



# STAFF REPORT

## Historic Preservation Commission

June 2, 2021

HPCA-21-00074

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**Agenda Item:** VI. D. 7.

**Case Number:** HPCA-21-00074

**Property Address:** 126 NW 21st Street

**District:** Heritage Hills East Historic District & Urban Conservation District

**Applicant:** Okie Solar  
Nate Greving  
1235 Sovereign Row, Ste C8  
Oklahoma City, OK 73108

**Owner:** Roger Adams  
126 NW 21st Street  
Oklahoma City, OK 73103

### A. CASE ITEMS FOR CONSIDERATION

1. Install solar panels on sides of roof (elective).

### B. BACKGROUND

#### 1. Project Description

The applicant proposes the installation of solar panels on both side roofs of the primary dwelling.

#### 2. Location

Project site is located on the south side of NW 21<sup>st</sup> Street between Robinson and Broadway.

#### 3. Site History

*Date of Construction:* 1929

*Zoned Historic Preservation/Historical Landmark:* 1999

*National Register Listing:* 1979

#### *Additional Information:*

The 1922 edition of the Sanborn Fire Insurance maps illustrates a two-story frame dwelling with one-story front porch extending the entire length of the front (north) façade and wrapping around the east corner. A one-story projection is illustrated on the rear (south). A one-story frame “autohouse” is indicated on the easternmost property line with the front face back nearly 2/3 of the property depth from the front property line. The primary structure is indicated with shingles, typically wood, while the garage is indicated with shingle, often indicative of a flat roof. The 1949 edition of the maps indicates the dwelling

and porch roofs to be composition material. No further changes are noted.

#### 4. Existing Conditions

The dwelling is the second site east of Robinson with a very visible, very large roof. The primary dwelling has been remodeled. Two additions have been constructed. A new garage has been constructed. The porte-cochere was reconstructed. The windows have been replaced.

#### 5. Previous Actions

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

Case Number	Date	Owner	Decision
HPCA-15-00187	12/02/2015	Yaniv Zimmer	Approved
Construct addition			
HPCA-	01/22/2016	Yaniv Zimmer	Approved
Construct garage not to exceed 450 square feet.			
HPCA-15-00187	01/22/2016	Yaniv Zimmer	Approved
Reconstruct columns at porte-cochere.			
HPCA-16-00066	05/19/2016	Yaniv Zimmer	Approved
Replace windows.			

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.\**

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, 2010\* as referenced below:*

##### 1. Item 1, Install solar panels on sides of roof (elective).

- Description: The applicant proposes the installation of 30 solar panes on the side slopes of the roof of this 2-story structure. Typically, solar panels require added mechanical equipment that is not illustrated. Often these features require reinforcing the roof structure which has not been addressed.
- References: *Design and Sustainability Standards and Guidelines for Oklahoma City Historic Districts*

## 2.4 Service and Mechanical Areas

**Policy:** Mechanical equipment, such as HVAC units and satellite dishes, should be located out of public view. They should be screened with landscaping (best) or fencing (acceptable).

**Design Justification:** Most mechanical units and equipment are non-historic additions to buildings, and the effect of their visual impact on a property's or district's historic character should be minimized.

- 2.4.3: Service and mechanical equipment are commonplace, but their presence must be minimized by appropriate placement and screening. A planted screen is preferred and a fence screen is also acceptable.
- 2.4.2: Mechanical equipment must not be located in public view. Equipment must be screened.
- 2.4.4: Service equipment (including ground mounted solar collectors), mechanical areas and trash receptacles, if proposed, must be screened from the street and other pedestrian areas. Loading areas should be located away from primary facades and be well maintained.
- 2.4.7: Roof-mounted equipment is not allowed on front- or corner side yard-facing roof planes and must be set back from the edges of roofs and screened, so that it is not visible to pedestrians in the public right-of-way and does not detract from the historic character of buildings and the district.

## 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.

## 3.7 Roofs

**Policy:** Retain original roof shape, details, and materials when possible. When replacing roofing materials, consider the energy used in their manufacture and transportation, the reflectivity of the material and whether the material derives from a renewable or recyclable resource.

**Design Justification:** By their shape, features, materials and details, roofs contribute significantly to the historic character of residential and multi-family buildings. Historic roof materials are usually related to the architectural age and

style of the main building. Through variations in line, pitch and overhang, a historic roof can also reveal changes and additions to historic buildings over time. Chimneys, dormers and other roof features add to the diversity and character of historic buildings.

- 3.7.2: Maintain roof and roof elements, thereby preserving the historic building.
  - 3.7.3: Preserve the original shape, line, pitch and overhang of historic roofs, as well as architectural features such as dormers, chimneys and turrets.
  - 3.7.4: Retain, preserve and keep in good repair distinctive features such as open eaves with exposed rafters and angled, decorative or plain rafter tails, flared eaves or decorative purlins, ridge cresting and brackets. Preserve flat roofs and parapets.
  - 3.7.7: Repairs to flashing must be copper or other metal with a finish to match the roof color. Unfinished, galvanized metal flashing shall not be used.
  - 3.7.13: For ventilation of attic heat, roof vents should be located out of view on back sloping roofs. Vents are encouraged to help improve the energy efficiency of the building and may be more appropriately accommodated using compatible attic wall louvered vents. If the building roof does not have a back sloping roof and attic walls for ventilation louvers are not available, then side roof ventilation may be considered on the least visible side locations from the public right-of-way. Low-profile ridge vents may be used.
  - 3.7.14: New roof features such as roof ventilators, antennas, satellite dishes and skylights may be installed, but must be located on back slopes and not visible from the public right-of-way. Solar panels and solar shingles may also be installed on back roof slopes as long as they are not visible from the public right-of-way.
- c. Considerations: Historically the dwelling was constructed with lathe decking and wood shingles, which are significantly lighter than modern decking and composite roofing materials. Additional weight added to the roof may require structural changes to the roofing support system which adds additional weight to the structure of the building. The Commission generally does not review interior structural repairs; however, work that could have an impact on the physical condition of the property should be identified and addressed.

Both Section 2.4, Service and Mechanical Areas, and 3.7, Roofs, address the installation of modern features such as solar panels. The Standards and Guidelines indicate that the historical visual character of a building, property, or district should be maintained, and that materials, form, details, scale, texture, patterns and finishes are important character defining features. Obscuring these features diminishes the significance of historic buildings and structures which has an adverse effect of the historic character of the district. The criteria supports retaining original roof shapes, line, pitch, details, and reflectivity where possible. The shape, features, materials and details of roofs contribute significantly to the historic character.

The Guidelines state that various roof components that are typically metal should have a finish to match the roof color. Unfinished metals other than copper shall not be used. New features must be located on the least visible side of the roof. The Guidelines indicate that solar panels and solar shingles may be appropriate when located on the back slopes and where not visible from the public right of way.

The proposed solar panels are visible from the right of way at this intersection, and most are located on the most visible slope of the roof. In addition, various components of the system are attached to the east wall of the accessory building and the north wall of the dwelling. These components may not be visible from the public rights of way; however, the installation may infiltrate the brick veneer of the buildings and damage historic fabric. Careful consideration to ensure appropriate protection against water infiltration is necessary, and careful installation within the mortar joints rather than the brick face is necessary.

d. Recommended Specific Findings:

1. That solar panels are prohibited from being located on the roof where visible from the street;
2. That the proposed solar panels are located side slopes of a roof that does have a rear slope;
3. That the proposed solar panels are located where visible from the public right of ways at both streets;
4. That solar panels may obscure the original line, slope and texture of the roof;
5. That solar panels are reflective and may have visible unfinished metals that do not match the color of the roof;
6. That various components of the system may be located on the walls of the historic building;
7. That appropriate screening of mechanical equipment to meet all criteria is required if visible from the public right of way;
8. That changes to the visual character of individual structures may have an adverse effect on the historic character of the property and district.

**E. HPCA-21-00074 STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

1. **Continue Item 1, install solar panels on roof**, 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:**

- 1) That solar panels are prohibited from being located on the roof where visible from the street;
- 2) That the proposed solar panels are located side slopes of a roof that does have a rear

slope;

- 3) That the proposed solar panels are located where visible from the public right of ways at both streets;
- 4) That solar panels may obscure the original line, slope and texture of the roof;
- 5) That solar panels are reflective and may have visible unfinished metals that do not match the color of the roof;
- 6) That various components of the system may be located on the walls of the historic building;
- 7) That appropriate screening of mechanical equipment to meet all criteria is required if visible from the public rights of way;
- 8) That changes to the visual character of individual structures may have an adverse effect on the historic character of the property and district.

*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](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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