

**SALT LAKE CITY
HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION**

**REQUEST BY JOSEPH MARTY TO ALTER THE EXISTING BUILDING AND
REPLACE A MISSING PORCH ELEMENT AT APPROXIMATELY 211-215 WEST
500 NORTH STREET, IN THE CAPITOL HILL HISTORIC DISTRICT
CASE NO. 470-07-03
WEDNESDAY, MAY 2, 2007**

OVERVIEW

The applicant, Joseph Marty, is requesting approval to alter existing wall openings of the building located at 211-215 West 500 North Street and re-establish a porch element. The subject property is located in the Capitol Hill Historic District, in a SR-1A Special Development Pattern Residential District. The purpose of the SR-1A district is to “maintain the unique character of older predominantly low density neighborhoods that display a variety of yards, lot sizes and bulk characteristics. This request is before the Historic Landmark Commission because the proposed addition is highly visible from the street and the replacement feature is a new design.



BACKGROUND

The Commission first reviewed this case at the April 4, 2007 meeting. Discussion at the meeting centered on design elements for the front porch addition that would be more in keeping with the design elements of the property and consistent with the City’s standards.

The Commission referred the case to the Architectural Committee, with direction to specifically review the following items:

1. Recommended a flat roof verses a pitched roof design on the porch element.
2. Recommended that the design for the front porch be modified to eliminate the proposed trellis, gables and extended joists.

The proposal was then to return to the Commission for final approval.

The Architectural Committee met with the applicant on April 17, 2007. The Committee, including David Fitzsimmons, Warren Lloyd and Anne Oliver, discussed potential solutions to the issues identified above, and the applicant submitted revised plans in response to the Architectural Committee's comments.

REVISED PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to reduce the number of dwelling units from nine (9) to seven (7) and intends to convert the apartment complex to condominium ownership. The property is a corner lot located on the northeast corner of 500 North Street and Baltic Court. The applicant is proposing to construct a two-story porch on the front of the building. The proposed addition would have a flat roof capped by a cornice detail. The dominate features of these balconies are square wood posts and wood balustrades and unit dividing rails. The size and the shape of the window and door openings of the front elevation would be altered to accommodate the proposed addition and the following fenestration options were submitted:

	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3
Main Floor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains original door openings • French doors to replace two eastern window openings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains original door openings • French doors to replace two eastern window openings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains original door openings • Maintains original window openings
Second Floor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains existing smaller window openings • French doors to replace larger window openings (3) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains larger window openings • Smaller windows (3) returned to original door openings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintains larger window openings • Smaller windows (3) returned to original door openings

The applicant also proposes to replace all existing windows with vinyl windows.

ANALYSIS

REQUIREMENTS OF THE ZONING ORDINANCE

All proposed work must comply with height, yard and bulk requirements of the SR-1A zoning district.

SR-1A Zoning District

- **Maximum height of a flat roof building:** Sixteen feet (16'). The proposed addition measures approximately twenty-two feet (22') to the cornice when measured from the front elevation. The existing building measures approximately twenty-five feet (25') to the highest point of the cornice. The new construction is comparable in height to other buildings in the immediate area and neighborhood. A discussion regarding scale and form is included on page 4 of this staff report.
- **Maximum exterior wall height:** Sixteen feet (16') for exterior walls placed at the building setback established by the minimum required yard. The existing exterior wall height at the front of the building measures approximately twenty-five feet (25') from grade. The proposed two-story porch element would exceed the wall height limitation of the ordinance, but is less than the existing building height and consistent with other buildings of similar height in the immediate vicinity and historic district.
- **Front yard setback:** The minimum depth of the front yard for all principal buildings is equal to the average of the front yards of existing buildings within the block face. The 1911 Sanborn Map is evidence that a single-story porch element existed historically. *The applicant will need to seek a Routine and Uncontested special exception to rebuild an historic porch element in its original location which would be less consistent with the alignment of buildings on the block face as they exist today.*

FINDING: The proposed alterations exceed the underlying zoning regulations, as adopted by the Compatible Residential Infill Development Ordinance, relating to building and exterior wall height. The Commission can allow the increased height if it finds that the project meets the provisions of Chapter 21A.34.020, and the applicant is requesting these modifications by the Commission. The proposed plans do not meet the standards for front yard setbacks. Thus, the applicant will need to seek a special exception through the Routine and Uncontested Matter process to modify the setback requirement, if a replacement feature that enhances the appearance of the building and brings its design closer to the original form is approved.

ZONING ORDINANCE AND DESIGN GUIDELINES

21A.34.020 H Historic Preservation Overlay District:

G. Standards for Certificate of Appropriateness for Alteration of a Landmark Site or Contributing Structure. In considering an application for a certificate of appropriateness for alteration of a landmark site or contributing structure, the historic landmark commission, or the planning director, for administrative decisions, shall find that the project substantially complies with all of the following general standards that pertain to the application and that the decision is in the best interest of the city:

1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be used for a purpose that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment;

DISCUSSION: No changes are proposed in the use of the building for residential purposes. It should be noted that the subject property is currently recognized as a legal nonconforming nine (9) unit apartment complex.

FINDING: The proposed project is consistent with this standard.

2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided;

DISCUSSION: This horizontal apartment block of brick masonry construction is covered with a stucco finish, and was once highlighted by a decorative brick cornice. The two-story building contains separate entries for each half of the building. The historic character of this residential structure was compromised when the original porch was removed, the brick covered with a new material and the arrangement of historic windows altered. As a result of these changes, the building lost important stylistic elements as shown in the 1936 tax photograph that contributed to the historic significance of the building. However, these early alterations may themselves be of such an age and character to have achieved significance and thus merit preservation. Other significant elements that remain include the buildings overall massing, and its roof form.

It is possible to reverse some of these changes since documentation is available to provide a framework for the work. If it cannot be an exact reproduction of the original, the new windows should, at a minimum, maintain the existing window proportions. The Historic Landmark Commission has approved the use of vinyl replacement windows in cases where the windows are located on secondary and tertiary elevations and no decorative or architectural features are removed. The windows must also be the same size and configuration as the historic windows.

The design guidelines offer the following guidance on the preservation of character-defining elements.

Design Standards for Windows

3.3 Preserve the historic ratio of window openings to solid wall on a primary façade. Significantly increasing the amount of glass on a character-defining façade will negatively affect the integrity of the structure.

3.4 Preserve the size and proportion of a historic window opening. Reducing an original opening to accommodate a smaller window or increasing it to receive a large window are inappropriate measures.

3.5 Match a replacement window to the original in its design. If the original is double-hung, then the replacement window should also be double-hung, or at a minimum appear to be so. Match the replacement also in the number and position of glass panes. Matching the original design is particularly important on key character-defining facades.

3.6 Match the profile and its components, as closely as possible to that of the original window. A historic wood window has a complex profile-- within its casing, the sash steps back to the plane of the glazing (glass) in several increments. These increments, which individually only measure eighths or quarters of inches, are important details. They distinguish the actual window from the surrounding plane of the wall. The profiles of wood windows allow a double-hung window, for example, to bring a rich texture to the simplest structure. In general, it is best to replace wood windows with wood on contributing structures, especially on the primary façade. Non-wood material, such as vinyl or aluminum, will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis, and the following will be considered: will the original casing be preserved? Will the glazing be substantially diminished? What finish is proposed? Most importantly, what is the profile of the proposed replacement windows?

3.7 In a replacement window, use materials that appear similar to the original. Using the same material as the original is preferred, especially on key character-defining facades. However, a substitute material may be considered in secondary locations if the appearance of the window components will match those of the original in dimension, profile and finish.

FINDING: Changing the proportion of solid-to-void which is important in defining the overall historic character of a site and establishing a new fenestration pattern that does not convey the same visual appearance will result in additional alterations that

further diminish the historic integrity of the property and its context. If the original second story doors have been filled in, the proposed **Option 3** is generally the most consistent of the proposed options with this standard.

3. All sites, structures and objects shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create a false sense of history or architecture are not allowed;

DISCUSSION: Entrances and porches are quite often the focal point of historic buildings, particularly when they are located on primary elevations. Their functional and decorative elements are important in defining the overall historic character of a property. The front porch element on this building has experienced the typical alterations made to similar structures over time. Some have undergone minor repairs to assure their preservation. Other entrance and porch features have been altered to the degree that they have lost character-defining elements, been enclosed or totally removed like the historic porch associated with this site.

Although the historic character of the building was compromised when original materials of the porch were removed, a porch similar to the original could be reconstructed based on available historical and pictorial documentation. Another acceptable approach for a replacement feature is a new design this is compatible with the remaining character-defining features of the historic building. The design guidelines recommend the following with respect to the treatment of porches:

Design Standards for Additions

8.1 Design an addition to a historic structure such that it will not destroy or obscure historically important architectural features. For example, loss or alteration of architectural details, cornices and eavelines should be avoided.

Design Standards for Porches

5.3 If the porch replacement is necessary, reconstruct it to match the original in form and detail when feasible. Use materials similar to the original whenever feasible. On contributing buildings, where no evidence of the historic porch exists, a new porch may be considered that is similar in character to those found on comparable buildings. Speculative construction of a porch on a contributing building is discouraged. Avoid applying decorative elements that are not known to have been used on your house or others like it. While matching original materials is preferred, when detailed correctly and painted appropriately, fiberglass columns may be acceptable. The height of the railing and the spacing of balusters should appear similar to those used historically.

5.4 Do not permanently enclose a historic porch. Enclosing a porch with opaque materials that destroys the openness and transparency of the porch is not allowed.

FINDING: The proposed design of the new porch element is compatible with the remaining character-defining features of the historic building, and thus is consistent with this standard.

4. Alterations or additions that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved;

DISCUSSION: Based on building permit records, the existing concrete stoops do not appear to be of sufficient age or character to have acquired historic significance.

FINDING: The primary façade and character-defining elements of the historic building as seen from the street would not be negatively affected by the removal of the existing concrete stoops and constructing a compatible replacement feature. The double entry elements are not of an age to have achieved historic significance in their own right.

5. Distinctive features, finishes and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved;

DISCUSSION:

Where an important architectural feature has already been altered or is missing, its recovery is typically the preferred course of action. Thus, staff views the earlier design of the front porch a character-defining feature of this building, as shown in the tax photograph from 1936, and as such the new porch should be designed to be an accurate reproduction. However, an acceptable second option for a replacement feature is a new design that is compatible with the historic character of the building. The design of the addition has evolved based on the following comments received from the Architectural Committee:

- Increase the depth of the porch.
- Reduce the massing because the original had a lighter feeling.
- Replicate the original column spacing on the first floor.
- Reduce the number of columns on the second floor.
- Investigate historical basis of upper level window openings.

The design guidelines offer the following guidance for the treatment of architectural features.

Standards for Architectural Details

6.2 If replacement is necessary, design the new element using accurate information about original features. The design should be substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence. One of the best sources for historic photographs is Salt Lake County Records Management, which maintains early tax photographs for thousands of buildings. In historic districts, intact structures of similar age may offer clues about the appearance of specific architectural details or features.

6.3 Develop a new design for the replacement feature that is a simplified interpretation when the original element is missing and cannot be documented. The new element should relate to comparable features in general size, shape, scale and finish. Such a replacement should be identifiable as being new. Use materials similar to those that were used historically, if feasible.

FINDING: The proposed design for the replacement feature is generally compatible with the size, scale, material and style of the existing building itself.

6. Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced wherever feasible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, texture and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historic, physical or pictorial evidence rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other structures or objects;

DISCUSSION: No repair or replacement of deteriorated architectural features is proposed as part of this request. However, historic fabric of the primary elevation was removed during more recent work compromising the proportions and architectural integrity of the house. It would be possible to reconstruct the original front porch because documentation is available to provide a framework for the work.

FINDING: The repair or replacement of deteriorated architectural features is not an issue for the proposed project. Although the new elements do not match or resemble the original in form and detail, the replacement features will enhance the appearance of the building and bring its design closer to its original form.

7. Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible;

DISCUSSION: No chemical or physical treatments are proposed as part of this request.

FINDING: This standard is not an issue for the proposed project.

8. Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant cultural, historical, architectural or archaeological material, and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property, neighborhood or environment;

DISCUSSION: This guideline regarding contemporary designs for alterations has typically been applied to new work on non-character defining elevations. In this case, the construction of a new front porch element would allow the removal of features that detract from the historic character of the streetscape. The new porch would be consistent with porches of homes from the historic period, and would not remove historically significant features. The design guidelines offer the following guidance for the treatment of architectural features.

Design Standards for Architectural Details

6.2 If replacement is necessary, design the new element using accurate information about original features. The design should be substantiated by physical or pictorial evidence. One of the best sources for historic photographs is Salt Lake County Records Management, which maintains early tax photographs for thousands of buildings. In historic districts, intact structures of similar age may offer clues about the appearance of specific architectural details or features.

6.3 Develop a new design for the replacement feature that is a simplified interpretation when the original element is missing and cannot be documented. The new element should relate to comparable features in general size, shape, scale and finish. Such a replacement should be identifiable as being new. Use materials similar to those that were used historically, if feasible.

FINDING: The proposed alterations are compatible with the house in terms of massing, size, scale, architectural features and streetscape. The application is consistent with this standard.

9. Additions or alterations to structures and objects shall be done in such a manner that if such additions or alterations were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible in massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment;

DISCUSSION: Although unlikely, the proposed work would be reversible, and the building could be returned to its current appearance. The Commission may wish to consider to what extent the applicant should follow a path of historic accuracy. The

proposed design of the alterations is generally compatible in massing, scale and materials with the historic home. However, greater detail regarding finish materials is needed including decking, stairs and balcony ceilings.

FINDING: The proposed design of the alterations generally take steps recommended by the design guidelines to ensure that the essential form and integrity of the building as seen from the streetscape will not be adversely affected by the new construction. The proposed design of the alterations is compatible with the size, scale, massing and architectural details of the existing house. The application complies with this standard.

10. Certain building materials are prohibited including the following:

a. Vinyl or aluminum cladding when applied directly to an original or historic material, and

b. Any other imitation siding material designed to look like wood siding but fabricated from an imitation material or materials;

DISCUSSION: No prohibited building materials are proposed.

FINDING: The standard does not apply to this project.

11. Any new sign and any change in the appearance of any existing sign located on a landmark site or within the H historic preservation overlay district, which is visible from any public way or open space shall be consistent with the historic character of the landmark site or H historic preservation overlay district and shall comply with the standards outlined in Part IV, Chapter 21A.46, Signs;

DISCUSSION: Signage is not a component of this project.

FINDING: The standard does not apply to this project.

12. Additional design standards adopted by the historic landmark commission and city council.

DISCUSSION: The Historic Landmark Commission's Design Guidelines for Residential Historic Districts in Salt Lake City contains standards that apply to porches. Specific guidelines that are applicable in this case are noted in the discussion of each ordinance standard.

FINDING: The proposed project is generally in keeping with the design guidelines. The replacement features are new designs that are compatible with the character of the historic building and in scale with that seen historically. Although distinctive features that characterized the property will not be re-established, the replacement features will enhance the appearance of the building and bring its design closer to its original form.

RECOMMENDATION

Although the proposed project exceeds the underlying zoning regulations relating to height, the proposal fits within the context of the neighborhood. Based upon the comments, analysis and findings of fact noted above, Planning Staff recommends the Historic Landmark Commission approve **Option 3** of the request to alterations to the existing building and design of the replacement porch at 211-215 West 500 North Street, subject to the following conditions:

1. Approval of the final details of the design shall be delegated to the Planning Staff based upon direction given during the hearing from the Historic Landmark Commission.
2. The applicant shall provide any available documentation of the historical appearance of the primary façade fenestration pattern.
3. The project shall meet all other applicable City requirements, unless otherwise modified within the authority of the Historic Landmark Commission.
4. The Historic Landmark Commission allows a modification to the maximum building height standard not to exceed twenty-five feet (25') at the front of the building.
5. The Historic Landmark Commission allows a modification to the maximum exterior wall height standard not to exceed twenty-five feet (25').
6. Any new windows and doors on the primary façade shall use materials that appear similar to the original or to those historically used in the district.
7. That the Commission approves the use of vinyl windows that will match those historically used in the district in terms of dimension, profile and finish, as they are on secondary and tertiary elevations where the Commission has approved the use of substitute materials such as vinyl in the past.
8. The Historic Landmark Commission forwards a positive recommendation to the Zoning Administrator to approve a front porch replacement for the subject property through a Routing and Uncontested Matter process because it will bring the design of the building closer to its original form.

Janice Lew
Planning Division
April 25, 2007

Attachments: Exhibit 1: Site Plan and Elevation Drawings
Exhibit 2: Photographs
Exhibit 3: April 4, 2007 Minutes
Exhibit 4: Historical Documentation

Exhibit 1
Site Plan and Elevation Drawings

Exhibit 2 Photographs

Exhibit 3
April 4, 2007 Minutes

Exhibit 4
Historical Documentation