



STAFF REPORT

Historic Preservation Commission

June 2, 2021

HPCA-21-00062

Agenda Item: VI. D. 6.

Case Number: HPCA-21-00062

Property Address: 925 NW 17th Street

District: Mesta Park Historic District

Applicant: Gumerson Blake
Jeff Blake
1020 NW 81st Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73114

Owner: John Stavros
925 NW 17th Street
Oklahoma City, OK 73106

A. CASE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Demolish garage and carport (elective);
2. Construct garage (elective);
3. Install new driveway (elective);
4. Install new concrete stairs at rear (elective); and
5. Replace fence (elective).

B. BACKGROUND

1. Location

Project site is located on the north side of NW 17th Street between Olie and Francis Avenues.

2. Site History

Date of Construction: 1915

Zoned Historic Preservation/Historical Landmark: 1994

National Register Listing: 1983

Description from National Register Nomination Intensive Level Survey:

None

Additional Information:

The 1922 edition of the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps illustrates a two-story, brick-veneered, frame dwelling with one-story front porch extending nearly the entire length of

the front (south) façade with a one-story side porch on the east side. A two-story frame “autohouse” is indicated in the northwest corner of the property line on and abutting the alley. All structures have shingle roofs, typically wood. The 1955 edition indicates the roofs to be composition materials. No other changes are noted.

3. Existing Conditions

The proposal removes a fence, garage and carport damaged in the winter storms. The carport has been removed. A new garage, driveway, rear steps and fence are proposed.

4. Previous Actions

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

Case Number	Date	Owner	Decision
HPCA-1177	08/10/1998	Dan Archer	Approved Conditionally
Replace fence with wood fence not to exceed 7 feet in height, of which the top 1-foot must be transparent.			
HPCA-1177	09/08/1998	Dan Archer	Approved
Construct decks at various elevations acknowledging that privacy at those elevations will be lost.			

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, 2010.**

1. Item 2, Construct garage (elective).

- a. Description: The applicant proposes construction of a new garage at approximately 478 square feet. Dimensions are 20.6 feet wide, 23.33 feet deep, and 13.33 feet tall. The structure will be raised to avoid water infiltration. The change in grade is not described.

Design details are modest with a 5/12 hipped roof, lap siding, a wood pedestrian door, and a 16-foot by 7-foot, wood panel, overhead door. Eaves are just over a foot deep. Gutters and downspouts are proposed and presumed to be a modern profile and coated, though not described. Materials include an architectural grade shingle, smooth “HardiPlank” lap siding and smooth “HardiTrim” and “HardiSoffit.” The double wide overhead door is indicated to have smooth wood panels with applied wood trim. No fenestration or light fixtures are proposed.

Placement, form, massing, proportions and design details approximate the existing garage.

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

4.4 Garages

Policy: The retention of existing, historic garages is encouraged. A historic garage should be refurbished and modified instead of demolished or replaced to accommodate contemporary lifestyle requirements. New garages are permitted where a house does not have a garage or where a new garage is necessary. As with other accessory buildings, garages should have their own form and should generally appear as secondary structures and not visually overwhelm or compete with the other historic buildings of the property or district.

- 4.4.1: Garage doors should typically be painted to match the color of the garage. For garages that are “high style” it may be appropriate to use the color of the garage doors as a complementary or accent color to the building color scheme.
- 4.4.2: Electronic garage door openers may be installed and used.
- 4.4.3: Construction of a new or replacement garage should follow the historic setback for a garage on the property or setback patterns of other garages in the streetscape or historic district.
- 4.4.4: Historic garages in Oklahoma City’s historic districts are predominantly detached, and attached garages are not appropriate unless documentation demonstrates their previous historic existence at the property.
- 4.4.5: Construction of a replacement garage shall approximate the original configuration, form, massing, style, placement and detail of the former garage as described by photographic or other documentation.
- 4.4.6: Construction of a replacement garage may reasonably expand beyond the footprint of a historic one- or two- car garage, up to a total footprint of 450 square feet or 5% of the lot, whichever is greater, in order to accommodate a standard size parking space for up to two vehicles. Additional factors including the level of visibility of a new garage and the size and massing of surrounding structures may be considered.
- 4.4.7: Design a new garage to be secondary to that of a property’s main historic building.
- 4.4.9: Materials used for a new garage should reflect the property’s historical development and the use and function of the garage. Materials used for the exterior facades of a garage were often different (and less costly) than those used for the primary building.
- 4.4.14: Spacing and size of window and door openings in a new garage should be consistent with the historical development of the property and similar to their historic counterparts within the streetscape or historic district, as should the proportion of window to wall space.
- 4.4.17: New garage pedestrian doors in all other districts may be solid wood with wood frames or alternate door and door frame materials such as

composite wood or aluminum clad wood for locations that are not visible from the public right-of-way. Otherwise pedestrian doors and frames shall be solid wood.

- 4.4.18: New garage vehicle doors in all other districts may be solid wood, wood veneer with a concealed metal frame, or composite materials including fiberglass or wood fiber (85% minimum wood fiber content). Doors should first match the historic design. When the historic design is unknown then the doors should match the design of other historic garage doors used in the respective district. A paneled design may be appropriate.
- 4.4.21: At double garages, two single garage vehicle doors should be used instead of one larger, double door. This will maintain the scale and rhythm of older structures, making a two-car garage seem smaller and more compatible with the primary building and the district.

4.6 Exterior Materials at New Construction

Policy: Materials used in the construction of new buildings, additions, garages and other accessory buildings should be compatible in appearance and design with common building materials in the district, or typical of structures of the proposed style, type, age and location.

Design Justification: The form, materials and details of exterior walls and embellishments, as well as their scale, texture and variety, contribute to the overall character of the historic district.

Sustainability Justification: Materials for new exterior wall construction should be as sustainable as possible. Appropriate siding materials may include stucco, wood, brick, or cementitious siding. Vinyl and metal siding materials are not sustainable and should not be used.

- 4.6.2: Materials for new construction should be consistent with those at other buildings within the property, block and historic district. Consideration should be given to the pattern of development of the specific property and lot.
- 4.6.6: Cementitious siding (smooth finish) of an appropriate profile may be used at new construction of stand-alone primary buildings, garages and other accessory buildings. It may also be used for additions to historic structures.
- 4.6.19: Recommendations and requirements for garage type doors are described in the “Garage” section of this chapter.
- 4.6.22: Pedestrian doors that are not visible from the public right-of-way may be made of alternate materials including aluminum clad wood, composite wood, and fiberglass. Doors in Heritage Hills must be of solid wood.
- 4.6.23: Wood shingles, composition shingles, slate tiles, terra cotta or clay tiles are permitted for use on roofs. Recommendations and requirements for these materials are found in the “Alterations to the Building Fabric and Components of Historic Buildings” chapter.

- 4.6.26: Composition roofs should be of higher quality and are often referred to as Architectural Grade or Dimensional Grade. These shingles are usually rated as 30-, 40-, or 50-year shingles and have a thicker profile.
- c. Considerations: The proposed garage appears to meet criteria for replacement of an existing garage. The standards and guidelines do recommend pairs of overhead doors rather than doublewide doors.
- d. Recommended Specific Findings:
 1. That placement of the proposed garage approximates the historic setback at the far back of the site;
 2. That the configuration, form, massing, style, placement and detail approximate the former garage;
 3. That the overhead door and garage will be minimally visible due to location at the back of the lot between large, close structures.

2. Item 5, Replace fence (elective).

- a. Description: The applicant proposes replacement of existing fencing with fencing not to exceed 6 feet tall. Fence material is wood and appears to meet all criteria.
- b. References: *Design and Sustainability Standards and Guidelines for Oklahoma City Historic Districts*

2.8 Fences and Walls

- 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.
- 2.8.8: 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.
- 2.8.16: 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.
- 2.8.21: The side of a fence or wall facing the street or alley shall be the “finished” side.

c. Recommended Specific Findings:

1. That proposed wood fencing will not exceed 6 feet tall on side and front facing locations;
2. That proposed wood fencing will not exceed 8 feet tall on the rear property line;
3. That structural components of the proposed fence will not be visible from street or alley;
4. That fencing will be located at least 40% back from the front wall of the dwelling, rear wall of the front porch;
5. That fencing will meet all relevant Standards and Guidelines.

3. Item 4, Install new concrete stairs at rear (elective).

- a. Description: The applicant proposes replacement of the rear landing and steps in kind. Materials include concrete steps and modest metal railing. The feature is not visible

from the street. The feature does not appear to be historic.

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

3.1 Maintenance, Preservation, and Rehabilitation of Exterior Building Materials

- 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.

- c. Recommended Specific Findings:

1. That replacement in kind of deteriorated features is appropriate;
2. That replacement with a new, compatible design where historic features cannot be determined is appropriate;
3. That new features should be easily removable should the historic condition be determined;
4. That the proposed design is very similar to the existing, is compatible with the dwelling, and is easily removed.

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, 2010 as referenced below:*

2. Item 1, Demolish garage and carport (elective).

- a. Description: The applicant proposes demolition of a one-story, two-car garage with a small addition on the rear (north) and a carport on the front (south). The garage and addition were approximately 432 square feet.
- b. References: *Oklahoma City Municipal Code, 2020*

59-4250.4

L. *Demolitions.*

(1) *General Provisions.*

- (a) A Certificate of Appropriateness shall be required for the demolition or removal of any structure within any HL or HP District. Applications for demolition permits shall be filed with the Development Services Director, but shall not be issued unless accompanied by a Certificate of Appropriateness.

(2) *Findings and Purpose.* Demolition or removal of a historic structure constitutes an irreplaceable loss to the quality and character of the City. Therefore, a Certificate of Appropriateness shall only be granted if one of the following occurs:

- (a) As determined by the Commission, the structure is noncontributing to the historic integrity of the historic district and the demolition will not adversely affect the historic character of the property or district.
- (b) As evaluated by the Commission based upon information including, but not limited to, reports, photographs, or inspection as part of a site visit, the structure is in a state of decay or ruin and poses an imminent threat to public health or safety and the demolition of said structure is required to alleviate said threat.
- (d) The structure is a garage or other accessory building and meets at least one of the following criteria addressing the functionality and continued use of the historic structure in relation to the impact of a demolition on the historic character of the property and district:
 - (1) The structure is not large enough to accommodate a standard size parking space and cannot reasonably be altered to do so;
 - (2) The condition of the structure makes it physically impractical to rehabilitate without the loss of all or nearly all fabric contributing to its historic integrity;
 - (3) The structure is not original to the property;
 - (4) The structure has minimal impact upon the historic integrity of the property and district, due to factors including the structure's lack of historic integrity and significance, architectural significance, or minimal to no visibility from a public way.

(5) *Burden of Proof.* The applicant has the burden of proof to establish, by a preponderance of evidence, the necessary facts to warrant demolition.

(6) *Standards for Demolition Approval.* The Historic Preservation Commission shall approve the application for demolition if it finds any of the following:

- (a) The structure is noncontributing to the historic district and the demolition will not adversely affect the historic character of the property or district.

- (b) The structure, which has not otherwise been declared a public nuisance by the City Council, poses an imminent threat to public health or safety and the demolition of said structure is required to alleviate said threat.
- c. Considerations: The garage, small addition on the rear, and the carport were damaged in the winter storms. Damage is illustrated in photographs. There is some evidence to indicate that the garage may not be historic. The addition and carport are not historic.
- d. Recommended Specific Findings:
 - 1. That the structures appear to pose an imminent threat to public health or safety that can be alleviated only through demolition.

3. Item 3, Install new driveway (elective).

- a. Description: The applicant proposed to replace and expand the existing driveway. The proposed width will expand to 10 feet wide in front of the house and significantly wider at the rear of the house and the garage. The radius is stated to increase to meet code. The radius is currently four feet. The minimum required is five feet. A radius exceeding five feet may not be appropriate.
- 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.

- 2.3.5: 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.
 - 2.3.9: 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.
 - 2.3.10: 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.
 - 2.3.12: 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.
- c. Considerations: The amount of paving is extensive. It is presumed that existing storm water management is sufficient, but the applicant may wish to address any issues during replacement of paving. Integral color in the paving mix is not required to acquire a patina and texture that matches the existing driveway or abutting paving and may hinder the ability to meet said requirement. A topical treatment may more accurately match the aged patina and texture of the driveway or sidewalks. Changes to the radius should not provide a radius in excess of five feet. Continuous pours of sidewalks, patios, and driveways do not match the appearance of design details at similar historic features.
- d. Recommended Specific Findings:

1. That narrow driveways may widen to 10 feet wide and may widen at the approach to the garage to match the width of the garage door;
2. That the proposed paving is more extensive than the width of the garage door and patios and sidewalks may be more appropriately addressed as separately installed features;
3. That new paving must not be bright white and should match the finish of existing or abutting remaining paving in design detail, texture, color and aged appearance;
4. That historic approaches included a radius of 3 to 4 feet and the minimum required per code is currently 5 feet;
5. That the maximum radius should not exceed 5 feet.

E. HPCA-21-00062 STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

1. **Approve Item 2, construct garage,** with the specific findings that the proposed work will not have an adverse effect on the historic character of the district or property and complies with all relevant Standards and Guidelines and sections of the Municipal Code, 2020*, as referenced in the Staff Report.

Specific Findings:

1. That placement of the proposed garage approximates the historic setbacks at the far back of the site;
 2. That the configuration, form, massing, style, placement and detail approximate the former garage;
 3. That proposed materials meet criteria and are compatible with the primary structure as well as approximate the previously existing garage;
 4. That the overhead door and garage will be minimally visible due to location at the back of the lot between large, close structures.
2. **Approve Item 3, install driveway, 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 narrow driveways may widen to 10 feet wide and may widen at the approach to the garage to match the width of the garage door;
 - 2) That the proposed paving is more extensive than the width of the garage door and patios and sidewalks may be more appropriately addressed as separately installed features;
 - 3) That new paving must not be bright white and should match the finish of existing or abutting remaining paving in design detail, texture, color and aged appearance;
 - 4) That historic approaches included a radius of 3 to 4 feet and the minimum required

per code is currently 5 feet;

- 5) That the maximum radius should not exceed 5 feet.

Conditions:

- 1) That the radius will not exceed 5 feet;
 - 2) That driveway will direct water to the street and away from buildings;
 - 3) That the finish will not be bright white but will match the design detail, texture, patina and aged appearance of the existing driveway or remaining abutting concrete.
- 3. (Demolition of an Historic Structure) Approve Item 1, demolish garage, attached addition, and carport,** with the specific finding that the proposed work will have an adverse effect on the historic character of the district or property, but is necessary because of an imminent threat to public health and safety, and complies with all relevant Standards and Guidelines and sections of the Municipal Code, 2020*, as referenced in the Staff Report.

Specific Findings:

- 1) That the structure structures pose an imminent threat to public health and safety that can be alleviated only through demolition.
- 4. Approve Item 5, replace fence,** with the specific findings that the proposed work will not have an adverse effect on the historic character of the district or property and complies with all relevant Standards and Guidelines and sections of the Municipal Code, 2020*, as referenced in the Staff Report.

Specific Findings:

1. That proposed wood fencing will not exceed 6 feet tall on side and front facing locations;
 2. That proposed wood fencing will not exceed 8 feet tall on the rear property line;
 3. That structural components of the proposed fence will not be visible from street or alley;
 4. That fencing will be located at least 40% back from the front wall of the dwelling, rear wall of the front porch;
 5. That fencing will meet all criteria in Chapter 2.8.
- 5. Approve Item 4, replace rear stairs and landing,** with the specific findings that the proposed work will not have an adverse effect on the historic character of the district or property and complies with all relevant Standards and Guidelines and sections of the Municipal Code, 2020*, as referenced in the Staff Report.

Specific Findings:

1. That replacement in kind of deteriorated features is appropriate;
2. That replacement with a new, compatible design where historic features cannot be determined is appropriate;

3. That new features should be easily removable should the historic condition be determined;
4. That the proposed design is very similar to the existing, is compatible with the dwelling, and is easily removed.

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, 2010 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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