



Agenda Report

21-1462

Agenda Date: 11/4/2021

REPORT TO HISTORICAL AND LANDMARKS COMMISSION

SUBJECT

Significant Property Alteration (SPA) Permit to replace existing foundation, convert existing first floor basement and attic to living area, minor interior and exterior alterations, and window replacement and installation of a roof shed dormer at the rear of an existing historic single family residence located at 1037 Harrison Street

BACKGROUND

The subject property is listed as a historic resource on the City's Historical Resources Inventory. The project is before the Historical and Landmarks Commission (HLC) for a recommendation to the Director of Community Development in accordance with the Historic Preservation Ordinance, which requires projects with significant modifications to a historic structure be referred to the Commission. As the project scope includes replacement of the existing foundation, conversion of the existing first floor basement to living area, remodel of the existing second floor, and exterior alterations to the rear building elevation with changes to door and window types and locations, the project in whole or in part may be approved at the staff level following HLC review.

DISCUSSION

The subject property is a 5,740 square foot (sf) lot with an existing 4,571 sf two and one-half story residence with a one-car garage. The residence was constructed in 1892 in the Shingle style of architecture and is currently a two-bedroom, one-bathroom home with storage area and garage in the first floor at grade basement, second floor living area, and attic above. This historic residence is one of seven homes grouped along the north side of the Harrison Street Block, between Washington and Main Streets, constructed in the 1890's with period architecture, intricate millwork, similar building form and materials, and uniform setbacks along the streetscape. All seven homes on this Block face are listed on the City's Architecturally and/or Historically Significant Properties List.

A building permit was issued in June 2021 to construct a 480 sf detached two-car garage as shown on the site plan to replace the existing one-car garage. The new garage will be accessed from the alley that extends from Washington Street to Main Street behind the home. The new garage is pending construction. The existing carriage style garage door on the front first floor elevation of the home and concrete driveway are not proposed to be modified with this proposal.

The project involves replacement of the existing brick foundation with a new concrete foundation; increase in the interior first floor ceiling height from 7'9" to 8'6"; and conversion of the first floor basement from storage area and garage to living area with two bedrooms, two bathrooms, laundry room and access to a new rear yard patio and secondary entrance to the home. The main entry to the residence is from the front porch at the second floor and is to remain largely unaltered with the exception of already completed window replacement on the front elevation. The project includes a remodel of the second floor and return of the original 11'0" ceiling height that is currently 9'0" to create

an open living/dining/kitchen floor plan at the front of the home, two bedrooms and one and one-half bathrooms behind, and a stairway midway for access to the first floor below and attic above. The proposal is to modify the ceiling height of the attic from 10'8" to 10'0" and turn it into a loft for added living area. Upon completion, these improvements will result in a four-bedroom, three and one-half bathroom residence.

The project plans submitted for HLC review consist of alterations to the exterior elevations at the rear of the structure that involve reconfiguration of door and window types and locations on the first and second floors. First floor changes include installation of a picture window and replacement of the two first floor rear doors with a swing French door and a sliding patio door on the northwest rear elevation; and installation of a swing French door and sliding door on the southwest rear elevation.. The existing stairway and landing to the second floor at the rear of the home is to be removed and the second-floor entry door is to be replaced with a fixed pane window. A new sliding window is also proposed on the second floor northwest rear elevation. Construction and integration of a shed dormer, with sliding multi-paned windows, into the hipped roof along the rear elevation of the converted attic to loft space to meet building code requirements for light and ventilation. The door and window schedule are provided in Development Plans and Exhibit 1 attached to this Staff Report. All new windows and doors are to include flat 4" wood trim to match existing. Siding repairs are also to match existing horizontal wood material.

Unauthorized Work: A total of 12 fixed and double hung wood windows have recently been removed and replaced with vinyl covered wood single and double hung windows on the second floor of the home without the requisite evaluation and SPA Permit. A Stop Work Order was issued on October 13, 2021 when the removal and replacement was brought to the Planning Department's attention. Photos of the windows replaced are attached as Exhibit 2. The removed windows were not retained by the owner, and the proposal for their removal and replacement are not shown in the attached Development Plans.

Analysis

A Historical Resources Design Review was prepared by Lorie Garcia, Beyond Buildings, for the property and is attached to this staff report (Attachment 3). The report includes a Historic Resources Survey (DPR Form 523) and analysis of the project as presented in the Development Plans for compliance with the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation (excluding the unauthorized window replacements). As cited by Ms. Garcia, "The Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation define "Rehabilitation" as "the "Process of returning a property to a state of utility, through repair or alteration, which makes possible an efficient contemporary use while preserving those portions and features of the property which are significant to its historic, architectural, and cultural values." At the end of the analysis, Ms Garcia concludes that the proposed project, as presented in the Development Plans, appears to be in compliance with the criteria set forth in the Secretary of Interior Standards. It is noted that the property owner was informed by Ms. Garcia and Planning staff that the historic windows are not to be removed without undergoing HLC review and obtaining an SPA Permit. It is also noted that the property owner received information from the Building Department by email correspondence that a permit is not required to replace like-for-like windows.

Staff finds that the proposed project does not change the historic use, footprint, or architectural integrity of the resource. The project, as shown in the Development Plans, involves limited exterior changes to rear portion of the residence that includes removal of elements that are not original to the home (i.e. added and replaced doors, vinyl clad sliding windows, staircase and landing) and are not

visible from the streetscape. The historic features of the resource are retained and new materials (i.e. wood trim and siding) are to match the existing. The new foundation and alteration in ceiling heights does not change the peak height of the residence. The conversion of the first-floor basement to living area and attic to a loft would allow for an efficient use of the residence and increase useable living area for the residents. While integration of a shed roof dormer with multiple pane windows along the rear elevation would be visible from the alley behind the residence it would provide the necessary light and ventilation to allow habitable use of the loft and would not be visible from the streetscape.

This analysis does not include evaluation of the removal and replacement of original windows not made part of the Development Plans and evaluation conducted by Ms. Garcia. The property owner will be required to submit a separate SPA Permit application for recent work that involved removal and replacement of the second floor windows without City review approval.

ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

The proposed project is categorically exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) per CEQA Guidelines Section 15301 - Existing Facilities, in that the project involves the repairs and alterations to a historic single-family residence.

PUBLIC CONTACT

On October 21, 2021, a notice of public hearing of this item was posted in three conspicuous locations within 300 feet of the project site and mailed to property owners within 300 feet of the project site. At the time of this staff report, no public comment has been received by the Planning Department in favor or opposition to the proposed project.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommend that the Historical and Landmarks Commission finds that the proposed project as illustrated in the Development Plans does not destroy or have a significant adverse effect on the integrity of the designated property; that the alterations are compatible with the existing structure; that the rehabilitation of the structure meets the Secretary of Interior Standards, and recommend approval of the SPA Permit for the scope of work shown in the Development Plans to the Director of Community Development, subject to conditions.

The property owner shall submit a SPA Permit application for evaluation and appropriate replacement of the windows not shown on the Development Plans that have been removed to date without the requisite analysis.

Prepared by: Debby Fernandez, Associate Planner
Approved by: Gloria Sciara, Development Review Officer

ATTACHMENTS

1. Project Data Sheet
2. DPR Form 523
3. Consultant Historic Resources Design Review
4. Development Plans

- 5. Exhibit 1
- 6. Exhibit 2
- 7. Conditions of Approval