

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION STAFF REPORT



Planning Division
Department of Community and
Economic Development

318 6th Avenue
Avenues Historic District
Rear Dormer Window
PLNHLC2010-00118
May 19, 2010

Applicant: Ben Shaver, Owner

Staff: Carl Leith, 535-7758
Carl.Leith@sclgov.com

Tax ID: 09-31-405-003

Current Zone: SR-1A Special
Development Pattern Residential

Master Plan Designation:
Avenues Comm. Master Plan
Low Density 4-8 Units/Acre

Council District:
District 3 – Stan Penfold

**Greater Avenues
Neighborhood Community
Council Chair:** Jim Jenkin

Lot Size: 0.09 acres

Current Use:
Single Family Residence

Applicable Land Use

Regulations:

- Section 21A.34.020
- Section 21A.24.080
- Historic Design Guidelines

Notification:

- Notice mailed on 5/6/10
- Agenda posted on the
Planning Division and Utah
Public Meeting Notice
websites 5/6/10

Attachments:

- A. Application
- B. Photographs

Request

This is a request by Ben Shaver, owner, for retroactive approval for minor alterations to a single family residence located at 318 6th Avenue in the Avenues Historic District. The request is for an addition of a dormer window to the rear of the property. The property is located in the SR-1A (Special Development Pattern Residential) zoning district.

Staff Recommendation

Based on the analysis and findings of this staff report, it is the Planning Staff's opinion that, although the scale, form and design of this dormer window conflicts in part with the objectives of Standards 2, 8 and 9, and in part with the intent or objectives of design guidance relating to Roofs and Dormers, the adverse effects of this dormer addition from the public way will be minimized by its position, and that, if the Commission concurs with these Staff findings, this application be approved.

VICINITY MAP



Background

Project Description

The property is situated on the south side of 6th Avenue, in the center of the street block between C and D Streets.

The house is described in the surveys as a one story Victorian home, dating from 1890. It is identified as a contributing building in the Avenues Historic District. The building is constructed in brick and designed with a a hip and gable roof form, with one original gabled dormer windows to each side, and central arched window in the front facing gable. The principal roof profile appears to have been capped, creating a central flat roof area. The front façade of the house is arranged as a single story projecting bay, alongside a small corner porch. There is one truncated chimney stack on the east side of the house. The rear of the property has a small, more recent addition, of wooden construction which appears to be in relatively poor condition. The surveys include a short history of the ownership of the building.

The immediate setting includes a series of single story and one and a half story residential buildings, some of these, including the adjacent to the west, of duplex arrangement.

The application is for the addition of a new, central, dormer window at the rear of the house. This dormer has been substantially constructed, although not at this stage completed. It was constructed without prior approval, and is the subject of action under sections 21A.04.030 and 21A.34.020E for ordinance violation under these provisions. In discussions with the applicant and owner of the property, the dormer was constructed in part to remedy failing roof structure and leakage in this area, and in anticipation of the family's future plans for improvement of the attic space. Again from these discussions, the house was previously altered to provide duplex accommodation, adding to the task of converting this back to single family residential accommodation.

The dormer is constructed as a continuation of the flat roofed section of the house and is approximately 9 ft wide by 6 ft deep (not measured), with pronounced eaves to the front and both returns. Although placed at the rear of the property the dormer can be seen from the street on both sides, as well as neighboring properties.

Comments

Public Comment

No public comment regarding this application has been received.

Project Review

Options

The Historic Landmark Commission has the following options:

1. Approve the request as proposed. This option requires that the Commission make a finding that the proposed dormer addition is appropriate.
2. Approve the request with modifications in size, design, and/or materials. This option requires that the commission make a finding that the proposed dormer addition is appropriate.
3. Deny the request based on a finding that the dormer addition is not appropriate.

Avenues Master Plan

The central historic preservation goal in the Avenues Master Plan 1987 is to:

“Encourage preservation of historically and architecturally significant sites and the established character of the Avenues and South Temple Historic Districts.”

Zoning Considerations

The purpose of the SR-1A (Special Development Pattern Residential) zoning district is to maintain the unique character of older predominantly low density neighborhoods that display a variety of yards, lot sizes and bulk characteristics.

The proposed dormer does not conflict with the standards for this district.

Analysis and Findings

Standards of Review

21A.34.020 G Historic Preservation Overlay District: **Standards For Certificate Of Appropriateness Involving 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 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:

Standard 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;

Analysis and Finding: The use of the property will remain as single family residential. No change is proposed.

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;

Analysis: The addition of this dormer window affects the roof profile to the rear of the property. The roof profile can be identified as a feature that characterizes the property. No removal of historic materials or features is involved.

Finding: The addition of the dormer will have a visual impact upon the appearance and character of the building. Given its situation at the rear of the property, although seen in oblique views from the street, Staff concludes that this impact will not adversely affect the historic character of this property, and that this character will be largely retained and preserved. The alteration in this respect would comply with this standard.

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.

Analysis and Finding: This standard is not pertinent in this case.

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

Analysis and Finding: No previous alterations or additions are affected in this case.

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

Analysis and Finding: The proposed dormer does not impact any of these design criteria.

Standard 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.

Analysis and Finding: The proposed dormer does not impact any of these features.

Standard 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.

Analysis and Finding: No cleaning or treatment of existing materials is currently specified.

Standard 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.

Analysis: The property has an original dormer window on both the east and west facing roof slopes. These dormers are gabled, relatively narrow and vertical in proportion. They are in a relatively poor state of repair. The additional dormer to the rear has been constructed with a flat roof and eaves, is larger in dimension and scale, and more square to horizontal in proportion.

Finding: In design terms the additional dormer can not be confused as an original feature of the building. The design is not compatible with the size, scale and character of the property. It is however located on the rear south facing roof slope and visible only in oblique views from the street. As such its scale, form and proportions can not be readily appreciated from the public way. It is Staff's opinion that, although this new dormer conflicts with some of the objectives of this standard, the apparent visual impact is minimized by its position, if the standard, as it is applied, is primarily concerned with views from the public way, rather than the integrity of the character of the property.

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.

Analysis: The current dormer window is an addition to rear roof profile of the building. This part of the roof profile remains otherwise intact. The essential form and integrity of the structure would be unimpaired if this element were to be removed in the future. The form and construction of the dormer contrasts with existing design features and the character of the building. The new dormer is not compatible with the building in terms of massing, size, scale and architectural features, as discussed also above in relation to Standard 8.

Finding: This standard has three objectives. The first relates to reversibility, and in this respect the dormer window would not conflict with this objective. The second addresses differentiation of new from old, and in this respect the dormer window does not conflict with this objective. The third relates to compatibility and echoes one of the objectives of Standard 8. In various respects the form of this dormer does conflict with the defined objective of this standard, but this effect will be minimized in visual terms in views from the public way due to location.

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;

Analysis and Finding: No issues are raised in relation to this standard.

Standard 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 chapter 21A.46 of this title;

Analysis and Finding: This standard is not applicable in this case.

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

Analysis and Finding: The Historic Landmark Commission's *Design Guidelines for Residential Historic Districts in Salt Lake City* are applicable in this case, with pertinent design guidelines identified above.

Design Guidelines for Residential Historic Districts in Salt Lake City:

Design Goals for the Avenues Historic District

The design goal for the Avenues District is to preserve its historic scale and unique character, while accommodating compatible new construction. The distinctive design characteristics of individual building types and styles should be preserved here. New construction should be compatible with its historic context while also reflecting current design.

Chapter 7: Design Standards for Roofs - Policy: The character of a historical roof should be preserved, including its form and materials whenever feasible.

This includes the following character discussion on **Dormers**:

Historically a dormer was sometimes added to create more head room in attic spaces: it typically had a vertical emphasis and was usually placed as a single or in a pair on a roof. A dormer did not dominate a roof form, as it was subordinate in scale to the primary roof. Thus, a new dormer should always read as a subordinate element to the primary roof plane. A new dormer should never be so large that the original roof line is obscured. It should also be set back from the roof edge and located below the roof ridge in most cases. In addition, the style of the new dormer should be in keeping with the style of the house.

There are no specific design standards that address dormer windows.

Analysis: In relation to the Policy statement, the proposed dormer window is an addition to the roof profile of this building, but does not alter the roof profile of the building. In relation to the character discussion on Dormers, the original dormers on the building are vertical in emphasis and are gabled. The recently constructed dormer is square to horizontal in proportion and emphasis. The roof ridge, in this case a horizontal plane, is widened to form the roof of the recent dormer window. The style of the new dormer departs from the style of the house, and introduces a different design element to the building, its roofscape and roofline.

Findings: Staff concludes that the dormer would not conflict with the design policy statement. The design of this feature does not accord with the principles in two areas of the character discussion, although there are no design standards to accompany these 'intentions'. In the absence of specific standards or guidelines, and in the light of the location of this dormer window, Staff concludes that the adverse impact upon the character of the property would be minimal, as perceived from the public way, and that the proposed dormer could be regarded as acceptable in this case.

Chapter 8: Design Standards for Additions - Policy: If a new addition to a historic building is to be constructed, it should be designed such that the early character is maintained. Older additions that have taken on significance also should be considered for preservation.

8.13 The roof form and slope of the addition must be in character with the historic building.

If the roof of the historic building is symmetrically proportioned, the roof of the addition shall be similar. Eave lines on the addition shall be similar to those of the historic building or structure. Dormers shall be subordinate to the overall roof mass and shall be in scale with historic ones on similar historic structures.

Analysis: Although strictly speaking not defined as an “addition” to the building, this section of the Design Guidelines does address the issue of dormer windows and their role in the design of additions, and by reference to design principles, has a bearing on the issue. The recent dormer is an addition to the overall roof mass but, overall, can be defined as subordinate to it. It can not readily be identified as being in scale with the original dormers which characterize this building.

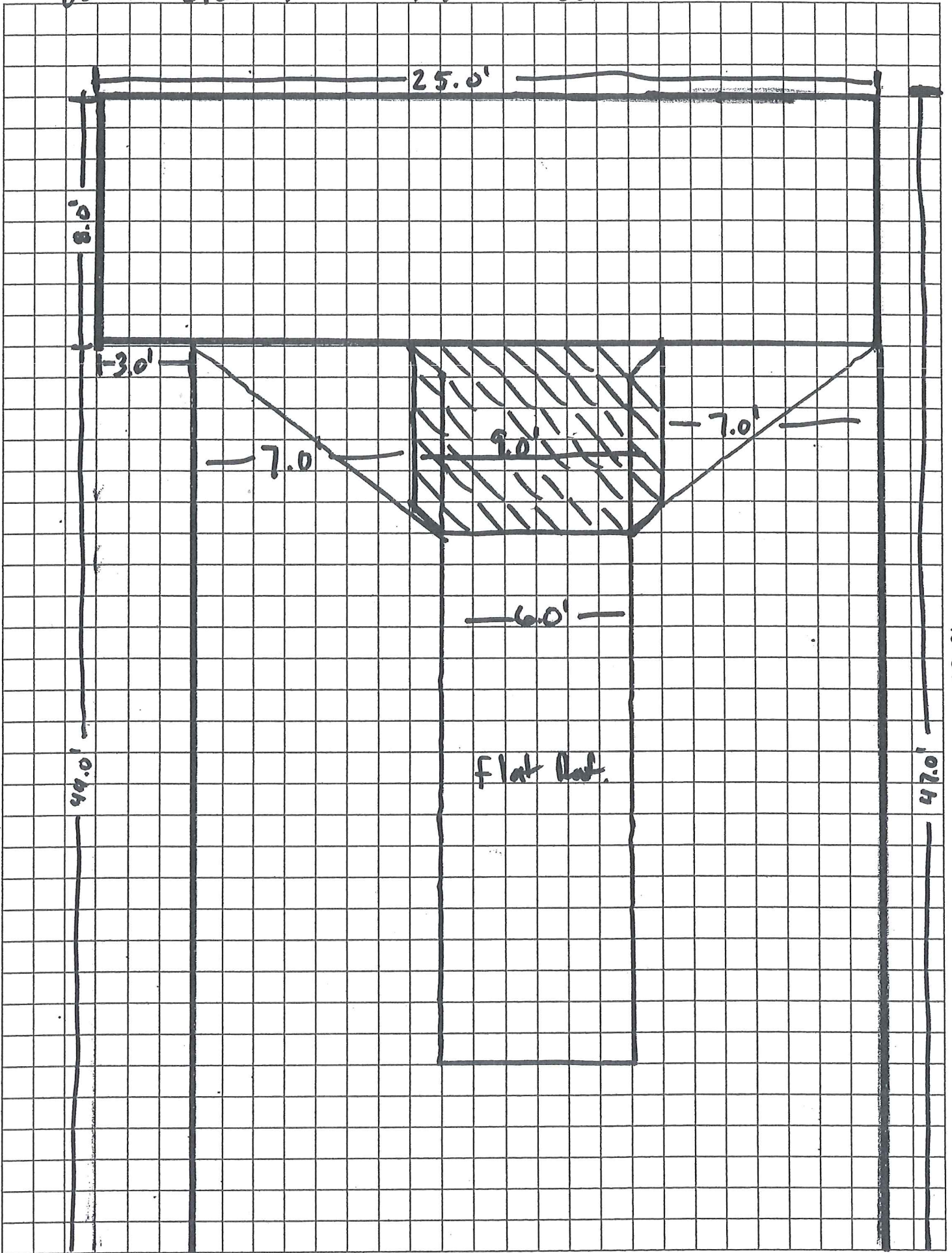
Finding: To the extent that this standard is pertinent in this case, Staff would conclude that the dormer does not conflict with the first principle, in that it would not dominate the overall roof mass. Staff would also conclude that the recent dormer does conflict with the second part of the standard, in that it is out of scale with the original dormers on the building, but that the positioning to the rear of the structure minimizes the effect of this discord.

Attachment A

Application

Dormer elevation - same.

South



east

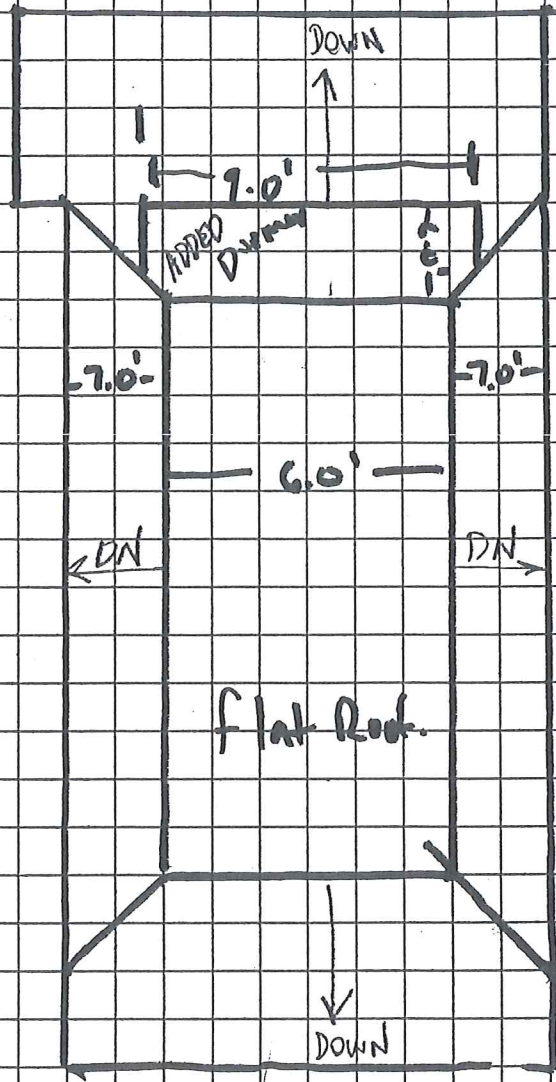
WEST

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Ben Shaver

318 6th Ave

NORTH



height - some clouds



Attachment B

Photographs



