

**485 College Ave**  
**Letters of Protest**

**(HD 24-04)**

Date: 11 June 2024

To: Historic District Commission

From: Scott Moses, 430 College Ave

Re: CoA for 485 College

We have about 43 properties on the 400 block of College. More than half were completed between 1909 and 1918, and all but 7 of them were completed by 1925. Despite the relatively narrow time period of construction, a variety of architectural styles exist – most are Craftsman/Bungalow but Prairie School, Colonial Revival and Tudor Revival also are present. However, the Lowbrow Baroque style used in the COA is not a style that is represented on College Avenue or in the Chautauqua Historic District.

The fence design, gutter materials, modifications to the front façade, and sunroom all aim to create a false historical appearance, which the Preservation Guidelines repeatedly state should be avoided. “Features or details ... that are introduced to a property shall reflect its style, period, and design” and “shall not create a false historical appearance by reflecting other time periods, styles, or geographic regions of the country” (or of France).

**I am writing to express my objection to majority of the items on this COA, and especially the following items:**

*a) Installation of a 4' wrought iron fence with brick columns in the front yard;*

- ☐ The property currently has a 3-foot stockade fence located on the edge of the sidewalk without setback. This is a relatively recent addition and is not a historic feature of the property.
- ☐ None of the other 42 properties on College have a front yard fence. A front yard fence along the sidewalk is not compatible with the character of this historic neighborhood, which values neighborly interactions created by front porches and well-trodden sidewalks.
- ☐ Furthermore, the proposed style is not historically appropriate or compatible with our historic neighborhood. We don't have fences made of wrought iron with large brick columns. The proposed fence attempts to create a false historic appearance but not one that is historically found in the CHD.

*b) Installation of an 8' solid metal fence with brick columns in the side yard;*

- ☐ Tall metal fences do not exist on College Avenue. Solid fences are made of wood with vertical pickets (stockade style), and not taller than 6 feet. Guidelines state “Side yard fences taller than 6 feet are prohibited.”
- ☐ The style of the proposed fence which uses horizontal lines and artistic ornamentation is completely out of character. The height is out of scale. We do not have any fortresses on our street.

*d) Installation of wrought iron gates over driveway;*

- ☐ Gated driveways are not historic features in the CHD. Gated driveways are so foreign to the CHD that the Preservation Guidelines do not discuss them.

- ☐ Only one of the 43 properties on College has a gate in the driveway, which is new construction that was completed shortly prior to College Ave joining the CHD. The wrought iron gate is not near the street and simple in style, although it remains out of character simply because it is a gate.
- ☐ A Baroque-styled gate is wholly incompatible with the historic district. College Avenue is not Versailles. Louis XIV doesn't walk down our sidewalks. Nobody even wears a powdered wig.
- ☐ Furthermore, any driveway gate especially at the end of the driveway is out of character. A gate would be a highly permanent and highly noticeable non-historic feature since it is adjacent to the sidewalk and in a prominent location near the end of the block (which receives relatively heavy foot and auto traffic).

*f) Installation of gutters on the house; g) Installation of gutters on the accessory structure;*

- ☐ Bronze gutters were not used on similar historic structures. The style of the gutters creates a false historical appearance that suggests other time periods and styles. Virtually all gutters on College are standard aluminum gutters.

*j) Addition of dormers to the front facade of the house; k) Addition of a porch to the front facade of the house; l) Addition of a porch to the front facade of the accessory structure;*

- ☐ The proposed modifications completely change the historic appearance of the structure, and in particular the front facade.
- ☐ The Preservation Guidelines state "it is not appropriate to ... add a new entrance or porch on a primary facade."
- ☐ Section 3.16 of the Preservation Guidelines state that "New balconies or porches on the front or side of a historic structure will only be considered if there is historic evidence that one existed." No documentation of an existing historic porch has been provided to support the re-installation of a historic porch similar to that which is proposed. The proposed porch is large in scale and the style of the proposed porch is not compatible with the historic character of the building.
- ☐ The structure has never had roof dormers and thus no documentation can be provided to support their re-installation. The proposed dormers are an entirely new invention for this structure. The Preservation Guidelines do not support addition of new dormers to the front facade.
- ☐ These requested modifications are completely contrary to the key idea of a historic district. I am flabbergasted that the requests are even being made.

*m) Installation of a metal and glass sunroom to the rear of the house;*

- ☐ In general, a rear sunroom seems reasonable – but the exuberant style and materials chosen are completely out of character with the historic main structure and the sunroom detracts from the historic character of the main structure. The sunroom also will be visible from the right-of-way.
- ☐ The form, materials, features and finish of the proposed Sunroom are not compatible with the principal structure, as is required by the Preservation Guidelines.

- ☐ Section 2.6 of the Preservation Guidelines states that new construction must be “compatible in design, style, material to the principal historic structure *and the surrounding historic neighborhood.*” (emphasis added)

*n) Installation of a swimming pool and associated decking in the side yard;*

- ☐ Section 2.2 of the Preservation Guidelines states that “swimming pools are to be located behind the principal structure with no visibility from the front right-of-way.” The proposed swimming pool is located in the side yard and would be visible from the right-of-way.

*o) Installation of a new concrete walkway in the front yard;*

- ☐ The proposed walkway does not adhere to the historic orientation used in the neighborhood or the Preservation Guidelines. Walkways on properties in the CHD are perpendicular to the street and extend to the main sidewalk. The Preservation Guidelines state that “Sidewalks on private property shall be maintained in their traditional location, usually perpendicular to the street”.

**A couple elements of the application do seem appealing and appropriate.**

- ☐ I am delighted to see that vinyl siding would be removed and the original wood siding would be rehabilitated.
- ☐ Item E: Removal of existing front yard parking and reconfiguration of the driveway;

In conclusion, the 400 block of College Avenue joined the Chautauqua Historic District in 2018 after earlier teardowns and inappropriate construction. We joined the Historic District expressly to preserve the historic character of our street.

You will be making important decisions about the fate of our neighborhood.

Thank you for serving on the Commission and for protecting our neighborhood.

**From:** [Henry, Dillon](#)  
**To:** [Anais Starr](#)  
**Subject:** EXTERNAL EMAIL : 485 College  
**Date:** Friday, March 29, 2024 11:33:26 AM  
**Attachments:** [image001.png](#)

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Anais,

I want to offer my support for not making the proposed changes to 485 College as the homeowner has presented. These changes have no similarities or likeness with *any* other properties in the entire district and would be a flood gate to precedent for future proposals.

Frankly, the homeowner's house at 490 Elm is an eyesore in the neighborhood and not something that we want to replicate in the Historic district. Considerations should be given to allow him to join the two yards into one, but the proscribed changes of wrought iron fences and metal gates over the driveways are inappropriate. Alternative window material other than wood is absolutely non-negotiable. A solid iron side fence is similar to a stone fence, but again, no similarity to any other property in the district.

Reasonable changes should be considered i.e. the glass sun room (with changes to the windows and materials), and the reduction in the size of the driveway.

Respectfully,  
-DH



**Dillon M. Henry**  
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*I work remotely Mondays and Fridays*

*Send me a text @ 580-512-6919*

**From:** [Larry Anderson](#)  
**To:** [Anais Starr](#)  
**Subject:** EXTERNAL EMAIL : 485 College  
**Date:** Saturday, June 15, 2024 12:59:05 AM

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Anais

I am on vacation in Europe and just made aware of this request. However, my opposition to the requests in the COA is so strong that I felt it essential to write this email to express my objections to the requests even while I am on vacation.

It seems like item E may merit consideration for approval. Also, since the existing windows are not historical, the HDC might suggest suitable replacements and, thus, conditionally approve items H and J.

Otherwise, the remainder of the requests are inappropriate for a historic district property. They reflect a false style and seem rather garish.

The height and style of the fencing are not appropriate in this historic neighborhood. Neither are gates in driveways.

Modifications to the front façade (items J, K, and L) are incompatible with the purpose of a historic district.

I hope the commission will disapprove most of the items on this application.

Sincerely,

Lawrence Anderson

Managing Member

KUCA, LLC

Owner, 426 College

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June 17, 2024

Historic District Commission

From: Leah Kenton-McGaha, 475 College Ave.

RE: CoA for 485 College

To Whom it May Concern,

My parents purchased 475 College Ave., a Tudor Revival style home in 1981. I have grown up on this street, and now live in my childhood home.

While I have many objections to the CoA that I will outline in detail below, my first reaction is anger at the proposed incorporation of a *third* historical home into the massive complex that currently dominates 490 Elm Ave.

My specific objections to the proposed CoA for 475 College Ave. include, but are not limited to, the following:

*a) Installation of a 4' wrought-iron fence with brick columns in the front yard;*

None of the houses on the 400 block of College Ave. have a fenced off front yard. The current 3' stockade fence that parallels the edge of the sidewalk was installed a few years ago and is not historic in nature. A fenced-off front yard is, to put it bluntly, unwelcoming and not in the character of the other yards on the front street that consist of flowers, grass, trees and shrubs.

*b) Installation of an 8' solid metal fence with brick columns in the side yard and;*

*c) Installation of an 8' solid metal fence with brick columns in the side yard;*

The preservation guidelines specifically state that fences “up to six feet in high” are allowed. Side yard fences taller than 6 feet are prohibited. Mr. Teel’s proposed fences violate these guidelines.

*d) Installation of wrought iron gates over driveway;*

While the preservation guidelines do not specifically mention gated driveways, they are not historically accurate to the character of the neighbourhood. There is only one gated driveway on College Ave., and it was installed shortly before College Ave. joined the CHD. Mr. Teel’s proposed, Baroque-style gate is of the wrong time period and does not fit the character of the neighbourhood.

*h) Replacement of existing windows with alternative material windows on the house;*

*i) Replacement of existing windows with alternative material windows on the accessory structure;*



The guidelines state that windows chosen for additions must “match the original structure,” and specific details of said windows are provided. Mr. Teel’s request for an exemption to this rule makes me suspect he does not plan to replace the existing windows on the structure with historically accurate ones.

- j) Addition of dormers to the front façade of the house;*
- k) Addition of a porch to the front façade of the house;*
- l) Addition of a porch to the front façade of the accessory structure;*

The proposed additions and modifications will substantially alter the historic appearance of the front façade. The guidelines state “it is not appropriate to remove an original entrance or porch or to add a new entrance or porch on a primary façade.” The guidelines further state that “features shall not create a false historical appearance by reflecting other time periods [or] styles.” In the event that a full replacement of a porch is necessary, the guidelines also state that it must match the original, “in design, dimension, detail, texture and material.” Mr. Teel’s proposed additions and modifications do not adhere to these guidelines.

- n) Installation of a swimming pool and associated decking in the side yard;*

The guidelines state that swimming pools be “located behind the principal structure in the rear yard and not visible from [the] front right-of-way.” The proposed swimming pool is in direct violation of the established guidelines.

The residents of College Ave. joined the Chautauqua Historic District in 2018 with the express purpose of preventing additional teardowns of historic homes and inappropriate construction. Mr. Teel’s attempts to extend his fortress to College Ave. are an example of the inappropriate construction College Ave. residents sought to prevent. As a long-time resident of College Ave. I hope that you will take my objections into consideration when determining whether or not to approve Mr. Teel’s numerous unhistoric, proposed changes.

Respectfully submitted,

Leah Kenton-McGaha  
475 College Ave.

**From:** [John Kmetz](#)  
**To:** [Anais Starr](#)  
**Subject:** EXTERNAL EMAIL : HDC Vote on 485 College Ave.  
**Date:** Monday, April 8, 2024 5:16:29 PM

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Hello Anais,

I hope you have been well! I'm writing as a neighbor on College Avenue to ask you to oppose the requests for waivers and exemptions from the historic district guidelines by Steven Teal at 485 College. We've been here before. It feels like yesterday that the city was going to fine him for paving over too much of the lot, but somehow he avoided that fate by burying it in mulch. Then, a couple of years ago, he went before the HDC informally to ask about the very requests he is now making, and the HDC basically told him no, yet despite that and knowing that his neighbors oppose it he is here again making the request.

Simply put, we as neighbors oppose this for all the usual and rather obvious reasons. My biggest complaint is that he will wall off a property on the block, creating a visual blight representing the "rump" end of his flamboyant, gothic, and downright strange residence on Elm Street. I don't blame anyone for indulging their Harry Potter fetish, but they should do so in the privacy of their home and not in a way that forces the neighbors to suffer for it. He is also going to pave large portions of this property. The neighbors on College already get substantial water runoff from his mulched in concrete, and this will only exacerbate the problem. As you know, College Avenue has a big problem with water runoff, so this is the last thing we need here. Finally, aside from being ugly in its own right, it will clash with the current stylistic and historic nature of the block.

Thank you for your work on behalf of us ordinary residents. I hope you can share this email with the HDC and support our request to do what Nancy Reagan bid us all do, "just say no."

Best,

John Kmetz  
440 College Ave.  
405-898-9707

**From:** [Marsha McDaris](#)  
**To:** [Anais Starr](#)  
**Subject:** EXTERNAL EMAIL : 485 College  
**Date:** Sunday, June 16, 2024 7:55:33 PM

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I walked over to Steve Teel's house on Elm and it looks like to me he intends to replicate all his bad taste in his application for 485 College. To begin with, he tore down a historic house to build his monstrosity. I remember it caused the neighbors to the North to sell their historic house and move out of the neighborhood. He has a history of violating city ordinances. Around 20 years ago he put gravel in the front yard and when Ward 4 Councilman, Kevin Pipes, reported the violation of city code, Mr. Teel put up a 4' fence and covered the gravel with mulch. He also violated the Norman city ordinance pertaining to no more than 3 unrelated people living there by advertising it for rent and could accommodate 6 persons. I talked to a tenant and indeed there were 6 people living there. When the 400 block of College Avenue downzoned from R-3 to R-1 and when we asked to join the Chautauqua Historic District, he was not in favor of either. I reference these known facts as a warning to the HDC that he cannot be trusted and only wants what is best for him NOT the neighborhood.

Of the 16 items listed for consideration, each one of them is pushing the boundaries of what is acceptable or appropriate in a historic property. In staff notes he states that he is agreeable to removing the vinyl and metal siding that are on the property. That's great and reasonable. It is my opinion and that of many of my neighbors that the HDC would be setting a dangerous and mostly unenforceable precedence, i.e. House on the corner of Boyd and Lahoma, if they approve any of his desired changes to the property. Additionally, the HDC should consider adding a new rule that prohibits non historic properties from merging with historic properties.

Thank you for all that you do to enforce historic guidelines.

Marsha McDaris  
448 College Ave  
Norman, OK 73069  
405-326-2309

**From:** Kash Barker <kashbarker@>

**Sent:** Tuesday, June 11, 2024 6:28 PM

**To:** Anais Starr <[Anais.Starr@NormanOK.gov](mailto:Anais.Starr@NormanOK.gov)>

**Cc:** Scott Moses

**Subject:** EXTERNAL EMAIL : proposed alterations to 485 College

To the Historic District Commission:

In 2014, the makeup of the Historic District Commission was worthless. The HDC, upon the incorrect advice of the Historic Preservation Officer, made a ruling regarding 434 Chautauqua that was grounded in a clearly sketchy historic record and not on physical, historic evidence.

I am unaware of the current makeup of the HDC. Here's hoping it has improved.

Allowing the proposed alterations to 485 College will make the ruling at 434 Chautauqua all the more arbitrary and capricious. I would advise against it.

Kash Barker

434 Chautauqua