

CITY OF SAN DIEGO HISTORICAL RESOURCES BOARD

DESIGN ASSISTANCE SUBCOMMITTEE

Wednesday, December 1, 2010, at 4:00 PM

12th Floor Conference Room 12B

City Administration Building

202 C Street, San Diego, CA

MEETING NOTES

1. ATTENDANCE

Subcommittee Members	Alex Bethke (Chair); Maria Curry; Ann Jarmusch
Recusals	None
City Staff	
HRB	Kelley Stanco; Jodie Brown; Jeff Oakley; Terra King, Jennifer Feeley
CCDC	Lucy Contreras
City Attorney	Nina Fain
Guests	
Item 3A	Sandy Shapery; Sasha Varone, Architect;
Item 3B	Scott Moomjian, Attorney; Jack Robson, Cornerstone Communities; Dan Starck, Starch Architecture & Planning
Item 3C	Henry Anderson
Other	Bruce Coons, SOHO

2. Public Comment (on matters not on the agenda) None

3. Project Reviews

▪ **ITEM 3A:**

Listings: HRB Site #945

Address: 360 15th Street

Historic Name: Isaac Lyon Rental House

Significance: Special Element of Development; Architecture

Mills Act Status: No Contract, Redevelopment Area

PTS #: 211646

Project Contact: Sasha Varone, architect; Sandy Shapery, owner

Treatment: Rehabilitation

Project Scope: This rehabilitation project proposes raising the building up 2 feet, 4 inches in order to get an 8-foot minimum ceiling height for the first floor units. The existing

siding, windows, and doors will be repaired and/or replaced with historic replicas, as required. A new historic replica wood shingle roof will be installed. New landscape and hardscape will be provided on and off site. The interior will be designed to provide two rental units on each floor (4 total). Staff and the applicant are seeking input from the Subcommittee on the issue of raising the house.

Existing Square Feet: 1,380

Additional Square Feet: 17

Total Proposed Square Feet: 1,397

Prior DAS Review: N/A

Staff Presentation: The project involves a Folk Victorian commercial building and residence built c.1883. The buildings were designated under HRB Criteria A and C. Plans have been submitted that propose raising the house 2'4" to provide additional units in the basement. Staff's position is that this modification would significantly alter the character of the house and is not consistent with the Standards. The applicant asserts that the project was approved with the designation; however, staff has confirmed that consistent with Board procedure and practice, raising the house was not discussed or approved at the designation hearing. The issue today is whether raising the building is consistent with the Standards.

Applicant Presentation: An extensive package had been submitted to the Board at the time of designation stressing the need to raise the building to make the project work. If they had known that the building could not be raised, they would not have pursued designation because it doesn't make economic sense. Right now the basement space has 6' ceiling heights, which doesn't meet current code. The proposal will raise the building 2'4" to provide the required ceiling height. The area below the bay had one window historically which will be reconstructed and two additional windows will be added. The street is higher now than it was in the 1880s. Based on this higher grade, the proposal will result in a house-to-grade relationship not too different from how the house appeared historically. One parking space will be added at the front of the house near the commercial building. The applicant is looking for Subcommittee input on raising the building and adding the parking space. The building is falling apart and needs to be rehabbed. It doesn't work economically to have only two units.

Public Comment:

Name	Comments
Coons	SOHO is in support of raising the building. The street was originally two feet lower than it is today. Raising the building will improve the historic relationship to the street, but will alter the historic relationship to the adjacent commercial building. The foundation is deteriorated beyond repair and needs to be replaced anyway. One thing that concerns him is that the porch is not shown on the plans, and it should be. The porch is original and has the original gingerbread detailing.

Q&A:

Subcommittee-member Issue or Question	Applicant's Response
Does the property have a Mills Act?	No.
It appears that it is being raised more than 2'4".	Applicant provided a section to show that the house has under-floor area exposed historically.
Have they considered excavating instead?	They have. The issue is that 15 th Street was raised at some point and the street is right at door level. This will create significant drainage issues because there are no storm drains east of 13 th Street.
Are the windows required for egress, or is that a design choice?	Just a design choice.

Subcommittee Discussion and Comment:

Subcommittee-member	Comments
Jarmusch	The design on the new basement area is not compatible with the original design and the character of the house is diminished by the new element, unfortunately. Wishes there was another option. Horizontal band is inconsistent.
Curry	Understands the situation of the house, and the project needs to be economically feasible. The project looks acceptable. The proposed façade below the bay looks like a continuation of the original and needs more differentiation to distinguish the original façade from the new element below. (The applicant is willing to introduce landscaping and shrubbery to conceal and provide privacy for tenants.) Believes project complies with Standards 9 and 10.
Bethke	Agrees with Ann. The house in the rendering looks odd and too elongated. Perhaps the windows don't help. Agrees that it's an adverse effect. Thinks that the home should be de-listed if the project moves forward.

Staff Comment:

Staff Member	Comments
Stanco	Given that some of the elevations and renderings do not accurately show the existing porch, and given that some Subcommittee members have indicated that a redesign could improve the project's consistency with the Standards, staff would recommend that the applicant work with staff on design issues and return to the subcommittee with improved elevations and renderings.

Recommended Modifications: Subcommittee member Curry feels that the project is consistent with the Standards as designed. Subcommittee member Jarmusch and Chair Bethke would consider a redesigned project; however Chair Bethke stated that the new construction must be differentiated and the vertical emphasis must be reduced. Staff will work with applicant on revisions and rendering corrections and will return to the subcommittee.

Consensus:

- Consistent with the Standards
- Consistent with the Standards if modified as noted
- Inconsistent with the Standards and needs revision and additional review
- Inconsistent with the Standards but is the best feasible alternative
- Inconsistent with the Standards

▪ **ITEM 3B:**

Listings: HRB Site #292

Address: 230 West Cedar Street

Historic Name: Frank L. Rawson Residence

Significance: Architecture; Worker Housing

Mills Act Status: No Contract, Redevelopment Area

PTS #: N/A

Project Contact: Jack Robson, Cornerstone Communities; Dan Starck, Starck Architecture and Planning; Scott Moomjian, Attorney

Treatment: Rehabilitation

Project Scope: This rehabilitation project involves the relocation and rehabilitation of the Frank L. Rawson Residence and the construction of new condominium units. The project site currently consists of 3 lots, which will be consolidated into 2 lots. The Rawson Residence is proposed to be moved approximately 75 feet from its current location from the center of the block to the corner of Front and Cedar Streets and renovated as retail on the ground floor with two levels of office space above. The condominiums will be on a separate lot from the Rawson Residence. Staff and the applicant are seeking input from the Subcommittee on the relocation and rehabilitation of the Rawson Residence.

Existing Square Feet: 2,356

Additional Square Feet: 1,338

Total Proposed Square Feet: 3,694

Prior DAS Review: N/A

Staff Presentation: This rehabilitation project involves the relocation and rehabilitation of the Frank L. Rawson Residence and the construction of new condominium units. The Rawson Residence is proposed to be moved approximately 75 feet from its current location from the center of the block to the corner of Front and Cedar Streets and renovated as retail on the ground floor with two levels of office space above. The condominiums will be on a separate, adjacent lot. Staff has reviewed the proposal and has found that the relocation site is appropriate and that the relocation could be supported

through a Site Development Permit process. The current front porch is not original, but is the only documented entry porch. Therefore, staff has directed the applicant to reconstruct the porch and provide a staircase parallel to the entry, as it currently exists. The applicant is proposing to increase the depth of the porch to provide more useable space, which staff is willing to support given that the current porch is not original. However, substantial alteration to the porch configuration, or conjecture as to what type of porch may have been there originally, is not supported by staff. Finally, the applicant is proposing to add new fenestration to the Cedar and Front Street elevations at the ground floor. Staff is supportive of adding new fenestration along the Front Street elevation at the side of the building in order to encourage retail that can activate the streefront. However, staff is not supportive of adding new fenestration along the main, Cedar Street elevation, as it will detract from the primary façade. Because the project will require a Site Development Permit for relocation that will be reviewed by the full Board, staff is seeking DAS input on the relocation proposal. In addition, the applicant is seeking input from DAS on the issue of adding fenestration along the main Cedar Street elevation.

Applicant Presentation: The project will relocate the designated building from the center of the block to the corner of Front and Cedar Streets. The grade falls down from the current site to the new site, exposing more of the west, side elevation. On the front elevation under the porch, the applicant is looking to shift the existing access door and add three windows. Two doors and three pairs of windows will be added to the Cedar Street elevation.

Public Comment:

Name	Comments
Coons	A prior project proposed to move the building to the other corner so that it would be closer to other Victorian buildings. That project was approved. The building's original vertical siding was beaded redwood tongue and groove.

Q&A:

Subcommittee-member Issue or Question	Applicant's Response
Why not move the building to the other corner closer to the other Victorian buildings?	Want to move the building downhill to pick up retail space in the under-floor area.
Are the windows at the Front Street elevation existing, original openings?	No, that portion of the elevation is currently below grade. The new siding will be vertical tongue and groove and the windows will be wood.

Subcommittee Discussion and Comment:

Subcommittee-member	Comments
Jarmusch	The relocation and rehabilitation is reasonable.

Subcommittee-member	Comments
Curry	Could support moving it to the corner. Keeping it in the same location doesn't make much difference.
Bethke	Relocation is reasonable. Moving the door and adding the windows at the ground floor on the Cedar Street elevation is consistent with the Standards.

Staff Comment: None

Recommended Modifications: While relocation is not consistent with the Standards, it is the best alternative for this project. Other rehabilitation aspects of this project, including the new windows on the Front Street elevation and the new windows and relocated door on the Cedar Street elevation, are consistent with the Standards as proposed by the applicant.

Consensus:

- Consistent with the Standards
- Consistent with the Standards if modified as noted
- Inconsistent with the Standards and needs revision and additional review
- Inconsistent with the Standards but is the best feasible alternative
- Inconsistent with the Standards

▪ **ITEM 3C:**

Listings: HRB Site #208 (Non-Contributing)

Address: 2648 K Street

Historic Name: Sherman Heights District Non-Contributor

Significance: Non-Contributing Element

Mills Act Status: No Contract, Not Eligible

PTS #: 216906

Project Contact: Henry Anderson

Treatment: Modification to Non-Contributing Resource

Project Scope: This project involves modifications to a non-contributing resource in the Sherman Heights Historic District. The Sherman Heights and Grant Hill Park Historic District Design Criteria and Guidelines require the use of wood frame and sash windows in all buildings, including non-contributing ones. The applicant has installed vinyl windows. The Subcommittee considered the use of non-wood windows in Sherman Heights in July 2006 and stated that non-wood windows could be considered on a case-by-case basis. The applicant and staff are seeking input from the DAS on appropriate resolution for this issue.

Existing Square Feet: N/A

Additional Square Feet: N/A

Total Proposed Square Feet: N/A

Prior DAS Review: N/A

Staff Presentation: This project involves modifications to a non-contributing resource located at 2648 in the Grant Hill Park Historic District. The house is a modified craftsman built between 1906 and 1921. The Sherman Heights and Grant Hill Park Historic District Design Criteria and Guidelines require the use of wood frame and sash windows in all buildings, including non-contributing ones. The applicant has installed vinyl windows which were approved by Development Services without review and approval by our staff. Because the permit did not receive the required approvals and was not finalized, it is not a valid permit and the applicant is required to obtain required permits. Because the District Guidelines are specific regarding the use of wood windows, our staff enforces that requirement consistently.

In the past, applicants and staff have asked the DAS to consider the use of non-wood windows on non-contributing properties in Sherman Heights and Grant Hill, most recently in July 2006. In that instance, the owner of a non-contributing property had installed aluminum windows with a wood veneer. DAS determined that although what applicant had done was unfortunate, it should be allowed to remain. The reasoning was that replacement of the existing windows with wood frame windows would not change the status of the structure from non-contributing to contributing, and therefore there was no gain. Further, requiring replacement of the windows would be an unfair hardship to the owner. The DAS directed that non-wood windows on non-contributing properties should be considered on a case-by-case basis. If new wood windows would result in a change from non-contributing to a contributing structure, then wood windows should be required, otherwise, substitute materials could be considered.

For the subject property, the applicant and staff are seeking input from the DAS on appropriate resolution for this issue. From a staff perspective, this could include replacement of all the windows with wood windows (which is cost prohibitive for the owner); replacement of just the front window with a wood window and maintenance of the remaining vinyl windows as they are or with a wood veneer; or maintenance of all vinyl windows as they are or with a wood veneer. The applicant is here to provide you with additional information.

Applicant Presentation: The owner is not a contractor; he was just trying to fix up his mother's house. It started with termite damage that had exceeded his expectations. The walls, windows, flooring and attic had all been infested and damaged. He is inexperienced with City processing and requirements but is learning. Replacement of all of the vinyl windows will be cost prohibitive.

Public Comment:

Name	Comments
Coons	Glad these decisions are made on a case-by-case basis. Vinyl is probably o.k. in this instance.

Q&A: None

Subcommittee Discussion and Comment:

Subcommittee-member	Comments
Jarmusch	Unfortunate that the City issued the permit. Agrees that he shouldn't be asked to change the windows, but if he ever wins the lottery, it would be great to replace that front window.
Curry	It's a non-contributing property and the investment was made for safety and quality of life. Should ensure compliance going forward, but not with modifications that have happened. It would be a significant cost that is not fair to impose.
Bethke	Inclined to let it go, does not think it is a detriment to the district.

Staff Comment: None

Recommended Modifications: none

Consensus:

- Consistent with the Standards
- Consistent with the Standards if modified as noted
- Inconsistent with the Standards and needs revision and additional review
- Inconsistent with the Standards but is the best feasible alternative
- Inconsistent with the Standards

4. Adjourned at 5:36 PM

The next regularly-scheduled Subcommittee Meeting will be on January 12, 2011 at 4:00 PM.

For more information, please contact Kelley Stanco at KStanco@sandiego.gov or 619.236.6545