Case No. 17170708-G Attachment 9

708 West Short Street
Western Suburb Historic District

Darius & Renee Fatemi, Owners
Van Meter Pettit, Applicant

Scope of Work
Construct rear addition.

Background

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a second floor on an existing addition at the rear of this circa 1850 Greek Revival cottage. The existing one story addition was approved by the BOAR on January13, 2010 and COA was issued on January 15, 2010. The currently proposed 500 square feet second floor is located at the very back section of the above referenced addition. The proposed second floor is rectangular in plan and cantilevers out three feet beyond the south wall. The proposed roof elevation is approximately eighteen feet above finished grade (AFG) at the low point at the north elevation, the high point of the roof at the south elevation is approximately twenty-two feet AFG. The historic structure's gable roof ridge is approximately eighteen feet above the finished grade. The existing addition is sided with cementitious clapboard siding, the new second floor exterior walls are proposed to be clad in either cedar shake shingles or cementitious shingle siding. Door and window trim, soffits and fascia are proposed to be cementitious board. Doors and single light windows are proposed to be aluminum clad wood.

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.
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.

Guidelines Cont'd.

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.

Guidelines cont'd.

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

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 s 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.

Guidelines cont'd.

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).

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.

Findings

The staff finds that the proposed second floor addition does not meet a number of the design guidelines noted in this report including Guidelines II.A.4.B. which states additions "should be secondary (smaller and simpler) to the original building in scale, design, and placement." Although the proposed addition's floor plan is relatively small, about five hundred square feet, the cumulative impact to the site is excessive in volume, mass, and height when taken together with the previously constructed addition and garage.

Guideline II.A.4.H. states new additions "should not be made by adding new stories." That Guideline might be interpreted to mean do not add a new story to a historic structure, which is correct, however it is also relative to this proposal to add a story to an existing addition at the rear of this one story historic house. As proposed, the second floor addition will introduce the only two story mass on the site and rise above the historic house roofline as well as other portions of the house, creating an adverse effect to the historic structure and its character as well as the adjacent historic properties.

The proposed addition of a second story to the existing addition also far exceeds the ten percent The proposed addition of a second story to the existing addition also far exceeds the ten percent variance noted and recommended in section II.B.1.B. of the Guidelines which states "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

Findings

along the block and within the historic district. Width should also be consistent with surrounding buildings and buildings throughout the district." The immediately adjacent properties comparable to this historic house and its existing rear additions in question are all approximately sixteen to eighteen feet high at the roof ridge.

In summary, the addition proposed to be located at the rear of the historic structure by adding a second floor onto an existing later one story addition, does not meet the Design Guidelines. The proposed addition adds too much mass, volume and height to the property and is out of scale with the primary historic house. In addition, its height, roof form, volume and overall mass rising up atop the existing one story additions is not compatible with the scale and character of the site, nor the immediately adjacent properties along the south side of this block of West Short Street.

Recommendations

Staff recommends disapproval of the proposal as submitted.

Deadline for BOAR Action

March 27, 2021