

181 Rosemont Garden  
Pensacola Park Historic District

Amir Najarzadeh, Applicant and Owner

Scope of Work

Demolish rear addition and deck; construct addition deck

Background

The new owner of this one story brick bungalow are requesting that the Board grant a Certificate of Appropriateness to conduct the following work:

1. Demolish some walls of the existing one-story frame addition.
2. Construct new foundation and wall systems.
3. Construct a new roof over existing addition.

Staff visited this site this summer with a potential buyer while it was for sale. It was later sold to the current owner.

In January, staff noticed the structure was being re-roofed and stopped to investigate. Staff found that more work was ongoing, and an addition was being constructed with new roof, walls and foundation. Staff talked to the owner and stopped work. During further discussion with the applicant, he said he started just to make repairs to the rear addition however, the rear addition was so bad it had to be rebuilt. Staff did issue a COA to reroof the existing structure. In addition, the applicant made application to modify the rear addition.

He started this work without a Certificate of Appropriateness or a Building Permit. Both, Historic Preservation Office and Building Inspection issued a stop work orders. Staff did have to issue second stop work order due to work continuing on thr rear addition.

From memory, staff did remember a portion of the existing roof having corrugated plastic roof over an enclosed porch and one side having low pitch roof with shake siding on the west side. From the Sanborn maps and aerial photographs, the structure received a sizeable later addition and the structure was divided into two apartments. This is a wide lot with two front entry doors, rear entry doors, decks and driveways. The existing structure was a mix of existing additions clad in shake shingle and clapboard siding. The roof was a built up low pitch roof on the west side and a corrugated plastic roof over an existing enclosed porch on the east.

The new roof which is under construction, is a rear gable having the same height at the front gable. In addition, it is now centered over the rear addition. . The applicant is proposing to roof it with dimensional shingles. Staff discussed the siding material with the applicant and he is proposing clapboard siding with two doors. Also a new covered patio at the rear.

Guidelines

II. Guidelines for New Construction

A. Guidelines for Additions to Buildings

1. Decks/Patio/Verandas/Balconies

DESIGN PRINCIPLE: Decks and patios or verandas are non-original additions to historic buildings and should be designed to be as compatible as possible. When building a new deck or patio it should be placed at the rear or side elevations. Decks and patios are not appropriate for placement on primary elevations. Second story balconies may also be added, but are limited to rear elevations and should be as unobtrusive as possible.

Decks/Patios/Verandas/Balconies:

- (II.A. 1.A) A. should be located at the rear of buildings.
- B. should be stained or painted to achieve a finished appearance. (Note: treated lumber should season for an adequate time prior to applying finish.)
- C. should be simple rather than ornate in design. It is recommended that wood decks have square wood balusters set no more than three inches apart. Balusters should be no more than 2" in width and depth.
- D. railings should continue the line and spacing of existing balustrades.
- E. second story decks and balconies should not be built on primary elevations, but may be appropriate on rear elevations.

3. Porches

Design Principle: Porches are often prominent features of a building and help establish scale, proportion, and rhythm along streetscapes. Construction of a porch on an existing building should be compatible in scale and materials with the principal structure and with adjacent and surrounding buildings and the district. Porches should be in keeping with the principal structure's architectural style and not reflect an earlier period style.

Porches:

- A. should be compatible in scale and materials with the principal structure and surrounding buildings along the block and within the district.

4. Room and wing additions

DESIGN PRINCIPLE: In planning additions, the best approach is to place the additions where they will have the least impact on the building's overall form and plan. The rear of buildings is the best location for the addition of rooms or wings. Exterior walls of new additions should not be flush with those of existing buildings, but should be stepped in a minimum of 12" from the edges of the existing building. Likewise, addition rooflines should be stepped down from the peak of the existing roofline so that the existing main roof remains evident. Enlarging a property through adding stories is not appropriate.

Additions:

- A. are most appropriately located at the rear of buildings.
- B. should be secondary (smaller and simpler) to the original building in scale, design, and placement. The use of a small connector or link between the addition and the original building is encouraged where appropriate. Exterior walls should be stepped in a minimum of 12" from the edges of the existing building, and rooflines should be stepped down from the peak of the existing roofline so that the existing main roof remains evident.

Guidelines cont'd.

- C. should be a compatible design in keeping with the original building's design, roof shape, materials, color and location of window, door and cornice heights.
- D. should not imitate an earlier historic style or architectural period. For example, a Greek Revival style rear porch addition would not be appropriate for a Queen Anne style house.
- E. should be built in a manner that avoids substantive removal or loss of historic materials and which does not damage or destroy the main architectural features of the building.
- F. should keep the exterior walls of the original building as intact as possible and use existing door and window openings for connecting the addition to the building.
- G. should not be made by adding new stories.
- H. should be of materials compatible with the historic fabric of the house. The use of wood is most appropriate; however cementitious board may be considered for additions.
- I. should have skylights, decks, or balconies placed so that they do not detract from the historic character of the building.

B. Guidelines for Construction of New Buildings

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.

Guidelines cont'd.

- 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.
- 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.
- I. Porch height and depth. Porch heights should be consistent with those of adjacent buildings. Buildings along the street and in the historic district. Porch depths should be a minimum of six feet.

Guidelines cont'd.

- 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.
- 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.
- J. 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).

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.

Guidelines cont'd.

Demolition:

- E. 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.

Findings

The proposal as constructed is not within the Guidelines. While, the proposal to modify and construct of a one-story addition and decks are within the Guidelines. As it is constructed, it does not meet the Guidelines. The roof as constructed overwhelms the structure. The roof appears to be massive and staff suggests that any proposal for a new roof would require a reduction in height. By lowering the roof, this would allow more the existing rear roof to be exposed and to prevent the appearance of an overly heavy roof mass. In addition, lowering the roof would create a more distinctive difference between the new and the old. The whole addition needs to “break” on both sides of addition and roof in order not to create a continuous mass. Design Guideline Principle for Room and Wing Additions states, “In planning additions, the best approach is to place the additions where they will have the least impact on the building's overall form and plan... Exterior walls of new additions should not be flush with those of existing buildings, but should be stepped in a minimum of 12” from the edges of the existing building. Likewise, addition rooflines should be stepped down from the peak of the existing roofline so that the existing main roof remains evident.”

While this structure had additions over time, the large square mass has lost the evolution of the structure over time. As constructed, the wall and foundation construction is not within the Guidelines. Guidelines II.A.4.F. and II.A.4.G state, “Additions should be built in a manner that avoids substantive removal or loss of historic materials and which does not damage or destroy the main architectural features of the building” and “Additions should keep the exterior walls of the original building as intact as possible”. Staff suggests any new addition needs to have undulation and breaks in the wall system to indicate the original and the new.

Recommendations:

Staff recommends disapproval as proposed and constructed addition.

Deadline for Board Action

March 19, 2021