

243 North Mill Street
Gratz Park Historic District

Crow Island, LLC, Owner
Darren Taylor, Applicant

Scope of Work

Demolish two story porch, construct addition, terrace and landscaping.

Background

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the following work:

1. Demolish the rear two story porch. The porch is a later modification to the historic structure that runs across the rear of the structure in place of a much smaller rear porch that was located on the northwest corner of the structure and recessed into the corner of the first floor.
2. Construct a two story ell shaped rear addition of approximately six feet by twenty feet and takes in the first floor recess of the historic structure with infill glazing. A vertical glazing seam separates the historic structure’s brick walls from the proposed addition’s smooth stucco walls on the north and south elevations. The west elevation is composed almost entirely of an aluminum clad glazed wall. The proposed roof is low slope.
3. Construct a wood decked terrace on board formed concrete stem walls of approximately eighteen feet by twenty feet.

Guidelines

II. Guidelines for New Construction

A. Guidelines for Additions to Buildings

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 reflect characteristics of the current period in design, but be compatible with the original building.
- F. 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.
- G. 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.
- H. should not be made by adding new stories.
- I. 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.
- J. should have skylights, decks, or balconies placed so that they do not detract from the historic character of the building.
- K. follow design guidelines established for new construction of primary buildings.

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.

Guidelines Cont'd.

- 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.
- 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.

Guidelines Cont'd.

- 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.
- 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.
- 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,

Guidelines cont'd

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).

- L. Chimneys. Chimneys and other roof features should be incorporated into designs for new construction, provided they do not dominate the building or streetscape and are appropriate to new construction.

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.
- F. Handrails/balustrades of vinyl or composite material are not permitted.
- G. should be appropriately scaled and not overwhelm the historic structure and site.

Guidelines cont'd

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.
- 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 were 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

1. Demolish the rear two story porch: The staff finds that the demolition of the later porch meets Guideline VI.B. demolition “of any original feature or part of a historic building should be avoided.” VI.C.2 “the demolition request is for a non-contributing building and the demolition will not adversely affect the character of the district.”
2. Construct two story rear addition: The staff finds that the proposal to construct the rear addition requires some modification to meet Guideline II.4.C “should be a compatible design in keeping with the original building's design, roof shape, materials...The stark flat two story wall of stucco on the north and south elevations needs to have some detail such as bands and reveals added to create shadow lines to reduce the flat undetailed area of stucco. The balance of the rear addition meets Guideline II.4.A. which states additions “are most appropriately located at the rear of buildings.” The proposal does meet II.4.B. which states additions “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,” The proposal also meets Guideline II.4.D. which states additions” and “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.” The proposal does “reflect characteristics of the current period in design, but be compatible with the original building.” The proposed addition is “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” per Guideline II.4.I. and II.4.K it follows “design guidelines established for new construction of primary buildings.”
3. Construct a wood decked terrace: Staff finds that he proposal does not meet Guideline II.A.1.G which states Decks/Patios/Verandas/Balconies “should be appropriately scaled and not overwhelm the historic structure and site.” The proposal does comply II.A.1.A. and II.A.C. which state respectively Decks/Patios/Verandas/Balconies “should be located at the rear of buildings” and “should be simple rather than ornate in design.”
4. The demolition of the later rear porch will have no adverse effect to the historic property and the new construction after the modifications to the stucco wall and the reduction of the size of the terrace would be compatible in scale character and materials to the historic property.

Recommendations

1. Reduce the depth of the terrace a minimum of four feet to a minimum of approximately fourteen feet and provide drawings to staff for review and approval prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.
2. Add detail such as reveals or bands to break up the flat vertical face of the stucco wall and provide drawings to staff for review and approval prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness.
3. If any changes are made that alter the information submitted, resubmit the changes to staff for review and approval prior to the start of the work.
4. Once reviewed by other LFUCG Divisions, any changes shall be returned to staff or Board for review and approval prior to the start of work.

Deadline for BOAR Action

April 19, 2021