

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW REPORT

Referral by City Planner to Historic District Commission
Meeting of October 17, 2024

Permit: Building Permit #24-1399

Location: 21 N. American Avenue, Dover
(Portion of building previously addressed as 19 N. American Avenue)
Located at the east side of N. American Avenue, north of E. Division Street

Tax Parcel: ED-05-077.05-02-23.00-000

File Number: HI-24-08

Present Zoning: RG-1 (General Residence Zone)
H (Historic District Zone)

Referral of Permit:

The following application **Building Permit #24-1399** for 21 N. American Avenue is referred by the City Planner to the Historic District Commission for consultation regarding the issuance of the Architectural Review Certificate for a Building (Demolition, Addition, & Renovation) project. Applications for certain types of construction activity within the Historic District Zone (H) are reviewed by the City Planner (or Staff as designated) for Architectural Review Certification as part of the Building Permit application review process. Staff is referring the Permit for review under the provisions of *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 10 Section 3.22(A) and (B). See below.

Section 3.22 Architectural review certification by the city planner.

- (A) An architectural review certificate for specific classes of building permits, including fences, signs, siding, window and door replacement, roofing, the addition or replacement of decorative features, minor demolition, residential additions, and other construction of a minor nature, may be issued by the city planner, after a review and determination that the proposed construction is in general accordance with the standards set forth in subsection 3.25.
- (B) The city planner may refer any permit application for demolition or construction in the historic district for consultation with commission.

Permit Proposal:

Building Permit #24-1399 was filed on September 25, 2024 for a project consisting of the demolition of a rear one-story addition, rebuild of the rear addition as two-story, renovations to the first rear one-a-half story rear addition and its porch, removal of asbestos siding and reclad in vinyl siding, and renovations to front porch. The Permit Plan set depicts the project locations and activities as follows:

- The second rear addition of 204 SF will be removed and the new rear addition footprint is 289 SF to consist of new mudroom and bathroom areas on the first floor with a room above.
- The first rear addition (one-and-half story) will remain and have its side porch renovated with new foundation, changes to doors and windows, and interior layout revisions.
- This half of the existing building (former southern duplex unit) is clad with an asbestos (cement) shingle; this cladding is proposed for removal with the building to be reclad in horizontal vinyl siding.
- On the front façade, the original front door (to this side of the duplex) is proposed for removal with the wall opening infilled. The front porch dividing railing is to be removed and to be reused to close off the previous stepped entry to the south unit. With the removal of the steps there will be only one entry point to the full-width front porch.
- The interior layout and its reconfiguration is not subject to review for Architectural Review Certification.

The portion of the property (the southern half) where the project activities are proposed is located within the local Historic District Zone (H) and subject to the provisions of the *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 3 §21 and referenced sections.

Staff Review of Permit for Architectural Review Certification:

Project activities are reviewed for compliance with the *Zoning Ordinance* and the *Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone* as stated in *Zoning Ordinance*, Article 10 Section 3.25(A).

3.25 Architectural review standards.

(A) An architectural review certificate may be issued if it is found that the architectural style, general design, height, bulk and setbacks, arrangement, location and materials and structures affecting the exterior appearance are generally in harmony with neighboring structures and complementary to the traditional architectural standards of the historic district as set forth in the historic district design guidelines and standards adopted by the planning commission and as set forth in the United States Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

In reviewing the proposed project for Architectural Review Certification, Staff referenced various sections of Chapter 3: Maintenance, Repair, Preservation and Restoration of Existing Historic Buildings of the *Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone* which presents the Recommended, Not Recommended, and Inappropriate approaches to construction of various elements in the Historic District. Also referenced is Chapter 4: New Construction, Addition, Demolition and Relocation of the *Design Standards and Guidelines*.

This Request should be reviewed for conformity with the design criteria and development guidelines found in the *Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone*. Specifically, Chapter 3 includes the following discussions page 3-3 through 3-8 on Doors and Windows; pages 3-14 through 3-16 on Walls: Wood Siding and Trim; and pages 3-16 through 3-20 on Porches. See Attached copies of these sections.

The proposal for demolition of the rear building addition must be reviewed for conformity with the design criteria guidelines found in Chapter 4: New Construction, Additions, Demolition and Relocation (pages 4-10 to 4-12). The *Design Standards and Guidelines* give guidance to the Historic District Commission by listing specific criteria to be evaluated when considering applications for the demolition of buildings in the historic district. These guidelines focus on consideration of financial implications, building significance, plans for new construction, recordation of the building, and the site following demolition (see *Design Standards and Guidelines* for the complete text).

Chapter 4 (pages 4-8 through 4-10) focuses on Additions to Existing Buildings with consideration given to Siting, Scale, Elevation of the First Floor, Floor-to-Floor Heights, Massing, Orientation, Proportions, Materials, Forms, and other elements.

Historic District Commission Action

The Historic District Commission should consider the proposal for the Demolition, Addition & Renovation project and take action in regard to the Architectural Review Certification for the Building Permit #24-1399. The Historic District Commission may add conditions for the project in order to comply with the character of the property within the Historic District.

Staff Findings from Review of Building Permit:

Staff findings and recommendations are summarized as follows for the proposed building project as presented in Permit #24-1399 and accompanying plan set.

1. The rear building addition proposed for demolition is towards the rear of the property and is small in overall size. It is somewhat limited in its visibility from the street.
2. The overall structure appears to have been constructed as duplex (two side-by-side dwelling units) with later rear additions to the main two-story structure. From the street view, the building retains the form characteristics of the two units, but the exterior finishes and rear additions have been changed over time. The northern half (unit) is clad in vinyl siding and has a large two-story rear addition. The southern half is clad with a cement shingle siding and may retain some of the wood trim detailing at the eave. The main block has a metal roof across the full width of the structure. The front porch exists across the full width of the front façade and is divided for the two units.
3. The property now exists as one parcel following a Minor Lot Line Adjustment Plan (MI-24-04) to consolidate the previous two parcels as the property is under a single owner who wishes to convert the two duplex units into one single-family dwelling unit.

Suggested Items for Consideration regarding Architectural Review Certification:

Staff notes the following items that could be considered to allow a better fit of the proposed project within the Historic District guidelines.

1. Second Rear Addition Demolition: Staff recommends approval to allow for demolition of the second rear addition due to its location and size and condition. This is a minor demolition.

2. Second Rear Addition Rebuild: Staff recommends approval to allow for the rebuilding of the second rear addition as proposed as it is distinguishable as an addition and is limited in size. The use of horizontal siding is recommended and given the location of this rear addition the use of vinyl siding could be utilized.
3. Rear Addition Renovations: Staff recommends approval of the renovation of the rear addition to reconstruct its porch and to relocate the entry door to the new rear addition. It is recommended that the second-floor windows be replaced in the same configuration as the existing rather than the with narrow band windows. With the removal of the asbestos shingles on this addition, consideration should be given to repair or replace in-kind (wood or composite) horizontal siding as the surface area is minimal on the south elevation.
4. Exterior Finishes: Staff notes that the removal of the asbestos/cement shingle siding is likely to reveal a horizontal wood siding and trimwork on the main block of the structure. It is recommended that exterior finish for the main block be horizontal siding with the repair or replacement in-kind (wood or composite siding) and include the retaining the form of any window trimwork, corner boards, cornice details, etc.
5. Front Façade and Porch: For the front porch area, Staff recommends that the front door remain in place for the southern unit as it continues the historic appearance of this structure as a duplex. Staff also recommends that the second opening (in the porch balustrade) and steps to the porch remain in place for the same reasons. The dividing railing/balustrade can be removed to create the large (undivided) front porch area.

Advisory Comments and Recommendations:

1. The applicant shall be aware that issuance of a Building Permit is required prior to the commencement of construction. The Building Permit Application will be subject to the conditions of approval established and may be required to be updated, if necessary, to comply with these conditions established through the Architectural Review Certification process.
2. In the event, that major changes and revisions to the project proposal occur, contact the Department of Planning and Inspections. These changes may require resubmittal for review by the Historic District Commission.

Attachments:

- Letter of Referral Notice to Applicant dated October 10, 2024
- Building Permit #24-1399 Application Form and Permit submission documents
- Streetview image
- *Design Standards and Guidelines for the City of Dover Historic District Zone*, excerpts from Chapter 3 and Chapter 4