



AGENDA

CITY OF OPELIKA HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION

March 13, 2025

4:30 p.m.

Meeting Chambers at Opelika Municipal Courtroom
300 MLK Boulevard

Call to Order

Approve February 13, 2025 minutes.

Public Comment/Citizen Communication

Old Business

New Business

1. 410-472 Geneva St: Geneva Historic District
COA: Remove Brick Walls
Applicant: Cody Holly
2. 402 S. 9th St: Geneva Historic District
COA: Mural
Applicant: Katie Wolter
3. 315 N. 8th St: Northside Historic District
COA: Enclose Door on Front
Applicant: Brent Reinhart

Other Business

4. Enforcement Report
5. Staff Report
6. Next meeting April 10, 2025
7. Adjournment

The City of Opelika complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and will make reasonable arrangements to ensure accessibility to meetings. If you need special assistance, please call the City's ADA Coordinator 72 hours prior to the meeting at (334)705-5130.



HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION MINUTES

300 Martin Luther King Blvd.

February 13, 2025

TIME: 4:30 PM

1. A CALL TO ORDER

Rush Denson called the meeting to order at 4:31 p.m.

2. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

A motion was made by Linda Lanz to approve the January 9, 2025 minutes. The motion was seconded by Mark Grantham. All approved.

1. Approve January 9, 2025 minutes

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

2. 515 S. 8th St: Geneva Historic District
COA: New Construction Renewal/Updates
Applicant: Cody Holly

Agenda Item #: 1

Meeting Date: 02/13/2025

Action Requested: COA: Renew Residential New Construction COA

Location of Property: 515 S. 8th St; Geneva Historic District

Petitioner: Cody Holly

Resources:

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

History: A single-family new construction home was approved and COA issued on April 11, 2024. A detached garage with a breezeway was approved and COA issued on October 10, 2024. The applicant now wishes to present changes to these plans for approval. See previous COA attached.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Renew new construction plan which expired November 2024.
2. Changes to the previous COA's include the following: New construction with painted fiberglass front and back doors, including entry doors for garage. Garage doors will be Amarr Hillcrest painted steel doors. Concrete porches have stone pavers on the floor and tongue, treated pine columns, and groove pine ceiling. Treated wood will be used for any porch railings. Roofs include asphalt shingles with metal standing seam on garage overhangs. Exterior to be smooth horizontal lap siding for entirety of both the house and garage with cased 1"x4" Hardie and 1"x6" header. Skirting around house and garage and chimney will be brick. Columns for house will

consist of treated 6"x6". Gables to have decorative "crow's feet" instead of eyebrow roofs. Both house and garage will have exposed rafters.

Guidelines:

G. NEW CONSTRUCTION:

1. Definition: The construction of any free-standing structure on any lot or addition to an existing structure.

2. General Principles:

1. These guidelines shall apply only to the exteriors of buildings and to areas of lots visible from public right-of-way.

2. The public facades, front and street-related elevations, of proposals for new buildings shall be more carefully reviewed than other facades.

100. New buildings should be compatible with other architectural styles in the historic district but are not required to imitate the past architectural styles of the historic district. They should reflect the era of their own construction.

500. Since construction in a historic district has usually taken place continuously from the nineteenth century to the present, a variety of building types and styles result which demonstrate the changes in building tastes and technology over the years. The special architectural character of the majority of the buildings in the historic district is responsible for this designation and new buildings should complement and be compatible with the prevailing architectural styles of other buildings in the historic district.

5. Reconstruction may be appropriate when it reproduces facades of a building which no longer exists and which was located in the historic district if; the building would have contributed to the historical and architectural character of the area, and if it will be compatible in terms of style, height, scale, massing, and materials with the buildings immediately surrounding the lot on which the reproduction will be built, and if it is accurately based on pictorial documentation.

6. New buildings should related to an established pattern and rhythm of existing contributing buildings, both on the same and opposite sides of a street, the dominance of that pattern and rhythm must be respected and not disrupted.

7. New construction should be consistent with existing contributing buildings along a street in terms of height, scale, setback, and rhythm; relationship of materials, texture, details and color; roof shape; orientation and proportion and rhythm of openings.

1. Height: New buildings should be compatible in height with the height of adjacent buildings. This shall not mean that new construction must be the same height as adjacent structures, but that new construction should be of similar heights as adjacent structures. New construction may not be over one story higher than adjacent structures or more than one story lower than adjacent structures.

2. Scale: The size of a new building; its mass in relation to open spaces; its windows, doors, openings and porches should be visually compatible with the surround buildings.
3. The relationship and use of materials, texture, details and material color of a new building's public facades shall be visually compatible with and similar to those of adjacent buildings or shall not contrast conspicuously.
4. The roofs of new buildings shall be visually compatible, by not contrasting greatly with the roof shape and orientation of surrounding buildings.
5. The setback from front and side yard property lines established by adjacent buildings must be maintained. When a definite rhythm along a street is established by uniform lot and building width, infill new buildings should maintain the rhythm.
6. Orientation: The site orientation of new buildings shall be consistent with that of adjacent buildings and shall be visually compatible. Directional expression shall be compatible with surrounding buildings, whether that expression is vertical, horizontal or non-directional.
7. The relationship of width to height of windows and doors, and the rhythm of solids to voids in new buildings shall be visually compatible with the surrounding buildings.

3. Additions to Existing Buildings:

1. Additions to existing buildings should be kept to a minimum and should be compatible in scale, materials, and texture. Additions should not be visually jarring or contrasting
 2. Additions should not be made to the public facades of existing buildings. Additions should be located to the rear or sides of existing buildings in ways which do not disturb the main public facades.
100. The creation of an addition through enclosure of a front façade porch is inappropriate and should be avoided.

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.

Staff recommendation:

1. New construction should be compatible with other architectural styles in the district but reflect the era of its own construction. This plan meets the new construction guidelines for height, scale, materials, orientation, and setback.
2. Staff recommends approval of horizontal lap siding and exposed rafter tails, architectural shingle roof, wood columns and porch railings, brick skirting and chimney, painted fiberglass doors, metal garage doors, exterior lighting, and decorative gable accent.
3. Staff recommends approval of casement aluminum window with center break and exterior grids.

Discussion:

Staff provided the history of previous COA obtained, which is now expired, and the proposed changes to the plan. She explained she had consulted the SHPO office about the use of casement open swing windows and was advised that casement windows were accepted as long as the exterior profile match those of historic homes.

The applicant stated that the two garage doors would face the shared driveway with the side of the garage facing the rear of the house.

There was no further discussion.

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

3. 1013 3rd Ave: Northside Historic District
COA: Add Dormer
Applicant: Compass Construction
Agenda Item #: 2
Meeting Date: 02/13/2025
Action Requested: COA: Add Dormer
Location of Property: 1013 3rd Ave; Northside Historic District
Petitioner: Compass Construction

Resources:

Circa 1910. One and a half story, wood frame Victorian cottage with hip with cross gables roof of asphalt shingles, weatherboard siding, off centered wood door, flanking 6/6 double hung sash windows, recessed, screened porch. Contributing Resource.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Build out attic space adding a new dormer facing 11th St with four windows. Windows are Lincoln aluminum clad 7/8" SDL with internal grids. Exterior siding and trim for dormer will be Hardie and match existing wood siding.

Proposed Guidelines:

5. 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.

Staff recommendation:

1. Staff recommends approval of side dormer with Hardie siding and trim. All siding and trim to match existing in reveal and width.
2. Staff recommends approval of Lincoln casement aluminum clad windows with 6/6 external grid pattern to match existing windows. Window shall have the look of a double hung window with the same width top rail in center. The casement window is needed to meet the egress requirements per code.

Discussion:

Staff outlined the addition of a new dormer facing 11th Street with casement swing windows to provide egress, as required.

Applicant stated they may decide to install a wood window instead of the proposed aluminum window. Staff requested new specs and photos for the record if this occurs prior to installation.

There was no further discussion.

A motion was made by Aaron Kovak to approve with staff recommendations. The motion was seconded by Mark Grantham. All approved.

4. Enforcement Report
There were no new enforcement cases to discuss.
5. Staff Report
There was no additional business for staff to report.
6. Next meeting DATE
The next meeting is scheduled for March 13, 2025.
1. Next meeting March 13, 2025

7. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Mark Grantham to adjourn. The motion was seconded by Aaron Kovak. All approved.

City of Opelika
Historic Preservation Commission
Staff Report



Agenda Item #: 1
Meeting Date: 3/13/2025
Action Requested: COA: Wall Removal
Location of Property: 410-416/466-472 Geneva St; Geneva Historic District
Petitioner: Hartbrook Development, LLC

Resources:

Vacant lot facing both Geneva Street and S. 10th Street.

History: Applicant received COA on 10/10/2024 to construct twin homes. A curb cut was required to install the shared drive for these units and future units in the rear.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Remove existing brick walls at curb and behind sidewalk and grade to match neighboring properties. The walls are falling in several areas. A new sidewalk will be poured and grass installed.

Proposed 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:

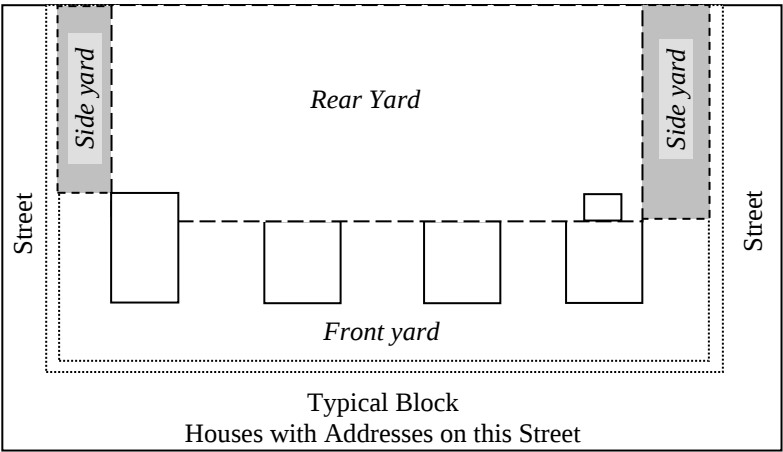
- Changes to stone walls and other historic site features
- New or expanded parking areas/lots
- New and expanded driveways and walkways
- Staff approval for change of materials (i.e. gravel to concrete)
- Staff approval for tree removal with supporting documentation from a Certified Arborist that the 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)

. 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:



Old concrete stairs



Length of both walls



Damaged/failing wall



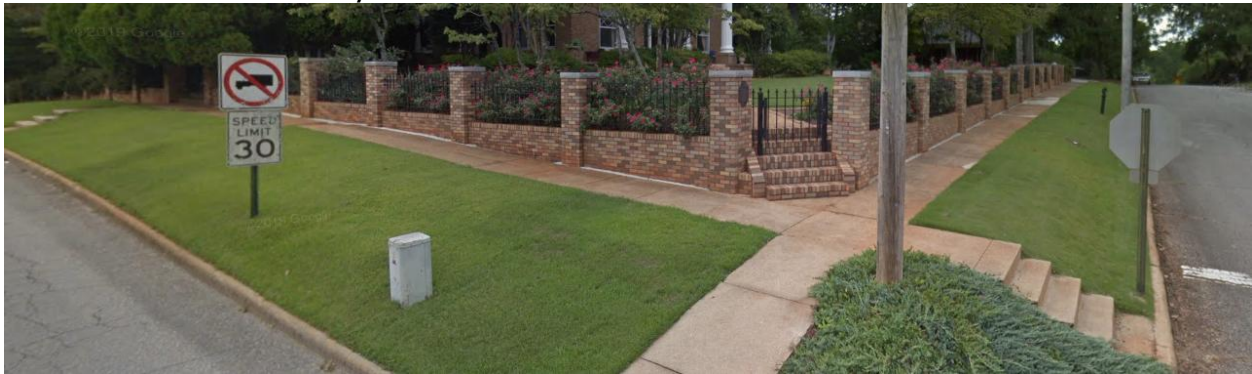
Damaged/failing wall



New drive installed for access to twin homes and future development (steps removed)



Concrete wall at 4th Ave/6th Street



Wall removed, graded, and sod planted

Staff recommendation:

1. Staff recommend approval of removing both brick walls, grading, and sodding so landscape will be consistent with adjoining properties.

City of Opelika
Historic Preservation Commission
Staff Report



Agenda Item #: 2
Meeting Date: 03/13/2025
Action Requested: COA: Sign and Mural
Location of Property: 402 S. 9th St; Geneva Historic District
Petitioner: Katie Wolter

Resources:

Amoco Station-Baker Alternator, c. 1920 One story, enameled siding gas station, painted green in recent years. Contributing structure.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. Mural on rear and wrapping around the side of the building containing a variety of flowers in multiple colors. The portion facing S. 9th Street is approximately 3ft x 12ft. The portion facing Ave C is approximately 20ft x 12ft.

Proposed Guidelines:

8. Exterior Finishes:

- a. It is recommended that investigation be made into the historic paint colors and finishes of the structure and that repainting with these colors be considered to illustrate the distinctive character of the property. The painting of unpainted brick should only be considered under the following circumstances:
 1. The masonry is not historic, nor is likely to become contributing in the future.
 2. The brick is soft brick or porous historic brick that was intended to be sealed. Most known brick in Opelika's historic districts have more modern bricks.
 3. A majority of the existing structure's masonry is already painted.
 4. Masonry at ground level or below needs to be waterproofed to exclude ground water.
 5. The structure has been extensively damaged by fire, natural disaster, or pre-existing alterations that the masonry no longer conveys the buildings historic character. This should not include major additions or changes that show the historic evolution of a building. (rev. 01/19/2022)
- b. Once painted, it is often better to repaint rather than remove paint. Removing paint and finishes down to the bare surface is not recommended. Strong paint strippers whether chemical or mechanical can permanently damage the surface and stripping also obliterates evidence of the historical paint finishes. Never sandblast a masonry building. (rev. 01/19/2022)
- c. Buildings should be repainted with colors that were identified on the building or that are documented colors from the period of the construction of the structure or from the period of the

last major addition or alteration to the structure. When permissible, masonry should only be painted with breathable paint, such as limewash or mineral-based pigments. (rev. 01/19/2022)

- d. A Certificate of Appropriateness is not required for painting structures if paragraphs a., b. and c. above are followed. The Opelika Historic Preservation Commission will recommend appropriate paint colors if requested.

The following commonly requested projects DO NOT require a COA:

- Re-painting painted surfaces.

The following commonly requested projects require a COA:

- Painting of unpainted surfaces.

a. Murals and Public Works of Art

1. Any mural in a locally designated historic district shall either be located on a site pre-designated by the Opelika historic Preservation Commission or shall require sight approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness from the HPC.
2. Murals shall not be painted on unpainted historic brick without approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness from the HPC.
3. Murals that are not directly painted on the building wall may be attached to unpainted brick provided that the method of attachment has been demonstrated that it will not damage the building.
 - a. Bolts or similar attachments to brick walls shall occur in the mortar between bricks and not directly to the brick.
4. Murals shall not be applied on or obscure architectural features such as: windows, doors, pilasters, cornices, or other building trim, features bands, and other recessed or projecting features.
5. Any lighting for murals in the historic district shall comply with lighting standards for the district.
6. Murals in historic districts may replicate painted historic signs that previously existed on the proposed site. Such historic murals shall only be permitted if historic documentation is provided to support the existence of the mural on painted or unpainted historic brick.
7. Public Works of Art site locations must be approved by the HPC. (updated 01/09/2020)

Photo's:





Staff recommendation:

1. Staff recommends approval of painted mural on rear and side of building. This surface is currently painted.

City of Opelika
Historic Preservation Commission
Staff Report



Agenda Item #: 3
Meeting Date: 03/13/2025
Action Requested: COA: Remove Door on Front
Location of Property: 315 N. 8th St; Northside Historic District
Petitioner: Brent Reinhart

Resources:

Circa 1920. One story, wood frame Victorian cottage with hip with cross gables roof of asphalt shingles, cornice returns on gables, interior brick chimney, weatherboard siding, off centered wood door, flanking double hung sash windows, wrap around porch with wooden porch supports, open rail balustrade. Contributing Resource.

Proposal: The petitioner requests a COA for the following:

1. The front of house has three (3) doors with two side-by-side on right side of porch. Remove far right door leading into a bedroom and install wood siding to match existing lap siding.

Proposed Guidelines:

5. 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:



View from sidewalk



Remove door on right and install wood lap siding

Staff recommendation:

1. Staff recommends approval of removing far right door and installing wood lap siding matching the reveal of existing siding.