



## CITY OF NORMAN, OK STAFF REPORT

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**MEETING DATE:** 04/07/2025

**REQUESTER:** Frank Sullivan

**PRESENTER:** Anais Starr, Planner II/Historic District Preservation Officer

**ITEM TITLE:** (HD 24-20) CONSIDERATION OF APPROVAL, REJECTION, AMENDMENT, AND/OR POSTPONEMENT OF THE CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS REQUEST FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 733 CHAUTAUQUA AVENUE FOR THE FOLLOWING MODIFICATIONS: A) REPLACEMENT OF EXTERIOR SIDING, SOFFIT, AND TRIM; B) REPLACEMENT OF WINDOWS; C) PAINTING OF THE EXTERIOR BRICK WALLS. (POSTPONED FROM THE OCTOBER 7, 2024 MEETING, THE FEBRUARY 3, 2025 MEETING, AND THE MARCH 3, 2025 MEETING).

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### **Property History**

#### **Historical Information**

##### **2004 Chautauqua Historic District Nomination Survey Information:**

*733 South Chautauqua Avenue. Ca. 1950. Minimal Traditional. This noncontributing, one-story, brick single dwelling has an asphalt-covered, cross-gabled roof and a brick foundation. The windows are metal casement. The wood door is glazed paneled with a wood screen. The entry porch has a flat roof supported by wood supports. There is an integral, single car garage on the north side with a wood, glazed, paneled, overhead door. Decorative details include wood on the gable ends, minimal eave overhang and a picture window on the porch. The house is noncontributing due to insufficient age.*

#### **Sanborn Insurance Maps**

Since this property was constructed after 1944, it does not appear on the Sanborn Insurance maps.

#### **Previous Actions**

**October 7, 2024** – The Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) request for the following modifications: a) replacement of exterior siding, soffit, and trim; b) replacement of windows; c) painting of the exterior brick walls was postponed to allow the applicant time to obtain proposals and cost estimates for rectifying the modifications.

## Project Overview

Unaware that the property was listed in a Chautauqua Historic District, the property owners began renovations on the exterior of the house. The applicants replaced all the original windows with vinyl windows, replaced the existing wood siding and associated trim with Smart materials, and painted a primer coat on the exterior brick.

Staff visited the property in early August and issued a Stop Work Order for the property. The applicant was informed the modifications required review and approval by the Historic District Commission. At the October 7, 2024 Historic District Commission meeting the applicant submitted an *ex post facto* COA request to retain the modifications performed. During the meeting, the applicant/owner requested the installed modifications be kept, including the vinyl windows, the Smart siding, and the painted exterior. After discussion with the Commission, the applicant requested a postponement to allow time to gather proposals and price quotes to rectify the alterations installed. The applicant has obtained this information and has submitted it for the Commissioner's reference with this COA request. For this meeting, the applicant requests that the modifications be kept as installed.

## **REQUESTS**

### **a) Replacement of exterior siding, soffit, and trim**

#### ***Project Description***

The applicant replaced the existing wood siding, soffit, and trim with textured Smart material for easier house maintenance. The applicant proposes to keep the installed Smart siding and trim.

#### ***Reference - Historic District Ordinance***

**36-535.a.2.g:** *To safeguard the heritage of the City by preserving and regulating historic district structures in such a way that maintains or restores their historic integrity while allowing modern-day uses and conveniences for their residents.*

**36.535.c.3: Reviewing non-contributing structures.** *Non-contributing structures should be controlled only to the degree necessary to make them compatible with the general atmosphere of any district with regard to exterior alteration, additions, signs, site work, and related activities.*

#### **Reference - Preservation Guidelines**

##### ***Exterior Walls***

##### **3.2 Guidelines**

*A review by the Historic District Commission will use the following criteria for the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA):*

**.1 Preserve Original Walls.** *Retain and preserve exterior walls that contribute to the overall historic form and character of a building, including functional and decorative features and details.*

**.2 Retain Original Building Materials.** *Retain and preserve exterior wall materials that contribute to the overall historic character of a building.*

**.7 Substitute Materials.** Cement fiberboard (e.g., Hardiplank® siding) will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Exterior insulating and finish systems (EIFS) will not be considered for use in historic structures.

**Issues and Considerations:**

As indicated, this is an *ex post facto* review, and the Historic District Ordinance requires the Commission to review the alterations as if the work had not been installed.

The *Guidelines for Exterior Walls* require the retention of the original exterior materials that contribute to a structure's historic character. This house is designated as a non-contributing structure due to its insufficient age. The Historic District Ordinance states that alterations to non-contributing houses should only be controlled to the degree necessary to make them compatible with the district's general atmosphere.

The *Preservation Guidelines* allow alternative materials on a non-contributing structure on a case-by-case review.

In recent years, the Commission has approved cement fiberboard and wood composite siding as replacement materials for vinyl siding, asbestos shingles, and metal siding on non-contributing structures. Last year, the Commission reviewed and approved requests at 606 Miller Avenue and 1320 Oklahoma Avenue to replace existing cement shingles on a non-contributing structure with cement fiber lap siding. Those structures did not have wood siding underneath the synthetic siding layer. Additionally, last fall, the Commission approved the replacement of wood siding with cement fiberboard at 627 Chautauqua Avenue. A smooth finish was required in all cases of approved alternative materials.

In this case, the property owner did not realize the property was in a Historic District and installed Smart siding over the original wood on the house's exterior. Additionally, the applicant utilized textured siding instead of smooth-finished siding.

The Commission needs to determine if the request to replace the existing wood on the exterior of this non-contributing house with Smart material meets the *Preservation Guidelines* and whether the proposed work is compatible with the District.

**Commission Action:**

Consideration of approval, rejection, amendment, and/or postponement of Certificate of Appropriateness request for property located at 733 Chautauqua Ave for the following modifications: a) Replacement of exterior siding, soffit, and trim.

**b) Replacement of existing windows**

**Project Description:**

The applicant replaced the metal casement windows with vinyl windows, not realizing the work needed review and approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness before installation. The applicant is proposing to keep the installed vinyl windows.

### **Reference - Historic District Ordinance**

**36-535.a.2.g:** *To safeguard the heritage of the City by preserving and regulating historic district structures in such a way that maintains or restores their historic integrity while allowing modern-day uses and conveniences for their residents.*

**36.535.c.3:** *Reviewing non-contributing structures. Non-contributing structures should be controlled only to the degree necessary to make them compatible with the general atmosphere of any district with regard to exterior alteration, additions, signs, site work, and related activities.*

### **Reference - Preservation Guidelines**

#### **Windows**

#### **3.12 Guidelines for Windows**

**.1 Retain Original Windows.** *Retain and preserve original windows, including glass, frames, sash, muntins, sills, heads, moldings, surrounds, and hardware.*

**.7 Window Replacement.** *An original window that is deteriorated more than 50% and is not repairable may be replaced in-kind if it meets the following:*

- a. Shall have a wood exterior, unless replacing a metal casement window.*
- b. Light patterns same as the original.*
- c. Size and dimension the same as the original.*
- d. Double-pane simulated divided lights with wood muntins on the exterior and interior and a shadow bar between the panes may be allowed for windows on the side or rear that are not visible from the street.*

**.10 Materials.** *Wood is allowable for in-kind replacement of windows. Aluminum-clad and metal windows can be considered for the replacement of metal casement windows that are deteriorated on a case-by-case basis. Fiberglass and aluminum-clad windows can be considered on non-contributing resources and on rear elevations not visible from the front right-of-way. Vinyl-clad windows are prohibited for both contributing and non-contributing structures in the historic districts.*

#### **Issues and Considerations:**

As indicated, this is an *ex post facto* review, and the Historic District Ordinance requires the Commission to review the alterations as if the work had not been installed. As noted earlier, the applicant replaced the original casement windows with vinyl ones without realizing the property was in the Chautauqua Historic District.

The *Preservation Guidelines for Windows* prohibit the installation of vinyl windows. The Commission has never approved vinyl replacement windows in contributing or non-contributing structures.

The *Guidelines for Windows* encourage the preservation and retention of original windows. The *Guidelines* allow original windows to be replaced if the Commission determines the windows have deteriorated more than 50% and are not repairable. The *Guidelines* also allow aluminum-clad, metal, or fiberglass windows for non-contributing

structures on a case-by-case review. The Historic District Ordinance states that non-contributing structures are to be controlled only to the degree necessary to make them compatible with the District.

The Commission has reviewed four previous requests to replace casement windows on non-contributing structures.

The Commission reviewed a similar request at 415 S Lahoma Avenue in February 2015. In that case, the house was a non-contributing 1960s structure with six of the twelve windows missing. The Commission found the replacement windows had to be aluminum and have a similar window pane configuration to the original casement windows to be compatible with the District.

Another request to replace casement windows on a non-contributing structure at 713 Cruce Street was reviewed in August 2020. The applicants wished to replace all windows with metal windows to increase energy efficiency and improve the appearance. The Commission postponed the portion of the request for the front windows, finding that their replacement would significantly alter the structure's appearance. The remaining windows on the side and rear were approved for replacement aluminum windows with the same pane configuration found on the remainder of the house.

Finally, in July 2022, the Commission reviewed a 720 S Lahoma Avenue request to replace casement windows on a 1950s non-contributing structure. The Commission ultimately approved the request to allow repair of the existing window frames, hardware, glazing, and glass or replacement with new metal casement windows with the same profile and pane configuration as the existing windows.

In previous *ex post facto* COA requests for original wood window replacement cases, the Commission has consistently required re-installing wood windows with true-divided lites. In June 2023, the Commission reviewed an *ex post facto* window replacement request at 607-609 S Lahoma Avenue. In that case, the applicant replaced hail-damaged windows with vinyl windows without an approved COA. It was revealed at the Commission meeting the Real Estate Disclosure Form did not have the historic status for the property notated as required. The Commission ultimately approved the replacement of the vinyl replacement windows with wood windows over five years with a requirement that the windows on the front of the structure be replaced within the first year.

The Commission needs to determine whether the request to replace the original windows on this non-contributing structure with vinyl windows meets the Preservation Guidelines and whether such proposed work is compatible with the District.

***Commission Action:***

Consideration of approval, rejection, amendment, and/or postponement of Certificate of Appropriateness request for property located at 733 Chautauqua Ave for the following modifications: b) replacement of existing windows.

**c) Painting of the exterior brick walls.**

**Project Description:**

This is an *ex post facto* review. The Historic District Ordinance requires the Commission to review the case as if the work has not occurred. As noted earlier, the applicant painted the exterior brick with primer without realizing the property was located in the Chautauqua Historic District. The applicant proposes to finish painting the exterior brick with white paint.

**Reference - Historic District Ordinance**

**36-535.a.2.g:** *To safeguard the heritage of the City by preserving and regulating historic district structures in such a way that maintains or restores their historic integrity while allowing modern-day uses and conveniences for their residents.*

**36.535.c.3:** *Reviewing non-contributing structures. Non-contributing structures should be controlled only to the degree necessary to make them compatible with the general atmosphere of any district with regard to exterior alteration, additions, signs, site work, and related activities.*

**Reference - Preservation Guidelines**

**3.4 Guidelines for Masonry and Brick Features**

**.1 Preserve Original Features.** *Retain and preserve masonry features that contribute to the overall historic character of a building, including foundations, chimneys, cornices, steps, piers, columns, lintels, arches, and sills. Installing brick or blocks where these materials were not originally used is prohibited. Installing brick on the walls of a house that initially had wood siding is prohibited as it changes the character of the house and can destroy the wood beneath.*

**.2 Preserve Original Materials.** *Retain and preserve historic masonry materials, such as brick, terra-cotta, limestone, granite, stucco, slate, concrete, cement block, and clay tile, and their distinctive construction features.*

**.6 Preserve Unpainted Surfaces.** *It is not appropriate to paint unpainted masonry and brick surfaces that were not painted historically. Repaint previously painted masonry surfaces in colors appropriate to the historic building material, the building, and the district.*

**Issues and Considerations:**

The *Guidelines for Masonry and Brick Features* state unpainted brick surfaces must be preserved. As mentioned, the applicant painted the brick without realizing the property was in a Historic District. Staff issued a Stop Work Order while the painting was in progress. However, by that time, all four brick walls had been coated with primer paint.

Painted brick is not a typical exterior finish in the Chautauqua Historic District. The houses in the Chautauqua Historic District with painted brick were painted before the District's establishment in 1995.

The Commission has reviewed cases regarding painting masonry or brick surfaces. In November 2018, the Commission requested an applicant re-paint brick columns with faux

grout lines to reduce the effect of paint applied to brick columns on a historic contributing structure. In March 2019, the Commission denied a request to paint the brick on a landmark structure in the Southridge Addition.

In 2023, the Commission approved a proposed rear addition with brick walls that would be painted after installation. This allowed the exterior to match the existing painted brick walls on the main portion of the non-contributing structure. In August of this same year, the Commission found the proposal for painted brick would not meet the *Guidelines*. The applicant modified the request to a slurry application on the brick, and in September, the Commission approved this exterior finish.

The Commission must determine whether the request to paint this non-contributing structure meets the Preservation Guidelines and whether such proposed work is compatible with the District as a whole.

***Commission Action:***

Consideration of approval, rejection, amendment, and/or postponement of Certificate of Appropriateness request for property located at 733 Chautauqua Ave for the following modifications: c) painting of the exterior brick walls.