

**SALT LAKE CITY
HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION**

**REQUEST BY FRANK BERNARD TO CONSTRUCT A BASEMENT-LEVEL
ADDITION THAT WILL ACCOMMODATE A SINGLE CAR GARAGE AT 415-417
NO. CENTER STREET, IN THE CAPITOL HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT
CASE NO. 032-05 (TABLED FEBRUARY 1, 2006)
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 5, 2006**

OVERVIEW

This item was tabled from the February 1, 2006 Historic Landmark Commission meeting. The applicant, Frank Bernard is requesting approval to construct a basement-level addition to accommodate a single car garage at 417 No. Center Street. Planning Staff referred the application to the Commission because of the significance of the proposed changes to a contributing structure. The Historic Landmark Commission tabled the case pending Planning Staff research regarding similar existing construction in the district. Additionally, the Commission requested that an accurate representation be shown on all drawings including all dimensions and further detail relative to the railings in relation to the entrance which the applicant has submitted (Exhibit 6).

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BACKGROUND

For determinations regarding certificates of appropriateness for alterations of a contributing structure, the Historic Landmark Commission must consider the Zoning Ordinance criteria (Section 21A.34.020G) and the *Design Guidelines for Residential Historic Districts*. The staff report prepared for the February 1, 2006 meeting set forth findings of fact for each standard to serve as the basis for the Commission's decision (Exhibit 1). Planning Staff did not support the proposed addition based upon the following findings:

1. The proposed project fails to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment. Changing the grade adjacent to the building to allow development of a formerly below-grade area would drastically alter the historic relationship between the building and the site and diminish the historic integrity of the property and its context.
2. The proposed addition fails to retain and preserve character-defining features of the property including the primary façade and series of spaces between the street and the building. The overall impact of the proposed addition on the property and streetscape will be substantial given the proposed changes to the site, the size of the new opening, and visibility of the proposed improvements from the public way.

NEW RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS

DISCUSSION:

New Research - Development of the Integrated Garage

The evolution of the garage is addressed in *The Great American Garage* by J. Randall Cotton which appeared in *The Old-House Journal* in September of 1986 (Exhibit 5). As noted in the article, beginning in the 1920s, garages were less frequently placed at the back of a property. Garages became directly connected to houses once the combustibility fears of early automobiles subsided. As they were constructed next to the house, connections were made by covered walkways, pergolas and breezeways. Then, there was a trend toward the complete integration of the house and garage. Basement-level garages were built under the main living area which was made possible by a down-sloping driveway and semi-raised basements were sometimes converted to garages. The irregular rooflines and massing of Tudor Revival homes also made them appealing to integrate garages. It was not until the post Second World War II housing boom that this type of modern amenity was incorporated into new homes, such as the ranch type home, and the broad blank look of a garage door was openly visible to the street.

Analysis of Photo Survey

The applicant has provided a photo survey of properties that he considers important to the Commission's discussion (Exhibit 4). The following is an analysis of the examples of integrated house and garage construction that are similar in design to the proposed addition. Staff divided the buildings into two categories; those that are located on a primary elevation and those located on a secondary elevation. The table below summarizes pertinent information included in the Historic Site Survey forms for each property and attached to this staff report as Exhibit 3. Exhibit 3 also includes photographs submitted by the applicant, available tax photographs, appraisal records, a few photographs taken by Planning Staff and information relating to whether a garage was approved by the Historic Landmark Commission.

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Basement-level Garage on a Primary Elevation				
Address	Year Built	Site Form Evaluation	Date of Garage Improvements (Survey Photo)	Other Documentation
123 No. D St.	1907	Contributing with minor alterations	Prior to historic district designation	Does not appear in early tax photo Prior to 1952
514 North 200 West	1902	Contributing with minor alteration	No photo	Appears in tax photo Prior to 1936
104 No. F St.	1925	Contributing	Prior to historic district designation	Appears in tax photo Prior to 1936
277 No. B St.	1929	Contributing with minor alterations	Prior to district designation	May be original Prior to 1936
237 No. E St.	1937	Out-of-period	Prior to district designation	May be original Prior to 1939
233 No. E St.	1938	Out-of-period	Prior to district designation	May be original Prior to 1939

Basement-level Garage on a Secondary Elevation				
Address	Year Built	Site Form Evaluation	Date of Garage Improvements (Survey photo)	Other Documentation
467 N. Center St.	1884	Significant with minor alterations	<u>1990</u>	HLC approved
132-134 W 300 N	1889	Contributing with major alterations	No photo	Does not appear to be original
354 N. Main St.	1906	Contributing with minor alterations	No photo	Does not appear in tax photo Prior to 1957
515 N. Columbus St.	1930	Contributing with minor alterations	No photo	Does not appear original Prior to 1936
602 N. Center St.	1930	Contributing with minor alterations	No photo	May be original Prior to 1936
233 N. State St.	1931	Significant with minor alterations	No photo	May be original

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Excluding 467 N. Center Street, a review of Salt Lake City Building Permit records for these properties does not specifically identify garage improvements for any of the buildings listed above.

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Past Case Review

From 2000 to 2005, the Historic Landmark Commission has not reviewed any similar requests for a basement-level garage addition to the primary façade of a contributing structure. Under Case No. 887 considered on August 15, 1990 by the Historic Landmark Committee, the lower-level garage doors on the west and secondary elevation of the property located at 467 N. Center Street were approved by the Planning Commission. At that time, the Planning Commission ratified the actions of the Historic Landmark Committee. The applicant’s proposal included a remodel of the duplex, porch addition, carport and parking under the house. Although the garage doors are readily visible from the street, the property has double frontage and the doors are located to the rear of the building. It is also important to note that the Design Guidelines for Residential Historic Districts in the Salt Lake City, the standards by which the Commission evaluates the appropriateness of proposed changes, was not adopted by the City Council until 1999. These standards updated the City’s 1979 design guidelines addressing appropriate renovation solutions and new construction.

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FINDING:

The Planning Staff’s analysis regarding similar existing construction in the district has not uncovered additional information that warrants support of the request. The submittal by the applicant documents the trend to integrate the garage into the house. The analysis, however, fails to show where the Historic Landmark Commission has approved a similar addition on a contributing building in the past (basement-level garage on a primary façade). The proposed garage requires an extensive new opening on a significant façade that is inconsistent with Section 21A.34.020(G) of the Zoning Ordinance and the Design Guidelines. The overall impact of the proposed addition on the property and streetscape will be substantial given the proposed changes to the site, the size of the new opening, and visibility of the proposed improvements from the public way.

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Staff made the following summary findings:¶
<#>The proposed project fails to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment. Changing the grade adjacent to the building to allow development of a formerly below-grade area would drastically alter the historic relationship between the building and the site and diminish the historic integrity of the property and its context.¶
The proposed addition fails to retain and preserve character-defining features of the property including the primary façade and series of spaces between the street and the building. The overall impact of the proposed addition on the property and streetscape will be substantial given the proposed changes to the site, the size of the new opening, and visibility of the proposed improvements from the public way.¶

RECOMMENDATION

Based upon the comments, analysis and findings of fact presented in the February 1, 2006 Historic Landmark Commission staff report attached as Exhibit 1 and the analysis above, Planning Staff does not support the proposed design for a basement-level single-car garage at 417 No. Center Street. If the Commission decides to approve the request, reasonable justification and findings of fact for this case should be stated by the Commission. If the addition is approved, it should be case specific and should not set a precedent for future decisions.

Janice Lew
Planning Division
March 29, 2006

Attachments: Exhibit 1: February 1, 2006 Staff Report
Exhibit 2: February 1, 2006 Minutes
Exhibit 3: Site Information – Primary Elevation
Exhibit 4: Site Information – Secondary Elevation
Exhibit 5: Article: The Great American Garage
Exhibit 6: February 7, 2006 Submittal

Exhibit 1
February 1, 2006 Staff Report

Exhibit 2
February 1, 2006 Minutes

Exhibit 3
Site Information – Primary Elevation

Exhibit 4
Site Information – Secondary Elevation

Exhibit 5
Article: The Great American Garage

Exhibit 6
February 7, 2006 Submittal

