



STAFF REPORT

Historic Preservation Commission

August 2, 2023

HPCA-23-00089

Agenda Item: VI.D.5.

Case Number: HPCA-23-00089

Property Address: 723 NW 38th Street

District: Crown Heights Historic District

Applicant: SRB LLC
Craig Wallace
115 NE 5th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73104

Owner: City of Oklahoma City/MAPS
420 W Main Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73104

A. CASE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Install new sidewalk along N Shartel Ave (elective).

B. BACKGROUND

1. Project Description

The applicant proposes to install a new sidewalk within the existing road, narrowing the road and relocating the curb.

2. Location

Project site is located on the east side of N Shartel Avenue, from NW 38th to NW 43rd.

3. Site History

Date of Construction: HPCA-23-00089

Zoned Historic Preservation/Historical Landmark: 1977

National Register Listing: 1995

Description from National Register Nomination Intensive Level Survey:

N/A

Additional Information:

Historically, the streetcar ran along what is now the median of N Shartel Avenue; the date of the removal of the tracks and whether that impacted the width or current configuration of the street is unknown. No sidewalk is known to have existed in this location previously.

4. Existing Conditions

The location of the proposed sidewalk is currently occupied by a bicycle lane, painted in the road bed adjacent to the easternmost curb of N Shartel. Abutting the curb to the east are front or side yards of residential properties.

5. Previous Actions

None.

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, Install new sidewalk along N Shartel Ave (elective).

- a. Description: The applicant proposes the installation of a new sidewalk, extending out from the existing curb on the east side of N Shartel from NW 38th Street to NW 43rd Street. The proposed sidewalk moves the existing curb out to a sidewalk width of 5 feet, with a 5-foot bicycle lane separating the sidewalk from the 11-foot-wide driving lane.
- 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.

- 2.3.4: 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.
- 2.3.10: Locate new driveways and sidewalks so that the topography of the building site and significant landscape features, such as mature trees, are retained. Protect mature trees and other significant landscape features from direct construction damage and from delayed damage such as destruction of root area or soil compaction by not permitting construction equipment access to the ground area under the tree canopy.
- 2.3.11: Curb cuts, including those intended to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), should be installed to minimize damage to the original concrete sidewalks. The color and texture of the new concrete shall match and be consistent with the existing adjacent concrete color and texture.

2.9 Public Property and Right-Of-Way Improvements

Policy: The public spaces within historic districts; for example streets, sidewalks, parks and parkways; are character-defining features and should be preserved and maintained. The City of Oklahoma City, utility companies, historic property residents, and historic property owners all play roles in maintaining these features; and the introduction of new features should be as compatible as possible with the historic districts.

Design Justification: The existing concrete streets and sidewalks are important character defining features of the city's historic districts. The introduction of new elements in the districts such as utility meters, switching boxes or postal service mailboxes should be carefully considered for compatibility with the streetscapes and overall character of the historic properties and districts.

Sustainability Justification: Maintaining parks and parkways provides permeable ground surface for rain absorption and plants for carbon dioxide generation and publicly accessible shade.

- 2.9.12: Neither existing street pavement widths nor existing street right of

way widths may be increased or decreased except by review and approval by the Historic Preservation Commission.

- 2.9.13: Street medians or esplanades may not be added or removed except by review and approval by the Historic Preservation Commission.

- c. Considerations: The proposed project is part of a larger, citywide effort to create more walkable, pedestrian friendly, routes for transportation throughout Oklahoma City's districts and neighborhoods. Shartel has been previously identified as a priority for improved pedestrian access.

Guideline 2.3.10 provides direction for the installation of new sidewalks where they did not exist previously, directing applicants to "locate new driveways and sidewalks so that the topography of the building site and significant landscape features, such as mature trees, are retained." The proposed installation of a sidewalk within the existing roadbed is intended to minimize the impact of the installation upon existing historic features, including the topography of the abutting yards and mature landscaping. The sidewalk will, in some locations, extend inward from the existing curb to the east (into side yards) by approximately one foot. The applicant indicates that this will not require a substantial change in grade or the installation of large retaining walls.

The Guidelines encourage and require the preservation of existing, historic paving features, including driveways and sidewalks, calling out their character, materials, color, and the radii of curb cuts. The installation of the sidewalk will create intersections with at least eight existing driveways and four existing walkways that will require replacement and potentially modifications to those features in order to address changes in grade. A "typical" detail of this modification has been provided. The applicant should provide details specific to these driveways and sidewalks to staff for confirmation that they are not adversely affecting the character of the individual properties or the district as a whole, for inclusion in a Certificate of Appropriateness if approved.

- d. Recommended Specific Findings:

1. That the Guidelines support the installation of new sidewalks if installed in accordance with applicable criteria;
2. That the sidewalk as proposed appears to have minimal impact upon the historic character of the district as a whole or upon the individual properties abutted by the proposed installation;
3. That the sidewalk will impact existing, potentially historic driveways and sidewalks in order to address changes in grade and slope;
4. That interactions between the sidewalk and existing historic features should be accurately documented and designed to minimize impact upon those features and to retain or recreate historic characteristics including size, shape, and materials.

E. HPCA-23-00089 STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

1. **Approve HPCA-23-00089 with the following conditions**, with the specific findings that

the proposed work, with the **agreed-upon conditions**, will not have an adverse effect on the historic character of the district or property; the items comply with all relevant Standards and Guidelines and sections of the Municipal Code, 2020*, as referenced in the Staff Report.

Specific Findings:

1. That the Guidelines support the installation of new sidewalks if installed in accordance with applicable criteria;
2. That the sidewalk as proposed appears to have minimal impact upon the historic character of the district as a whole or upon the individual properties abutted by the proposed installation;
3. That the sidewalk will impact existing, potentially historic driveways and sidewalks in order to address changes in grade and slope;
4. That interactions between the sidewalk and existing historic features should be accurately documented and designed to minimize impact upon those features and to retain or recreate historic characteristics including size, shape, and materials.

Conditions:

1. That interactions between the N Shartel Avenue sidewalk and existing features, including sidewalks and driveways, be designed to minimize impact upon those features and to retain or recreate historic characteristics including size, shape, and materials.
2. That detailed documentation of interactions between, and modifications to, existing features including sidewalks, driveways, or topographical anomalies and the new N Shartel Avenue sidewalk be submitted to staff prior to release of a Certificate of Appropriateness.

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.

KMF