



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

300 Martin Luther King Blvd.

October 12, 2023

TIME: 4:30 PM

1. CALL TO ORDER

Rush Denson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 4:32 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Linda Lanz to approve the September 13, 2023 minutes. The motion was seconded by Debbie Purves. All approved.

1. Approve September 14, 2023 minutes.

3. CITIZEN COMMUNICATIONS

(Limit comments to five minutes or less)

There were no comments.

4. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss.

5. NEW BUSINESS

2. 404 2nd Ave: Northside Historic District

COA: Double Door on Rear

Owner: Charlie Core

Agenda Item #: 1

Meeting Date: 10/12/2023

Action Requested: COA: New Windows

Location of Property: 404 2nd Ave; Northside Historic District

Petitioner: Charlie Core

Resources:

C. 1915. Marion's Hair Salon. One-story, wood frame pyramidal roof cottage with roof of asphalt shingles, decorative gable, off center door, flanking 6/6 double hung sash windows. Contributing Resource.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Approval to replace a rear window with single door was granted on 2/9/23. The applicant wishes to install a double door with full glass for better access.

Guidelines:

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

These guidelines shall apply only to the exteriors of buildings, structures and to areas of lots visible from the public rights-of-way in designated historic districts of the City of Opelika, Alabama.

Proposals for exterior work to be done on public facades, fronts and street-related elevations, shall be more carefully reviewed than that to be done on other facades. Non-public facades shall mean those facades not visible from the street.

. Doors:

- a. The original size and shape of door openings should be maintained. Original doors and door hardware should be repaired and reused in place. Original transoms, sidelights and doors should be maintained.
- b. Replacement doors when necessary, should be compatible with the original doors in terms of style, texture and size.
- c. Shiny aluminum storm doors and screen doors are not appropriate. Full view storm doors painted to match the door are appropriate.
- d. New door openings should not be introduced on the front, principal façade of the structure.
- e. Original door openings should not be filled in.

The following items DO NOT require a COA:

- Re-glazing of windows or replacing broken panes of glass
- Repairs to original wood windows and doors when there is no change in appearance and material
- Painting of window frames and sashes
- Installation of full view (glazed) storm windows and doors – either wood or aluminum with baked enamel or painted finish are acceptable

The following commonly requested projects require a COA:

- Replacement of original windows
- Removal or addition of a window or door opening
- Exposing a previously covered window units with a replacement according to the guidelines

Staff recommendation:

1. Staff recommends approval of installing double door on rear out of public view.

Discussion:

Staff explained on 2/9/23 a COA was granted to replace a single window in the rear with a door. The applicant now wishes to install a double door instead of a single door on the rear.

There was no further discussion.

A motion was made by Debbie Purves to approve as presented. The motion was seconded by Aaron Kovak. All approved.

3. 414 N. 9th St: Northside Historic District
COA: Add Pergola and Steps to Deck
Owner: William Mayfield

Agenda Item #: 2
Meeting Date: 10/12/2023
Action Requested: COA: Add Pergola and Steps to Deck
Location of Property: 414 N. 9th St; Northside Historic District
Petitioner: William Mayfield

Resources:

Circa 1940. One story, brick Colonial Revival cottage with gable on hip roof of asphalt shingle, interior chimney, central double leaf wood and glass door, flanking long vertical windows, off centered porch with gable roof, four columns. Contributing structure.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Rebuild dilapidated deck with treated lumber on back of house retaining original footprint. Add pergola and steps to side yard.

Guidelines:

10. Appurtenances:

- a. Appurtenances related to a building (fences, walls, outdoor lighting, steps, paving, sidewalks and signs) should be visually compatible with the environment to which they are related.

- b. Fences:

The size, scale, and transparent quality of the fence shall be considered in the design to minimize the impact on the historic fabric on the

neighborhood. The orientation and location of the fence shall also be considered, with the structural members located on the interior of the fence (pretty side out) and the location and size such that it does not block views of the buildings from the street.

front, side and rear yard area will be determined on a case-by-case basis from a site plan showing the footprint of house and proposed fence, due to the variety of lot and building shapes. Generally speaking, the front yard is the portion of lot between the street and the rear edge of the building; the side yard is the portion of lot behind the house, between the sidewalk and the rear corner of the building, on corner lots; and the rear yard is the portion of lot behind house. Staff approval may be granted for fences that clearly fall within the guideline specifications; particularly those pertaining to staff permissible-materials and fence heights.

1. Low retaining walls in front and side yards should be kept where they exist. If new retaining walls are required, they should match the existing or match a documented example correct for the period of the structure.

1. Existing period fencing should be maintained and repaired. Where necessary to replace period fencing, it should be replaced with compatible fencing of the same material, size and appropriate design.

1. Materials:

Where a fence is desired to be installed, it should be appropriate for the period and architectural style of the structure. Materials and size of the fence should be documented as correct for the period of the structure.

- i. Appropriate materials: wood, iron, wire, stone or plants.
- ii. Inappropriate materials: chain link, concrete block, unfaced concrete, plastic, fiberglass, plywood, slatted "snow" fences and mesh "construction" fences

1. Chain link fences may be used in rear yards, if visible from the street, shall be camouflaged with vegetation.
2. Staff approved fences are limited to wood dog ear and open gothic fences as pictured below. Other styles or materials require formal Commission approval.

1. Heights:

Generally, low fences should be used at the fronts and visible street side yards near public sidewalks. Taller fences and solid walls may be used in rear yards and side yards when set back from the sidewalk.

- i. front yard fences should not be taller than 4 feet. A height of up to 6 feet is permitted only if set back at least 1/3 the structure's length or 1/3 the adjacent structure's length, whichever is furthest from

the street. Measurement should be taken from the structures' respective facades.

- ii. side yard fences should not be taller than 6 feet
- iii. rear yard fences should not be taller than 8 feet

Requests for new fences must have a site plan, with proposed fence heights clearly marked.

The following items DO NOT require a COA:

- Repairs to existing walls and fences and other historic site features
- Wood dog ear and wood open gothic fences that clearly fall within the setback and height requirements (staff approval)

The following commonly requested projects require a COA:

- Changes to stone walls and other historic site features
- All new fences and walls

THE ENVIRONMENT:

1. The environment consists of all exterior features in the designated historic districts which are visible to the public and includes structures, outbuildings, landscaping, streets, appurtenances, trees, mass and spacing between structures, scale, mass, color and materials of buildings that give a neighborhood its distinguishing character and contributes to its historic district designation.
2. Significant landscape features such as public parks and gardens, street lighting, signs, street benches, sidewalks, streets, alleys and building setbacks that have traditionally been maintained in the historic district and that contribute to its historic character should be retained. Existing streets should not be widened. paving material should not be changed to a different texture and color. Inappropriate new streets or parking lots incompatible with the neighborhood should not be constructed. (*updated 08/12/14*)
3. New plant materials, fencing, walkways, housing and other outdoor lights, signs, benches, etc. should be compatible with the character of the neighborhood in size, scale, material and color.
4. Plant material should be maintained so as not to become a hazard to the public, public property or shall not be allowed to cause deterioration to structures.
5. Existing street trees should not be removed without supporting documentation and a plan for replacement. Trees located in the city right of way cannot be removed without city approval (*updated 09/09/22*)

The following items DO NOT require a COA:

- Back yard Tree house, swing sets and trampolines
- Benches and other outdoor furniture and accessories
- Sculpture and another outdoor artwork
- Pools and patios
- Tree pruning, clearing of overgrown bushes, vines, saplings, etc.
- Tree removal (less than 4" diameter at breast height or diseased).
- Planting new trees, shrubs, ground cover, etc.
- Landscape edging
- Flower, vegetable and rock gardens
- Flowerpots, planters, window boxes, birdbaths, bird houses, etc.
- Adding gravel to existing driveways
- Patching deteriorated concrete or asphalt pavement, walks, steps, etc.

The following commonly requested projects require a COA:

- Changes to stone walls and other historic site features
- New or expanded parking areas/lots
- New and expanded driveways and walkways
- Staff approval for change of materials (i.e. gravel to concrete)
- Staff approval for tree removal with supporting documentation from a Certified Arborist that the tree is either dead, in severe decline, and/or possess a high risk of failure. Trees to be reviewed by the City Arborist. A tree replacement plan must be provided. (*Updated 09/09/22*)

Staff recommendation:

1. Staff recommends approval of rebuilt deck using treated lumber, addition of pergola, and steps.

Discussion:

Staff provided details of back deck renovations to include replacement of decking, a new pergola, and dual steps. The applicant provided photos of properties in the Northside Historic District with pergolas.

There was no further discussion.

A motion was made by Debbie Purves to approve as presented. The motion was seconded by Linda Lanz. All approved.

4. Presentation: Anderson Windows

Staff explained Anderson Windows was asked to visit because an applicant from last month's meeting requested to install Anderson Fibrex windows. He tabled his request to allow time to get more information about the product. Second, this will help with the revision of Design Guidelines to determine acceptable alternative composite windows.

Joel Calleiro spoke stating that we live in a world where materials evolve, and being a general contractor, architect, and designer, he looks for products that have longevity. We all want something that looks good and doesn't compromise the architecture. I believe in the Fibrex window and that it is the best product we have currently, that is a composite window not a vinyl window. Not only is vinyl a cheap product but it has issues that do not make it acceptable in the historic district. Vinyl can't be painted because it voids the warranty. Whereas, the Fibrex 100 window has the ability to be painted and customized to the architecture. He brought Jamie Bucey and Jack Williams from Anderson Windows to provide additional information.

Rush Denson asked about the customization of windows. Mr. Calleiro stated that with this proposed project the original trim will be left in place pulling the windows out from behind and installing the new windows behind the original trim.

Jamie Bucey with Anderson Windows stated Anderson has been around 120 years, and they understand the historical aspect of the project. He reached out to the corporate office to see if there were pictures or additional information they could provide. There is currently a project at Yellowstone National Park. All the new lodges are Anderson A Series windows. They have also been installed in some of the older structures in the park with the 100 Series. These windows will last a long time. These windows will not shrink or rot, all the things that can happen with a wood window. Anderson is a wood window company; this is their addition to composite windows. These windows are 100% vinyl and wood. Anderson makes their own pellets and sells them to companies like Trex. The material is used in windows and doors. As we move on in the next 15-20 years the 100 Series will be the window we probably will keep growing. Fibrex is like a chameleon. We can do anything with it. We can make our own trim or use the trim the homeowner has. We're just talking about the window as a chassis. We can decorate the window to match anything in the historic district.

Linda Lanz asked what the warranty is on the Fibrex 100 Series. Mr. Bucey said it is 20 years on the glass and frame. Rush Denson asked if it is paintable. Mr. Bucey said Yes. Rush Denson asked if the factory makes the window in different colors. Mr. Bucey replied it comes in black, bronze, tan, white, grey, green, and red.

Linda Lanz asked how the windows sash holds up to UV rays. Mr. Bucey said the beauty is the frame will not twist because heat and solar rays do not affect it. The walls of the window are much thicker than a vinyl window. There is a 20 warranty on the color fading.

Debbie Purves asked when they said these windows have been used in Pensacola and New Orleans, were the properties in a designated historic district? Mr. Calleiro said he provided information on Fibrex windows being allowed in historic districts. Also, this is an expense window that not everyone will be able to afford. It

probably is not as expensive as a fully clad window. It is better than wood for longevity. Low E glass is used in these windows.

Aaron Kovac stated this building in particular, he is leaving the trim on, which is the beautiful part of the building, it's not the sash that's inside. Second, the Fibrex product is paintable. No matter what is put up, wood or plastic, we try to paint it. This is a paintable product and has a wood base in it. He is not destroying the integrity of the original trim to the building. He does not see a problem with using this product.

Rush Denson said the commission has had this come up before and this is one reason why we are revising our design guidelines. Everybody is going to bring us a request to use alternative materials. Debbie asked what percent is wood. Mr. Bucey replied they are 40% wood and 60% vinyl.

Debbie Purves stated she doesn't want to open it up to where others bring in suggested materials outside of wood and aluminum clad. Aaron Kovac responded that a lot depends on how the applicant is going to marry it in the same fashion as what is there.

Mr. Calleiro said he fully understands the concerns and it will be important to have language in the guidelines that demand the architecture of the building is not compromised. Using a particular window does not give a green light to destroy the original trim or eliminate architectural details. Anderson is able to customize and replicate features. He will be installing five windows that replicate the current style and adding fans in the upper half moon to make all the windows look the same.

Debbie Purves suggested only allowing on second floor windows. Mr. Calleiro said he will probably be asking for this same product on the first floor, when they get to that phase of the renovations.

Mark Grantham voiced he doesn't think the motion should be too restrictive to not allow the possibility of using the product in the future. He believes in the product and that architecturally the applicant has tried to maintain the integrity that we all want to keep in the downtown area. The approval should be made based on the product and attention to the architectural detail. Every decision is based individually and not just on the product but on the attention of preserving the integrity of the architectural.

Linda Lanz asked if this composite is termite proof. The Anderson representative answered yes.

Staff reviewed the five examples provided and stated that only one list Fibrex windows as an allowable composite window in their design guidelines. Another stated vinyl replacement windows are not permitted in certain cases. If windows must be replaced, consider replacing only the sashes. One city does not have separate design guidelines but uses the Interior Standard for reviewing cases. However, all the examples provided did allow the Fibrex window. It is unknown if the properties were commercial or residential. She then asked the Anderson representative of all the products they manufacture, if their recommendation is to use a wood or composite Fibrex for window replacement. Mr. Bucey responded yes.

5. 116 S. 8th St: Downtown Historic District
COA: New Window Second Floor
Owner: Hiro & Lynsay Fukai
Agenda Item #: 3
Meeting Date: 10/12/23
Action Requested: COA: Replace windows upper floor
Location of Property: 116 S. 8th St; Downtown Historic District
Petitioner: Hiro & Lyndsay Fakai

Resources:

Goodwill Building: Late 19th c.; Two story brick with original façade at upper level; round arched windows. Recent wood infill and denticulation at second level; wood siding, glass and aluminum storefront at ground level.

History: Applicant received COA on 06/09/22 for façade renovations. This COA has since expired. Approval for window replacement was contingent on applicant returning with window specs prior to installation.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Replace upper floor windows with Anderson 100 Series Fibrex composite single-hung full divided light with ¾" grill windows. Interior and exterior color will be white. Glass is Low-E non tinted.

Proposed Guidelines:

STANDARD #5: Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be retained and preserved.

STANDARD # 9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

STOREFRONT - #2.

Preserve existing historic storefronts. Retain characteristic storefront features.

DISPLAY WINDOW: Maintain the original dimensions and transparent nature of the display window. Do not add small paned windows or reflective glass.

COLUMNS: Maintain cast iron columns and brick and stone piers which frame the storefront.

TRANSOM: Retain original shape and transparency of the transom. Do not place a sign over the transom, If an interior ceiling has been lowered below the transom, it

should be recessed from the storefront. Do not place air conditioning units in the transom.

AWNINGS - #5.

Awnings should be compatible with the design of the building and the streetscape.

PRESERVATION: Preserve original canopies and awning hardware where feasible.

MATERIALS: Fabric awnings are appropriate. Vinyl coated canvas and acrylic awnings may be acceptable. Metal awnings may be appropriate in a few instances, but rough sawn wood, plastic, or asphalt shingle awnings give an immobile, hard, mansard—like appearance and are not appropriate.

DESIGN: Retractable or fixed standard shed—type canvas awnings are appropriate. Fake mansard roofs and rustic wood shingle awnings are inappropriate. Carefully coordinate the awning color with other building design features.

LOCATION: The awning should fit the dimensions of the storefront within the masonry opening and should not obscure architectural details. Mount the awning just above or just below the transom. Where feasible, align the awning so that it is the same height as others on the block. Upper story awnings should fit inside the window surround. Arched windows should have awnings shaped like the curvature of the arch, and rectangular windows should have rectangular awnings.

UPPER STORY WINDOWS #7.

Preserve the size, shape, details, and transparency of upper story windows.

PRESERVATION: The glass, sash, hardware, and window surrounds, including the lintel or decorative window hoods, should be preserved and maintained. Add shutters to the exterior only if they originally existed. Shutters should be operable or should at least appear to be operable; when closed over an opening, they should fit the size of the opening. (see Preservation Brief #9, 10)

RE-ESTABLISHMENT: Consider reopening closed or blocked windows. In some cases, closed exterior shutters may be used to define original window dimensions. Instead of boarding up windows when the second story is not in use, hang curtains or interior shutters to give the building an occupied appearance. Reflective and dark, tinted glass is not appropriate.

REPLACEMENT: Replacement windows are only recommended when historic windows can not be rehabilitated. When replacement windows are installed, they should match the historic window in size, style, and materials and have the same number of panes. Interior storm windows are preferable to exterior ones. Wood windows are recommended, but painted metal windows may be acceptable. (see Preservation Brief #3)

DOORS - #9.

Preserve the original front doors and opening.

PRESERVATION: The original size and shape of door openings should be maintained, not in-filled. Original doors and door hardware should be repaired and

maintained. Replacement doors, when necessary, should be compatible with the original doors in terms of style, size, material, and glass panel configuration.

CANOPIES - #17.

Maintain original canopies and balconies.

PRESERVATION: Although canopies, porches, and balconies are not commonly found on commercial buildings, when they exist, they are distinctive features.

Original materials, details, shape, outline, and roof height should be retained.

Enclosing canopies and balconies is not appropriate if it destroys the visual openness of the porch appearance. Concrete canopies or covered walkways are not appropriate.

Information found:

Fibrex is a thermoplastic polymer, some of which is reclaimed, making up 60% of the material used in these windows. Most of the wood fibers are reclaimed from Andersen's own manufacturing process, which makes up the remaining 40% of the materials used. Fibrex is a low-cost alternative to vinyl. It never needs to be painted. Because it is made with genuine wood, it has a more realistic wood appearance than fiberglass or Ultrex. The Fibrex is a good alternative to fiberglass and is offered to luxury house buyers at the highest price range in the window replacement business.

The assertion by Andersen that Fibrex is twice as strong as vinyl is correct, but only in terms of compressive strength. The advantage is not so much that the window is stronger, but that the window frame is smaller, allowing for greater glazing. More glass allows more light to enter the home.

Staff recommendation:

1. Staff recommends approval of replacing upper windows with wood, composite, or aluminum clad windows with same grid pattern of 2/2. This type of window has not previously been used or approved by the Commission. Windows should appear to be wood or metal.

Discussion:

Staff stated this request was tabled at the September 14, 2023 meeting so the applicant could provide additional details and information on Fibrex composite windows.

Rush Denson asked if anyone in the public (audience) wanted to comment. There were none.

Rush Denson asked if anyone on the panel had comments or concerns. Aaron Kovak said he likes that Anderson is bringing this type of window that architecturally can

be made to look and adapt to what was originally in place and look exactly like what was there.

Mark Grantham made a motion to approve the Fibrex composite window with the same grid pattern based on this product being allowed in other historic districts and its ability to match historic architectural details. The motion was seconded by Linda Lanz. All approved.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

6. Enforcement Report
There was nothing new to report.

7. Staff Report
Staff provided information on a class offered at Wallace Community College in Selma on preservation of masonry structures on Tuesday, October 24, from 5:30 p.m. - 6:30 p.m. The lecture is free and open to the public.

8. Next meeting DATE

1. Next meeting November 9, 2023

7. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Debbie Purves to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Linda Lanz. All approved.

The meeting adjourned at 5:07 p.m.

Rush Denson, Chair

Linda Lanz, Secretary