



AGENDA

CITY OF OPELIKA
HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
August 8, 2024
4:30 p.m.
Meeting Chambers at Opelika Municipal Courtroom
300 MLK Boulevard

Call to Order

Approve July 11, 2024 minutes.

Public Comment/Citizen Communication

Old Business

New Business

1. 511-513 S. 8th St: Geneva Historic District
COA: Tree Removal
Applicant: Cody Holly
2. 515 S. 8th St.: Geneva Historic District
COA: Partial Removal Rock Wall
Applicant: Cody Holly
3. 315 N. 9th St: Northside Historic District
COA: Window Replacement
Applicant: Kathryn James

Other Business

4. Enforcement Report
5. Staff Report
6. Next meeting September 12, 2024
7. Adjournment

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HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

300 Martin Luther King Blvd.

July 11, 2024

TIME: 4:30 PM

1. A CALL TO ORDER

Rush Denson called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mark Grantham motioned to approve the June 13, 2024 minutes. The motion was seconded by Aaron Kovak. The motion passed with one opposition.

3. PUBLIC HEARINGS

(Limit comments to 3 minutes or less)

Rush Denson opened the floor for public comments. There were none.

4. OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to discuss.

5. NEW BUSINESS

1. 500 2nd Ave: Downtown Historic District

COA: Demolition

Applicant: Madback Tee, LLC

Agenda Item #: 1

Meeting Date: 07/11/2024

Action Requested: COA: Demolition

Location of Property: 500 2nd Ave; Northside Historic District

Petitioner: Madback Tee, LLC

Resources:

Circa 1970. Opelika Auto Detail. Noncontributing Resource.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Demo and remove existing noncontributing structure. Replace it with a new bank designed in accordance with the Downtown Historic Guidelines.
2. The replacement building will contain distinctive architectural features that are represented in "solid but simple style" characterized in Opelika's downtown.

Guidelines:

H. DEMOLITION:

1. Definition: The tearing down of a building by active means or by neglect resulting in the structural decay of the original building fabric. Neglect means not maintaining a weatherproof, watertight, secure building, structurally stable and/or maintaining vegetation around the structure or structures on the property.
2. Since the purpose of historic zoning is to protect historic properties, the demolition of a building which contributes historically or architecturally to the character and significance of the district is inappropriate and shall be

avoided. This means demolition by active means or by neglect in failure to maintain a property. This also includes any structure that contributes to the architectural character of the historic district, not just the most outstanding architectural structures in the district, but the ordinary period structures as well.

3. Demolition is inappropriate:

1. if a building is of such architectural or historical interest and value that its removal would be detrimental to the public interest.
2. if a building is listed as contributing to the architectural character of the district.
3. if a building is of such old or unusual or uncommon design and materials that it could not be reproduced or be reproduced without great difficulty and expense.
4. if its proposed replacement would make a less positive visual contribution to the district, would disrupt the character of the district or would be visually incompatible.
5. if a building is listed as contributing to the architectural character of the district or qualifies for any of the above a through d and can be feasibly stabilized and no new compatible structure is proposed to be built on the site. An existing structure shall not be demolished for a parking lot or vacant lot. The applicant for demolition must demonstrate financial resources for stabilizing the site after demolition and the construction of a new building or new structure. Stabilization plans as well as Architectural plans and specifications for the new construction along with a schedule for their completion shall be presented to the Opelika Historic Preservation Commission prior to a COA for demolition being issued.

J. COMMERCIAL BUILDINGS

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1. The district contains buildings with a variety of uses including residential, commercial and institutional.
2. The Downtown Historic District, immediately adjacent, is composed of buildings which were built in the same time period, but primarily 'zero-lot line' commercial structures.
3. There may be instances, particularly with the adaptive reuse of a building, or construction of infill structures, when the Downtown Historic District Design Review Guidelines may provide the basis for an appropriate design criteria review.

Staff recommendation:

1. Staff recommends approval of demolition of noncontributing structure.
2. Applicant to return with full plans for replacement building including detailed specs, site, parking, and landscape plans.

Discussion:

Staff provided a summary of applicants' request to demo the existing gas station being a noncontributing structure. Renderings were provided of potential designs for a future building.

Rush Denson opened the floor for public comment. There were none.

There was no further discussion.

Debbie Purves motioned to approve. The motion was seconded by Mark Grantham. All approved.

6. OTHER BUSINESS

- 2. Enforcement Report
There was nothing to report.
- 3. Staff Report
Staff stated the new Design Guidelines edits should be completed soon. Once all corrections are made, a clean copy will be provided to all commission members.
- 4. Next meeting DATE
- 1. Next meeting August 8, 2024

7. ADJOURN

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

The meeting adjourned at 4:36 p.m.

Rush Denson, Chair

Linda Lanz, Secretary

City of Opelika
Historic Preservation Commission
Staff Report



Agenda Item #: 1
Meeting Date: 08/08/2024
Action Requested: COA: Tree Removal
Location of Property: **511-513 S. 8th St; Geneva Historic District**
Petitioner: Cody Holly

Resources:

Vacant lot located in the Southside development in the Geneva Historic District.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Remove four (4) trees at rear of property that root systems have been damaged during excavation and digging footings. Root systems may also cause future damage to foundations. Due to tight setback requirements, shifting site plan is not an option.
2. The replacement plan includes planting four (4) 3 inch minimal caliper oak trees along rear property line.

Guidelines:

A. 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*)

B. BUILDING SITE:

1. Landscaping in an important part of the historic district and important landscape features such as old plants, trees, fencing, walkways, out-buildings and other elements of historic or artistic merit or that reflect the property's history and development should be maintained and preserved. Old plants, trees, fencing, walkways, out-buildings and other exterior elements should be maintained until their importance in the property's history and development has been evaluated. This evaluation should consist of actual knowledge of the past appearance of the property found in photographs, drawings, newspapers, tax records, fire maps, etc. Complete removal of significant and historic plants and trees should be avoided and where necessary, pruning and cutting back should be encouraged instead of complete removal.
2. Plant material which is in very close proximity to a historic structure, and which is causing deterioration of the historic fabric of the structure may be removed or pruned back to eliminate damage to the structure.
3. Drainage around historic structures is important and proper site and roof drainage should be maintained. Water should drain away from building foundations and should not be trapped or allowed to stand adjacent to building foundations. Roof drains and gutters should not be allowed to clog up and cause water to pond on the roof or in interior gutters.

Photo's:

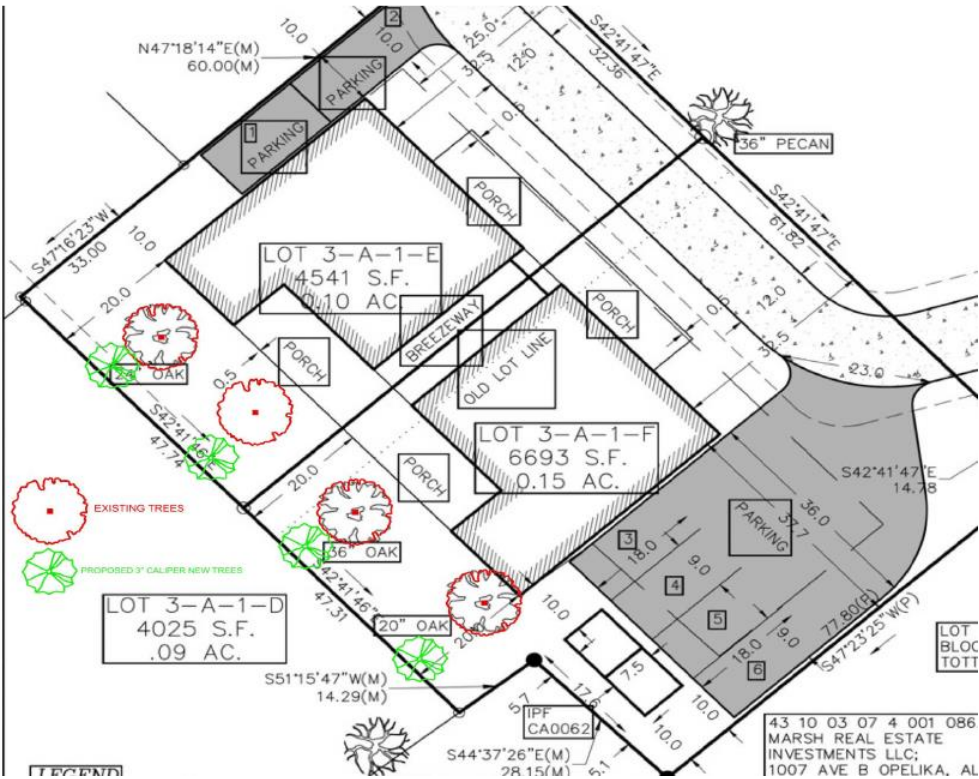


Diagram showing existing tree and proposed new planting locations



Trees to be removed



Footing and tree location



Footings and tree location



Natural Resource Consulting, Inc.

June 21, 2024

Good Morning Lisa,

I have spoken with Cody this week and have gone to the site. Cody had asked me to look at where the footing was going to be poured (where stakes are) and if the trees would be okay. When I arrived on site, lot grading had already occurred and approximately 4 inches of soil and roots have been removed up to 6-7 feet from the base of the tree. The majority of tree roots are located within the top 8 – 12 inches of soil. 4+ inches have already been removed.

The Critical Root Zone (CRZ) is the standard zone used in protecting trees during construction. Standard practice for CRZ varies anywhere from 1.5 – 2.5 times the diameter of the tree in feet. The CRZ in this case would extend from 30 – 54 feet. This structure is going to be approximately 10 – 15 feet from the trees.

These trees have already been severely comprised from the site work. The pouring of footings will further the damage and the building of the house within the CRZ will compound the problem.

It is my professional assessment that these trees will have a high risk of mortality and possible failure.

Additionally, these are mature trees. Trees like us humans become less tolerate of changes to our environment as we age!

George
Natural Resource Consulting
Opelika Arborist
ISA Certified Arborist
Tree Risk Assessor Qualified
Alabama Registered Forester

Arborist Report

Staff recommendation:

1. Staff recommend removal of all four (4) trees which have been compromised due to required site work. Replacement trees should be at least 3 inches in diameter (caliber) and 10-12 feet in height.

City of Opelika
Historic Preservation Commission
Staff Report



Agenda Item #: 2
Meeting Date: 08/08/2024
Action Requested: COA: Partial Removal of Rock Wall
Location of Property: 515 S. 8th St; Geneva Historic District
Petitioner: Cody Holly

Resources:

Existing rock and concrete wall along S. 8th Street of the Southside development in the Geneva Historic District.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Removal of approximately 10-12ft of existing rock and concrete wall to realign the shared driveway to more accurately match the recorded plat while respecting the historic wall.

Guidelines:

A. 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:

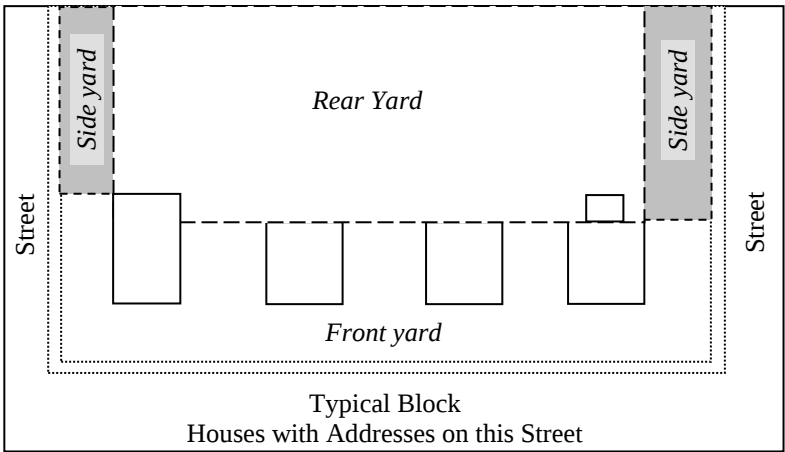
- Back yard Tree house, swing sets and trampolines
- Benches and other outdoor furniture and accessories
- Sculpture and another outdoor artwork
- Pools and patios
- Tree pruning, clearing of overgrown bushes, vines, saplings, etc.
- Tree removal (less than 4” diameter at breast height or diseased).
- 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)

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.

2. 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.

3. 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
- iii. Chain link fences may be used in rear yards, if visible from the street, shall be camouflaged with vegetation.
- iv. Staff approved fences are limited to wood dog ear and open gothic fences as pictured below. Other styles or materials require formal Commission approval.

4. 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)

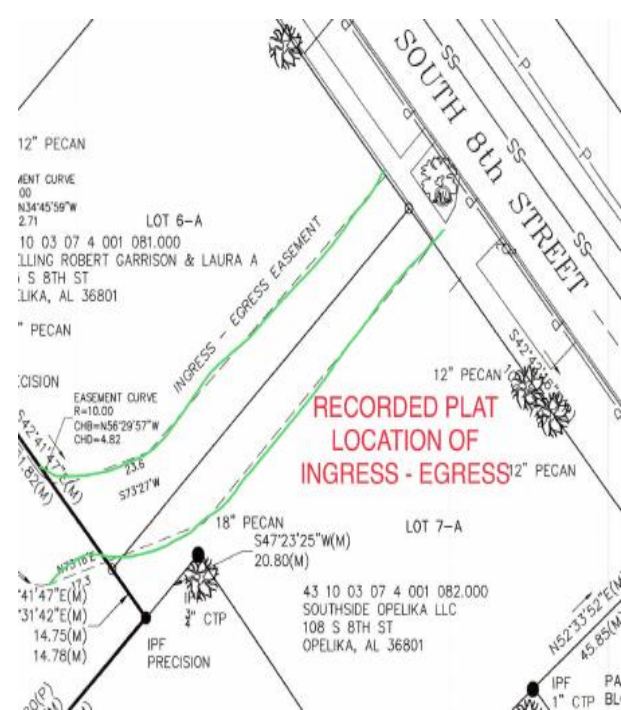
The following commonly requested projects require a COA:

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

Photo's:



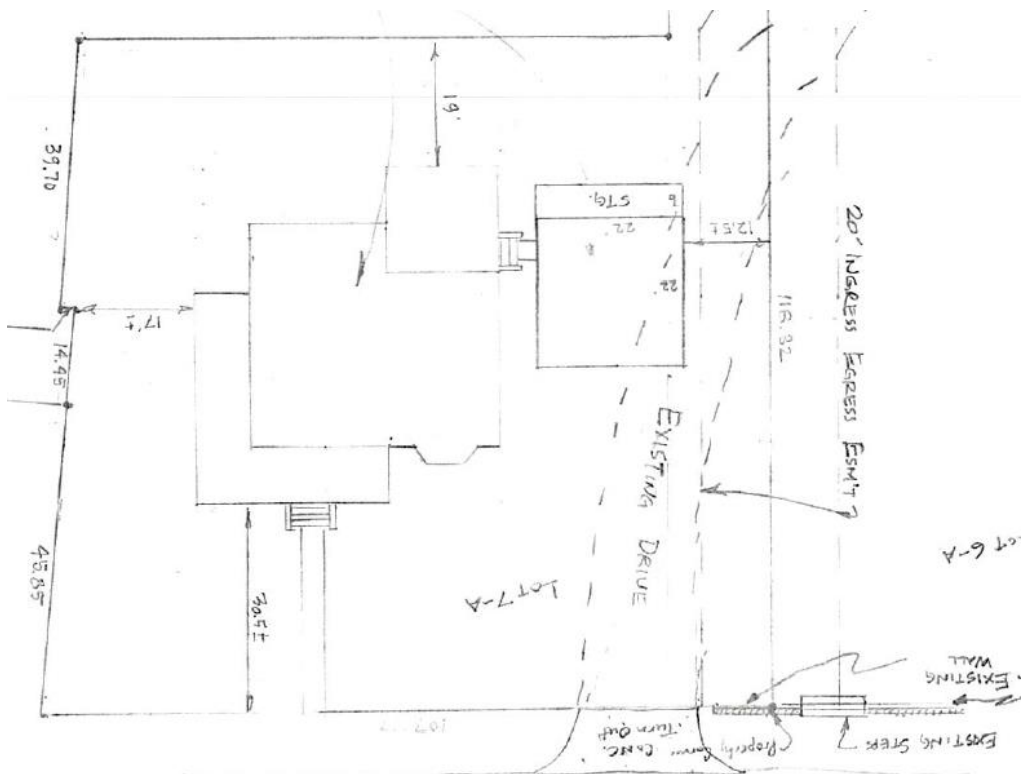
Existing rock and concrete wall with stairs



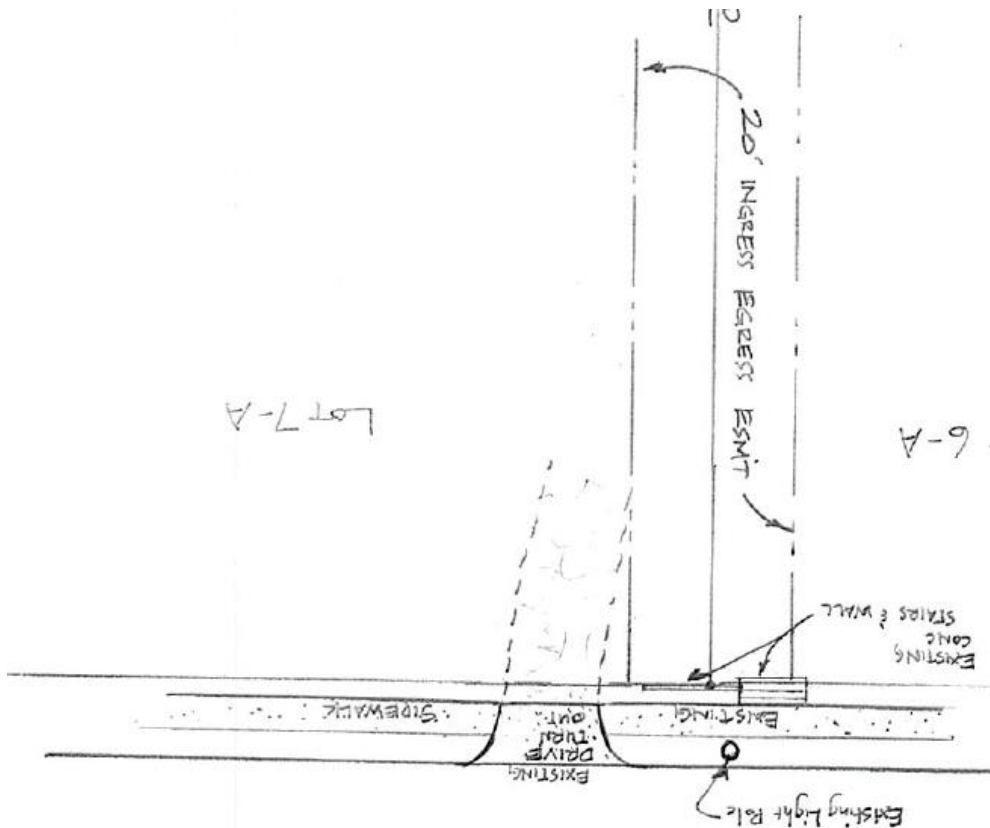
Recorded plat showing shared drive



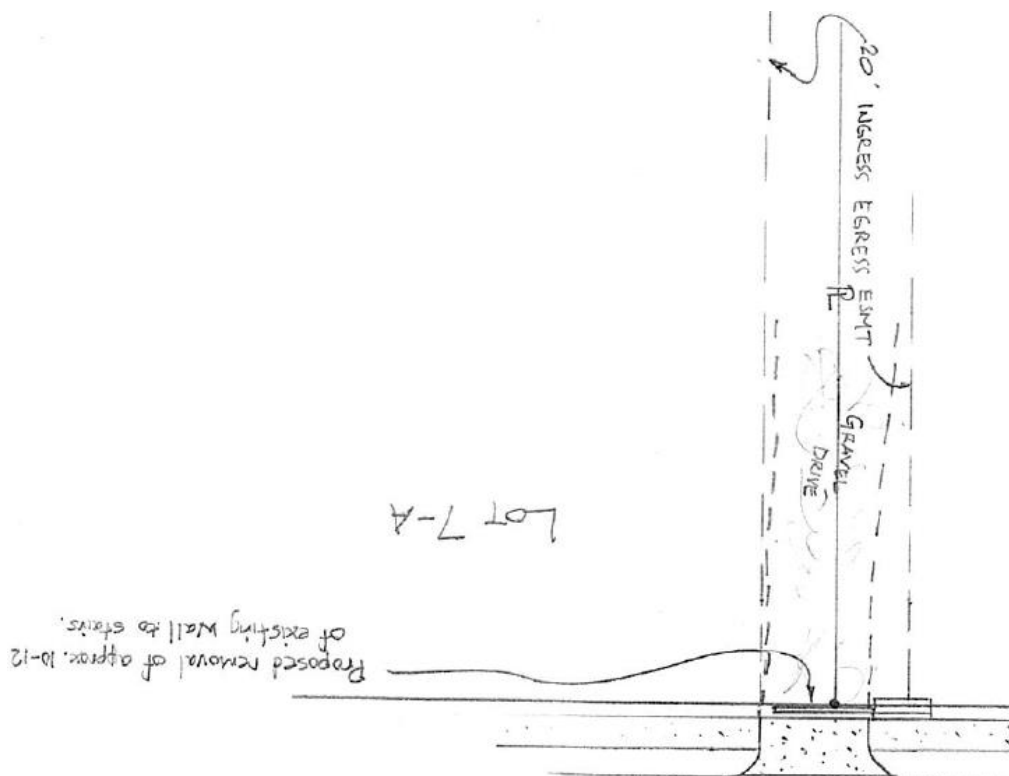
Survey pin showing lot line and relocation of proposed drive



Existing drive encroaches on site plan for garage of new home



Current drive with existing wall, stairs, and light pole



Proposed removal of ~10-12ft of existing wall to stairs for alignment of shared drive

Staff recommendation:

1. Staff recommend realignment of drive and removal of 8ft of existing wall to better match recorded plat. This may require the driveway entrance to curve but will assure stairs are not compromised.
2. Applicant will be responsible for relocation of street light and any other utilities.

City of Opelika
Historic Preservation Commission
Staff Report



Agenda Item #: 3
Meeting Date: 08/08/2024
Action Requested: COA: New Windows
Location of Property: 514 N. 9th St; Northside Historic District
Petitioner: Kathryn James

Resources:

Circa 1950. One story, wood frame minimal traditional with cross gable roof of asphalt shingles, weatherboard siding, off center wood door with stop, flanking 3/1 double hung sash windows, side screened porch. Contributing Resource.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Replace all windows with ENVIROGUARD cellular PVC double hung, OSF (outside frame) and 7/8" SDL (simulated divided lite). Paint grade. 3/1 grid pattern to remain. Current windows are hard to open and have wood rot.

Guidelines:

Windows:

- a. Retain and repair existing windows including window sash, glass, lintels, sills, architraves, shutters, pediments, hoods and hardware. If new sashes are used, duplicate the original material, design, size and hardware of the original window. Do not change window size, sash size or windowpane size.
- b. Do not introduce or create new window openings into the front principal elevation of the structure and do not enlarge or reduce original window openings to fit new stock window sizes.
- c. The original number and arrangement of panes should be maintained.
- d. Storm windows should be visually unobtrusive and should not damage existing window frames. Storm windows should be designed so that they can be removed in the future without damage to the original fabric of the structure. Storm windows should be compatible in color and design with the original windows. For example, mill finished aluminum storm windows should not be used with painted window sash.
- e. Plastic, canvas or metal strip awnings or fake shutters that are not compatible with the architectural style of the structure should not be used.
- f. Where existing shutters are replaced or reinstalled when missing, the new shutters shall be sized to fit the window opening, in height and width, whether the shutters are fixed or operable.

Composite materials are allowable for shutters so long as they duplicate the original in shape and texture.

- g. New window openings should not be introduced unless they match the existing window configuration and their placement harmonized with the existing rhythm of openings.
- h. Original windows should not be filled in.

Photo's:



Front elevation



Right elevation

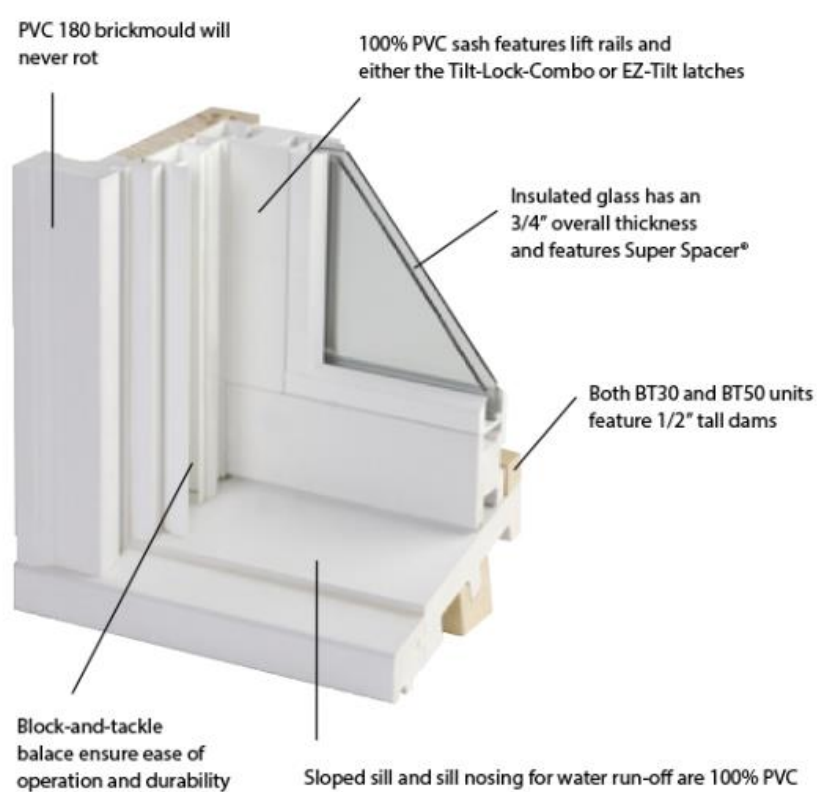


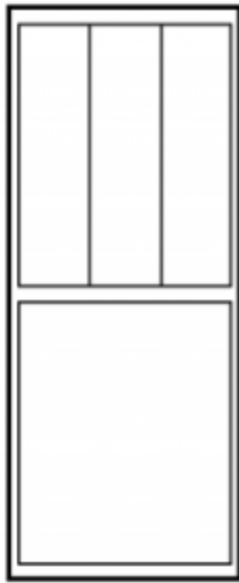
Rear elevation



Examples of wood rot around windows

Specs on new windows to be installed:





Mission



Our double-hung windows are built using ENVIROGUARD™ technology to ensure lasting quality. Our ENVIROGUARD windows are no rot and are made using the **highest quality cellular PVC**. Unlike wood, ENVIROGUARD windows won't peel, splinter, decay, or absorb moisture and they are impervious to insects. Unlike flimsy vinyl windows, ENVIROGUARD windows are sturdy, won't bend, and are paintable. ENVIROGUARD windows offer greater strength and durability over wood and vinyl windows and have enhanced screw-holding power. PVC windows have a traditional curb-side appeal and complement any architectural style of home. Our products are proudly made in the U.S.A and are backed up by the craftsmanship of our American workforce with our industry-leading 20 and 25 year warranties.

Staff recommendation:

1. Staff recommends approval of installation of new PVC composite simulated divided light with external grille windows with the same grid pattern (3/1) as existing windows. Width of trim surrounding the windows should be of the same dimensions as existing windows. All windows should be the same size as original opening requiring no infill.