

194 North Limestone Street
Mulberry Hill Historic District

Sayre School, Owner/Applicant

Scope of Work

Demolition of two school buildings, demolition of a storage building, construction of a new classroom building, site work and landscaping.

Background

The Sayre School is requesting that the BOAR approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for a new Lower School classroom building to be located on the southern edge of the campus along Pleasant Stone Street west of the Buttery. The new structure will be located on the site of the existing Extended Day and Lower School buildings which are slated for demolition under this plan, an additional one story brick building that was constructed about 1969 located between the Lower School and the Gymnasium is also slated for demolition. The proposed new Lower School is oriented on a main east west axis that uses an ell shaped plan made up of volumes varying between one and two story masses with pyramidal, shed and low slope roofs.

Materials used throughout the proposed structure include flemish bond brick with the color to match the existing Buttery building, prefinished metal wall panels and prefinished metal roof. Fenestration is composed of a prefinished aluminum glazing system.

The roof of the mass fronting Pleasant Stone Street is accented by shed roofed sections. The long two story mass along Pleasant Stone Street is broken by full height glass and spandrels located in rectangular bays to ease the monolithic appearance of the streetscape. The west elevation includes a canopy along the first floor, opposing shed roof on the two story section and a single story pyramidal roofed volume. The north elevation seen from the interior of the campus running from west to east appears largely as a two story shed roofed mass broken by metal panels and fenestration with the western most building section being one story with low slope and pyramidal roof mass. The opposing shed roof masses are also seen on the west elevation although the two story mass is fronted by building sections that are capped by low slope and pyramidal roofs.

Site work is also included in the plans under this review. The proposed site work includes interior site circulation, directional signage, seating areas, play areas, landscaping and other amenities.

Guidelines

- II. GUIDELINES FOR NEW CONSTRUCTION
- B. GUIDELINES FOR CONSTRUCTION OF NEW BUILDINGS

Guidelines cont'd.

1. NEW PRIMARY BUILDINGS

DESIGN PRINCIPLE: New primary buildings should be designed to be compatible with adjacent historic buildings and those along the block. Compatibility is demonstrated by having similar orientation, roof forms, materials, window and door sizes and placement, porch size and location and foundation heights as adjacent buildings. New buildings that are exact replications or reproductions of historic designs are not appropriate. New construction should clearly be recognized as of its time and distinguishable from historic buildings. New construction may incorporate contemporary materials such as cementitious board, fiberglass and aluminum. The use of vinyl is not permitted.

New construction of primary buildings should maintain, not disrupt, the existing pattern of surrounding buildings, the streetscape and the historic district by being similar in:

- (II.B.1)A. Shape. Variations of rectangular and square forms are most appropriate for Lexington's historic districts.
- B. Scale (height and width). New construction should be in keeping with adjacent properties in height and in width. In general, new construction should not vary in height more than 10% from the average along the block and within the historic district. Width should also be consistent with surrounding buildings and buildings throughout the district.
- C. Setback. Consistent setbacks, or distances of the building from the street and adjacent buildings, help to convey a pattern and sense of rhythm along a block or within a district, which adds to the character of the streetscape and the overall district. Placement on the lot of new construction should be consistent with that of adjacent and surrounding buildings along the block and within the historic district. This includes both front and side yard setbacks.
- D. Roof shape and pitch. Roof slope ratio for new construction should be a minimum of 6:12 to a maximum of 12:12 (6:12 refers to six inches of rise to twelve inches of run in measuring slopes). Roof forms of gable and hipped variations are more typical than those of flat, mansard or gambrel forms.
- E. Orientation to the street. All buildings should have the primary entrance on the front of the building. Most houses in Lexington have their fronts oriented towards the street and this characteristic should be maintained by new construction.
- F. Location and proportion of entrances, windows, divisional bays and porches. Openings, such as entrances and windows and architectural features such as divisional bays and porches, are design components that help establish balance, rhythm, scale, proportion and emphasis in a structure. Patterns of these components on buildings along blocks and within districts create a characteristic rhythm for streetscapes and neighborhoods. It is very important that new construction respect the balance, proportion and scale of existing buildings along the block and within the district in regards to these components.

Guidelines cont' d.

- *Entrances and divisional bays:* Entrances shall be compatible in scale, size and proportion to established patterns of openings in adjacent and surrounding buildings. Divisional bays are where the facade of a building is divided into a series of vertical bays or sections using designs such as pilasters and columns and projecting and inset sections. Divisional bays in new construction should be compatible with the balance and proportion of divisional bays in existing buildings on the block and within the district.
 - *Windows:* Window openings shall be compatible in scale, size and proportion to established patterns of openings in adjacent and surrounding buildings. New buildings should have a similar ratio of window openings to solid wall space as adjacent and surrounding buildings as well as buildings in the district.
 - *Porches and Decks:* Porches and decks should be compatible in scale and materials with the principal structure and with adjacent and surrounding buildings. Placement and scale should be compatible with that of existing buildings along the street and in the historic district. Porches should have roof forms of gable or shed design and at least cover the entrance. Porches which extend partially or fully across the main facade are recommended. Porch columns and railings should be simple in design in square or round shapes. Columns should be a minimum of six inches square or in diameter. Porch railings should have balusters which are no less than two inches square or in diameter. Installation of porches that give a building an “imitation historic” appearance are not allowed.
- G. Foundations. Height of foundations should be a minimum of 1’-6” above grade. Foundation heights should be consistent with the average heights of other buildings on the street and in the historic district.
- H. Floor-to-ceiling heights. Regular patterns of floor-to-ceiling heights along a street and throughout a district help to create a sense of cohesiveness of character as well as balance and proportion. New construction floor-to-ceiling heights should be consistent with the majority of existing buildings along the block, the surrounding neighborhood, and the historic district.
- J. Material and Material Color. Material color, texture, pattern and construction technique help define building character and scale. Materials are incorporated into all parts of buildings, but may vary from building to building. Installation of materials that give a building an “imitation historic” appearance are not allowed. Materials should be in scale to the building on which they are located and should be compatible with materials on adjacent and surrounding buildings. In areas where strong continuity of materials, texture and material color is a factor, the continued use of those materials is strongly recommended.

Guidelines cont'd.

- *Brick Structures:* If the new construction has a brick exterior, the brick should closely match typical mortar and brick styles and color tones found along the block.
 - *Foundations:* Most foundations are of brick, poured concrete or concrete block. Poured concrete is more appropriate than concrete block. If concrete block is used, a stucco wash is recommended to provide a smooth surface. Split faced concrete block is also an acceptable foundation material. Lattice and other appropriate materials should be used as infill between masonry piers, when and in the district appropriate.
 - *Frame Structures:* If the new construction is of frame, the preferred exterior material is horizontal wood siding which is a minimum of four inches and a maximum of six inches in width. The use of smooth cementitious board siding is also acceptable as long as it meets these size recommendations. Vinyl siding is not allowed.
 - *Porches and Decks:* Porch and deck materials should be appropriate to the building on which they are to be located.
 - *Windows:* The use of wood or anodized or baked enamel aluminum windows is appropriate. Vinyl windows are not allowed. The use of plastic or "snap-in" muntins (window pane dividers) is not permitted.
- K. Details. Architectural details help give a building character and scale. Details include, but are not limited to: corner boards, rake boards, cornices, brackets, downspouts, railings, columns, steps, door and window moldings and decorative elements. Architectural details may be appropriate when they give the building on which they are placed a good "sense of belonging" on a street and within a district. Details should be appropriately scaled for the proposed structure and compatible with other adjacent buildings and the district. Installation of ornament or details that give a building an "imitation historic" appearance is not allowed. New construction may incorporate contemporary material (see above).

III. GUIDELINES FOR SITE AND SETTING

In addition to buildings, elements of the surrounding site and setting contribute to the character of historic properties. These elements include both natural and manmade features such as trees, fields, gardens, fences, driveways, retaining walls and boundary definers. Historic site elements help to define a property's historic character and appearance. Historic site and setting features should be preserved and maintained.

Guidelines cont'd.

1. FENCES

DESIGN PRINCIPLE: Fences were typically constructed of wood, cast or wrought iron, brick, stone or woven wire. Lexington has a number of historic metal fences. Historic fences should be preserved and maintained. The construction of new fences based upon historic designs and materials is also appropriate. Cast iron or woven wire is preferable for 19th and early 20th century buildings. Wood fences are also allowed; however, it is important to keep the fence as transparent as possible so as not to obscure the view of the historic building.

Fences:

- (III.1.) A. of cast iron, stone, metal, wire, or brick that are original to the property should be preserved and maintained or if missing, may be reconstructed based on physical or pictorial evidence.
- B. of cast iron may be added to properties with buildings constructed to the early 20th century. Cast iron fences are not appropriate for buildings built after 1920.
- C. of wood pickets are appropriate for front yards. Wood fences in front yards should be no taller than three feet, have pickets no wider than four inches and set no farther apart than three inches. Woven wire fences in front yards should also not be more than three feet tall.
- D. of wood boards for privacy should be located in rear yards and generally be no taller than six feet (most pre-fabricated wood fence sections are 8' wide by 6' high). Privacy fences of this height should be at least half-way back from the front of the building to the back walls on the side of the house. Privacy fences of flat boards in a single row are more historically correct than shadowbox (alternating boards) designs but both designs are acceptable. Fences with flat tops, "dog ear" or Gothic (pointed tops) designs are all acceptable. "Stockade" designs are discouraged.
- E. of free-standing brick or concrete walls are not appropriate in front yards but are acceptable at rear yards and side yards.
- B. of stone should be repaired/restored with the same material and mortar mix as the historic stone fence. If it is a dry-stacked stone wall, it should remain so. *Please be aware that stone fences in Fayette County within the public right-of-way are protected by the Stone Wall Preservation Ordinance Section 14-83 (see following section, Walls) and require permits through the DHP.*

2. Walls

DESIGN PRINCIPLE: Some properties in Lexington's historic districts include stone or brick walls. Historic walls should be preserved and maintained.

Walls:

- (III.2.)A. of stone or brick should be preserved and maintained.
- B. should be repaired with materials and mortar mix that closely approximate the original in size, shape and texture.
- C. of dry-stacked stone should remain so.
- D. of stone or brick that are repointed should incorporate the same mortar mix, tooling and color as the original wall.

Guidelines cont'd.

E. that are retaining walls should be retained and repaired as needed with matching material and mortar mix. New retaining walls, where needed, may include split face concrete block, if appropriate.

F. of stone within the public right-of-way are protected by the Stone Wall Preservation Ordinance, Section 14-83 (see following page) and require permits through the DHP.

3. Mechanical Systems

DESIGN PRINCIPLE: Modern air conditioning and heating units often require condensers and other units to be placed on the site near buildings. Utility equipment should not be visually dominant or intrusive to the property. Heating and cooling units should be placed at the rear or sides of buildings. The placement of these units at the front of buildings is not appropriate and should be avoided. Screening of these units through shrubbery, fencing or lattice panels is highly recommended. It is also recommended that utility wires on the site be placed underground if possible.

Mechanical Systems:

- A. should be located where they are the least visible and intrusive.
- B. if visible on the sides of buildings, should be screened with shrubbery and/or fencing.
- C. such as electrical and gas meters and other mechanical equipment should be located on the rear or side of a building.

4. Sidewalks, Walkways and Curbs

DESIGN PRINCIPLE: Sidewalks, walkways and curbs in Lexington's historic districts are constructed primarily of concrete with some brick walkways and some limestone curbs. These elements help to define the character of the districts and should be preserved and maintained.

Sidewalks, Walkways, and Curbs:

- A. that are significant paved surfaces should be maintained and preserved.
- B. that are added or altered should be compatible with the principal and accessory structures on the property and surrounding historic properties.
- C. that are added should not be visually dominant, intrusive or suggest a false sense of history.

Guidelines cont'd.

5. Driveways and Parking Lots

DESIGN PRINCIPLE: Significant driveway materials such as brick, concrete and asphalt should be preserved and maintained. New driveway or parking lot surfaces should be of a material appropriate to the site and the historic district. Paving and parking should not be visually dominant. Parking areas should not be sited in front yards but at side or rear locations, as appropriate.

Driveways and Parking Lots:

- A. should be maintained.
- B. that are new, should be located at the side or rear of the building and not be visually dominant.
- C. should be of concrete, asphalt, pavers or grassy pavers.
- D. should have their parking areas located in rear yards and be screened with hedges, shrubs or fences as appropriate. Driveways should include concrete tracks where characteristic of the property and historic districts.
- E. should not be sited in front yards.
- F. requiring new curb cuts for access should be kept to a minimum.
- G. On vacant lots between buildings should align edge screening with front elevations/facades of adjacent buildings and on corner lots should have edge screening on both the primary and secondary street.
- H. Driveways and parking lots shall have appropriate retention elements to retain gravel and retard expansion.

6. LANDSCAPE, LAND FEATURES, LAND FORMATIONS, VIEWSHEDS
AND ARCHAEOLOGY

DESIGN PRINCIPLE: Landscape, land features, land formations, view sheds and archaeology define many site elements in historic areas throughout Fayette County These elements include resources above and below the ground surface. As a result, landscape and land features are more difficult to define than built features and elements. Landscape and land features can be either man-made or natural. These features include, but are not limited to: trees and shrubs, decorative gardens, utilitarian (functional) gardens, fields, documented historic topography, archaeological and cultural resources and other land features and land formations.

Landscape, Land Features, Land Formations, View sheds and Archaeology:

- A that are significant should be preserved and maintained.
- B that are altered or introduced should be compatible to the site and with surrounding properties.
- C should not be visually dominant, intrusive or suggest a false sense of history.
- D should not be created by the demolition of existing structures.
- E of open space should only be developed in scale and character with the neighborhood or designated historic landmark.
- F of vistas and approaches should be preserved and maintained.
- G trees with trunks greater than 10 inches in diameter should not be removed unless diseased or unsafe.

Guidelines cont'd.

H. new construction or rehabilitation activity should work around trees with trunks greater than 10 inches in diameter.

I. the determination of archaeological/cultural resource significance is recommended before site work begins. If archaeological or cultural significance is determined, this should guide proposed alterations, new construction or demolition.

7. LANDSCAPE ELEMENTS – POOLS, HOT TUBS, GAZEBOS, PERGOLAS

DESIGN PRINCIPLE: The installation of swimming pools, hot tubs, gazebos, pergolas, etc. should be limited to rear yards. Swimming pools should be screened from view by fencing or landscaping.

Landscape Elements and Site Elements:

- A. should not be visually intrusive or suggest a false sense of history.
- B. open space should only be developed in scale, use and character with the site and the local historic district.

VI. GUIDELINES FOR DEMOLITION

DESIGN PRINCIPLE: Demolition of historic buildings permanently alters the character of the individual site, streetscape, building or district grouping. Demolition of buildings and structures in historic districts and of landmark structures should only be an action of last resort. Demolition is not permitted within historic districts or on historic sites unless certain conditions are demonstrated. Procedures for demolition are stated in Article 13 of the Lexington-Fayette County Zoning Ordinance.

Demolition:

- A. should only occur as a last resort after all other avenues to protect historic buildings and structures have been exhausted.
- B. of any original feature or part of a historic building should be avoided.
- C. of a building within a locally designated historic district is not permitted, unless one of the following conditions exists:
 - 1. The demolition request is for an inappropriate addition, a non-significant portion of a building or non-significant accessory structure provided that the demolition will not adversely affect those parts of a building or buildings that are significant as determined by the BOAR.
 - 2. The demolition request is for a non-contributing building and the demolition will not adversely affect the character of the district.
 - 3. The property owner proves that no reasonable economic return may be gained from the property through a process designated in Article 13, Section 7(c) (see Appendix E).
- D. Demolition of a structure or building should not be detrimental to the character, scale, rhythm, design and importance of a group of buildings, streetscape or district.

Guidelines cont'd.

- E. If tied to future development of the property, future development should be compatible in scale, size and use with existing zoning and existing characteristics of historic properties where the development is located.
- F. For further information about these procedures, consult Article 13 of the Lexington –Fayette Urban County Zoning Ordinance and DHP staff.

Findings

The proposed demolition of the three buildings, construction of a new Lower School and its associated site work appears to be within the Guidelines except for some materials and construction as noted in the following:

- II.B.1.A. The massing of the new Lower School is compatible with the adjacent historic properties in the use of “variations of rectangular and square forms are most appropriate for Lexington’s historic districts.”
- II.B.1.B. The scale of the new Lower School is “in keeping with adjacent properties in height and in width.” The new construction does “not vary in height more than 10% from the average along the block and within the historic district. The width is also “consistent with surrounding buildings and buildings throughout the district.”
- II.B.1.C. The setback of the new Lower School is “Consistent with setbacks, or distances of the building from the street and adjacent buildings, help to convey a pattern and sense of rhythm along a block or within a district, which adds to the character of the streetscape and the overall district. Placement on the lot of new construction should be consistent with that of adjacent and surrounding buildings along the block and within the historic district. This includes both front and side yard setbacks.
- II.B.1.J. The selected “materials and material colors, texture, that define the proposed building’s character and scale” are compatible with other structures within the Mulberry Hill Historic District. The use of the historic and modern historically compatible materials in the proposed structure does not give an “imitation historic” appearance. The proposed materials are “in scale to the building on which they are located” and are “compatible with materials on adjacent and surrounding buildings.”
- III.1.B&D. The information submitted regarding the proposed fences and site walls does not include information that documents materials, details heights, etc. that would allow approval of the materials and construction at this time and will require further information to be submitted.
- III.3.A&B. The mechanical units are proposed to be located on the structures roof where they will not be “intrusive,” if they are visible the proposed units “should be screened.”

Findings cont'd.

- III.4.b The proposed walkways are “compatible with the principal and accessory structures on the property.”
- III.5.B&C. The proposed driveway is a continuation of an existing drive located on the interior of the site “at the side or rear of the building” and is not “visually dominant.” The drive is proposed to match the existing drive.
- III.6.B. The proposed landscape plan appears to be “compatible to the site and surrounding properties” but additional information will need to be submitted.
- III.6.C. The proposed landscape plan appears to “not be visually dominant or suggest a false sense of history” but additional information will need to be submitted for review and approval.
- III.6.H. The “new construction or rehabilitation activity should work around trees with trunks greater than 10 inches in diameter.” This cannot be determined at this time and additional information will need to be submitted for review and approval.
- VI.C.2 “The demolition request is for non-contributing buildings and the demolition will not adversely affect the character of the district.”
- VI.D. The proposed demolition of the structures is not “detrimental to the character, scale, rhythm, design and importance of a group of buildings, streetscape or district.”

Recommendations

The Staff recommends approval with the following condition:

1. Once reviewed by any other LFUCG Division, submit all changes to Staff for review and approval prior to the start of any work.

Deadline for Board Action

October 31, 2016