneer over existing wall,** 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 historic components that are documented as deteriorated beyond repair may be replaced in kind via administrative approval;
2. That non-historic components may be replaced with a compatible feature based on historic documentation of the feature or historic conditions at similar structures;
3. That the Tudor style arches of the proposed porch rehabilitation have not been



- documented to be consistent with the structure or similar structures in the area;
4. That the porch floor is proposed in concrete but has not been illustrated; and
  5. That replacement of concrete steps with brick steps may not be consistent with the historic character of the structure or similar structures.

*Note: Staff recommendation does not constitute Commission action.*

*\*Relevant Sections of the 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 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.*

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