

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**

**Application Date:** November 5, 2014

**Applicant:** Aaron Forslund, Southern Green Builders, for Clayton Watson, owner

**Property:** Lot 6, Block 289, Houston Heights Subdivision, City of Houston, Harris County, Texas. The site includes a 1,370 square foot contributing residence situated on a 6,600 square foot (50 x 132) interior lot.

**Significance:** Contributing Bungalow style residence, constructed circa 1920, located in the Houston Heights Historic District South. The owner was granted a Certificate of Appropriateness in December 2013 to construct a two-story rear addition, which is currently under construction.

**Proposal:** Alteration – Addition – *Revision* The applicant was granted a COA on December 12, 2013 to construct a two-story addition.

During preliminary staff consultation meetings, the owner and applicant had expressed an interest in replacing their historic wood windows as part of their proposed alteration. After being informed they would need to provide evidence that the windows were damaged beyond repair, they changed their proposal and agreed to retain the existing historic windows.

On November 3, 2014, the City’s Structural Inspector found that the historic windows had been replaced with new wood 1 over 1 sash pack windows. In addition, staff performed a site visit and found the builder also deviated from the approved scope of work entirely removing a 16’ long portion of the original north side wall and by revising the proposed roofline over an existing south-facing bump out. The applicant is now applying for a COA for the following revisions to their approved scope of work:

- Replace 15 historic 1-over-1 wood windows with new 1-over-1 wood sash pack windows. These were installed within the existing historic window frames.
- Replace a 16’ long section of the exterior wall and siding on the north elevation of the historic structure with new wall material and new wood siding.
- Omit the proposed hipped roof over an 8’ deep existing south facing bump out. The bump out will now be covered by the same roof structure over the remainder of the existing historic home.

See enclosed application materials and detailed project description on p. 6-15 for further details.

**Public Comment:** Staff has received one public comment in opposition to approving the COA. Please see attachment A.

**Civic Association:** No comment received.

**Recommendation:** Denial – Does not satisfy criteria 1, 4, 5, 8, and 9. Staff also recommends that the HAHC direct the Planning Department to issue citations for exceeding their approved scope of work without a Certificate of Appropriateness.

**HAHC Action:** -

## APPROVAL CRITERIA

## ALTERATIONS, REHABILITATIONS, RESTORATIONS AND ADDITIONS

Sec. 33-241(a): HAHC shall issue a certificate of appropriateness for the alteration, rehabilitation, restoration or addition of an exterior feature of (i) any landmark or protected landmark, (ii) any building, structure or object that is contributing to an historic district, or (iii) any building, structure or object that is part of an archaeological site, upon finding that the application satisfies the following criteria, as applicable:

S D NA

S - satisfies D - does not satisfy NA - not applicable

- (1) The proposed activity must retain and preserve the historical character of the property;  
*Historic wood sash windows are a character defining feature of this property and other historic properties within Houston Heights Historic District South. Replacing these historic windows with new windows represents a failure to preserve the historic character of the property.*
- (2) The proposed activity must contribute to the continued availability of the property for a contemporary use;
- (3) The proposed activity must recognize the building, structure, object or site as a product of its own time and avoid alterations that seek to create an earlier or later appearance;
- (4) The proposed activity must preserve the distinguishing qualities or character of the building, structure, object or site and its environment;  
*Wood sash windows are a distinguishing quality of this property and other turn of the century bungalows within Houston Heights Historic District South. Replacing all of them represents a failure to preserve this structure's distinguishing qualities.*
- (5) The proposed activity must maintain or replicate distinctive stylistic exterior features or examples of skilled craftsmanship that characterize the building, structure, object or site;  
*Wood sash windows are a product of skilled craftsmanship that characterizes this structure and the other Contributing Structures within Houston Heights Historic District South. Replacing all of them represents a failure to maintain examples of skilled craftsmanship.*
- (6) New materials to be used for any exterior feature excluding what is visible from public alleys must be visually compatible with, but not necessarily the same as, the materials being replaced in form, design, texture, dimension and scale;
- (7) The proposed replacement of missing exterior features, if any, should be based on an accurate duplication of features, substantiated by available historical, physical or pictorial evidence, where that evidence is available, rather than on conjectural designs or the availability of different architectural elements from other structures;
- (8) Proposed additions or alterations must be done in a manner that, if removed in the future, would leave unimpaired the essential form and integrity of the building, structure, object or site;  
*Replacing a section of the historic exterior wall impairs the essential form and integrity of the property.*
- (9) The proposed design for any exterior alterations or addition must not destroy significant historical, architectural or cultural material and must be compatible with the size, scale, material and character of the property and the area in which it is located;  
*The removal of a section of historic wall material and all of the historic windows is an act of destruction of a significant amount of the structure's historic and architectural material. Destroying this historic fabric diminishes the historic character of this property and that of the Historic District. Staff has no reason to believe the historic windows were in poor*

*condition as the applicant agreed to retain these windows after we requested specific information on their condition.*

- (10) The setback of any proposed construction or alteration must be compatible with existing setbacks along the blockface and facing blockface(s);
- (11) The proposed activity will comply with any applicable deed restrictions.

**Staff finds that the application would likely meet all applicable criteria if they replaced their new windows for historic salvaged wood sashes.**

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**PROJECT TIMELINE**

**October 28, 2013** – The property owner and Creole Design (the previous applicant) met with staff to discuss a proposed two story addition and replacement of all of the existing historic windows. Staff advised the owner and applicant that the windows are part of their house's historic fabric and to consider restoring them. The applicant stated that he knew a contractor who could evaluate the condition of the windows. The applicant later submitted drawings that stated "*Existing to Remain*" notes for each window, except the north facing kitchen window, which was approved to be replaced with a revised window opening.

**November 7, 2013** – Application is considered by the HAHC. While the owner addressed the Commission, she stated that after meeting with staff, they had "made concessions some concessions in terms of the windows," in order to maintain the addition in the back," alluding to their decision to retain their historic windows. The item was deferred by the HAHC in order to allow the applicant time to submit a 3 D rendering of their addition.

**December 16, 2013** – Certificate of Appropriateness granted to construct the addition. COA stipulated that the existing windows would remain.

**June 17, 2014** – Permit plans were submitted to and were stamped by Historic Preservation Office staff. Both the elevation and plan drawings state "Existing to Remain" at each historic window except for the one at the north facing kitchen, which was approved to be relocated.

**November 3, 2014** – City Structural Inspector notes that all of the historic windows were replaced with new sash pack windows. The Inspector directs the builder to apply for a COA for the exceeded scope of work at the next HAHC meeting in December. The builder applies for a COA for new windows on November 5, 2014.

**December 5, 2014** - Historic Preservation Office performs a site visit and notes the following additional changes:

- Proposed hipped roof above the existing structure's south facing bump out was not built as proposed. Instead, the applicant incorporated the bump out within the existing roof structure.
- A 16' deep section of exterior wall material and cladding were removed and replaced with new matching material.

Staff brought these additional changes to the attention of the applicant and requested that they submit a revised demolition plan. The applicant asserts that removing the wall was necessitated by the need to add additional support for the revised window location of a north facing kitchen and the placement of second story living space on top of the historic wall and framing.



### PROPERTY LOCATION

## HOUSTON HEIGHTS HISTORIC DISTRICT SOUTH



INVENTORY PHOTO



CURRENT PHOTO



**EAST ELEVATION – FRONT FACING CORTLANDT STREET**  
**DECEMBER 2013**



CURRENT PHOTO



**SOUTH SIDE ELEVATION**

DECEMBER 2013



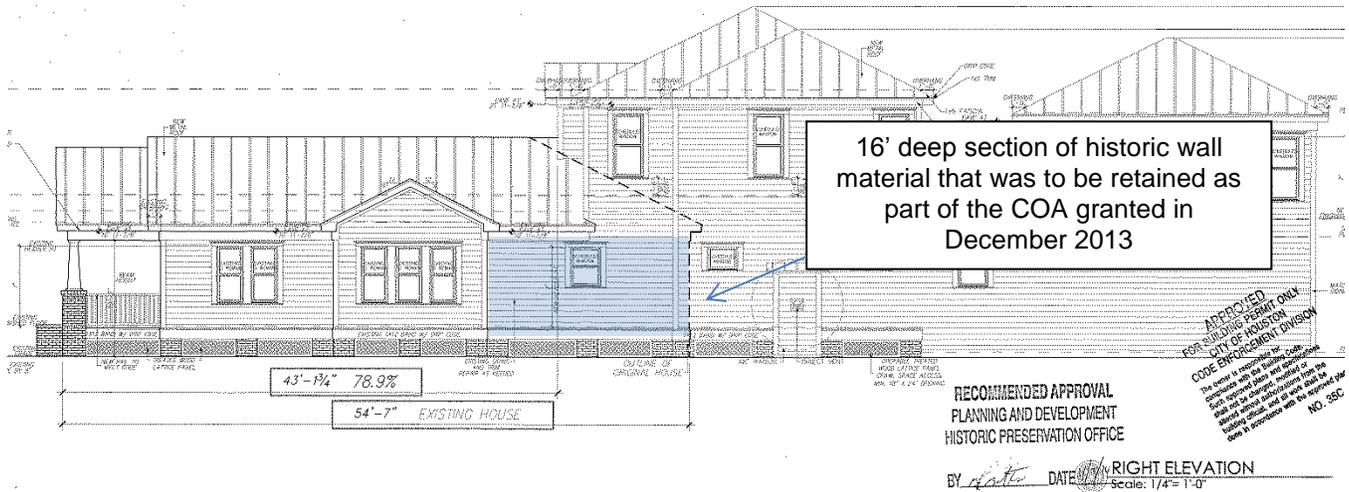
CURRENT PHOTO



New windows

**NORTH SIDE ELEVATION**

DECEMBER 2013



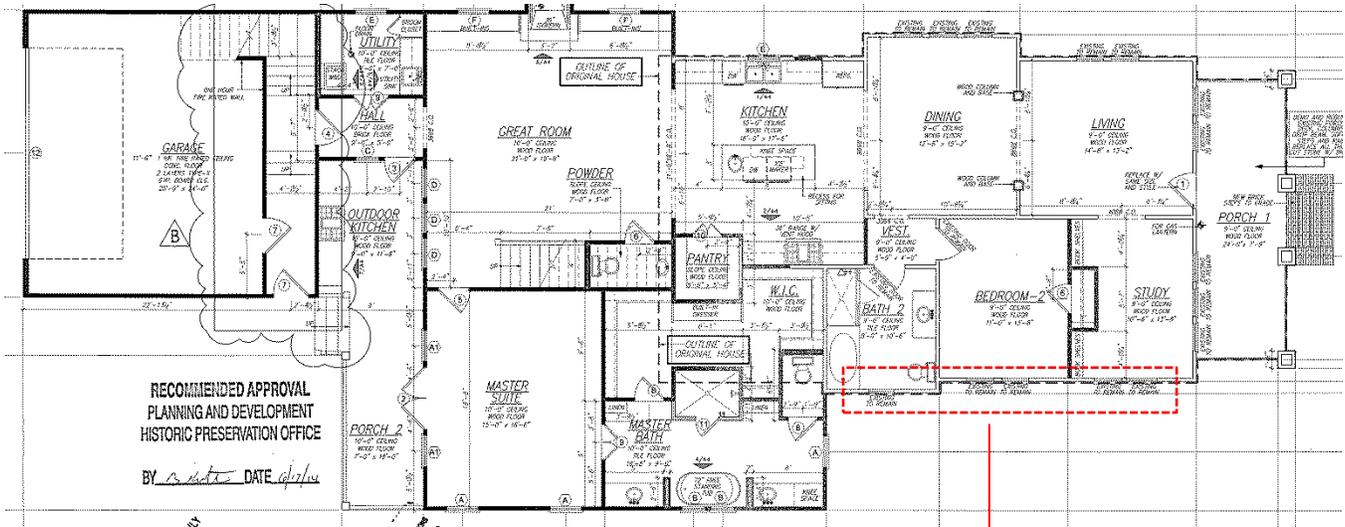
**CURRENT PHOTO**





### FIRST FLOOR PLAN

APPROVED 12/12/13 AND STAMPED 6/17/14

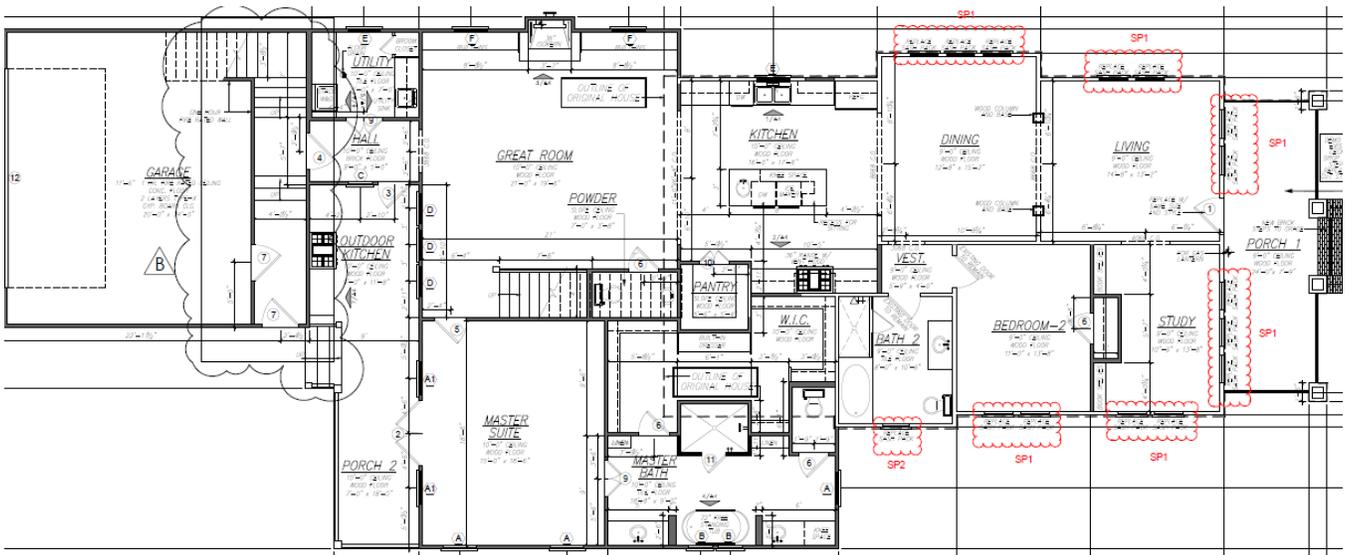


RECOMMENDED APPROVAL  
 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT  
 HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE  
 BY *[Signature]* DATE *[Date]*

Existing to Remain notes by each  
 window



### PROPOSED



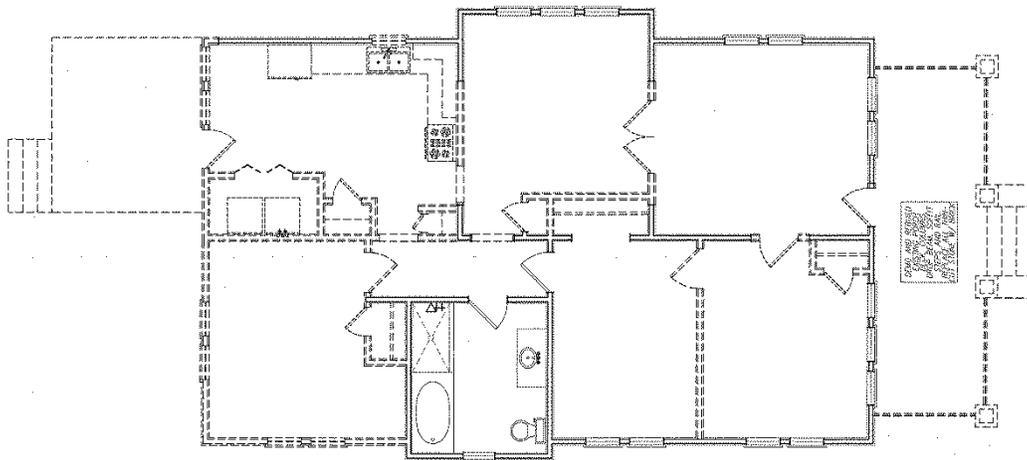
**WINDOW SCHEDULE**

<b>Sash Pack Replacement Schedule</b>					
<b>Tag</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Qty</b>	<b>Width</b>	<b>Height</b>	<b>Description</b>
SP1	Dining Room	3	2'-4"	5'-2"	Double Hung
SP1	Living Room	4	2'-4"	5'-2"	Double Hung
SP1	Study	5	2'-4"	5'-2"	Double Hung
SP1	Bedroom2	2	2'-4"	5'-2"	Double Hung
SP2	Bath 2	1	2'-4"	3'-2"	Double Hung Tempered

*WINDOW SCHEDULE*

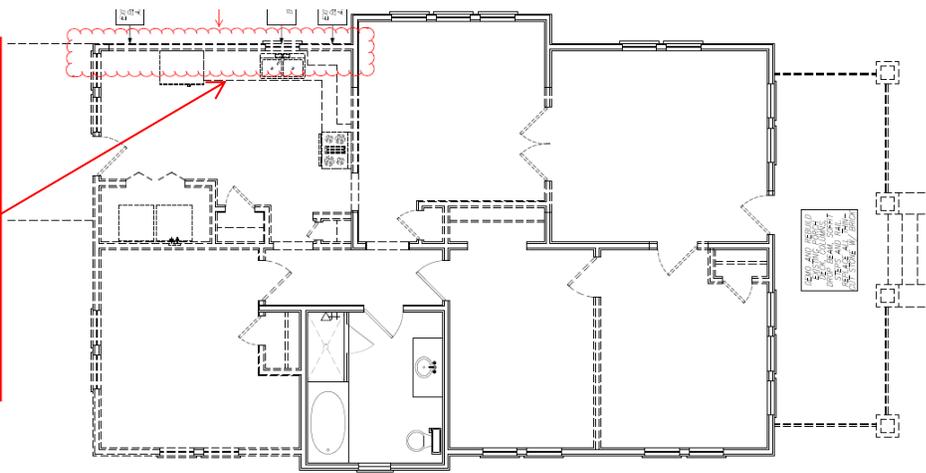
**DEMOLITION PLAN**

APPROVED 12/12/13 AND STAMPED 4/3/14



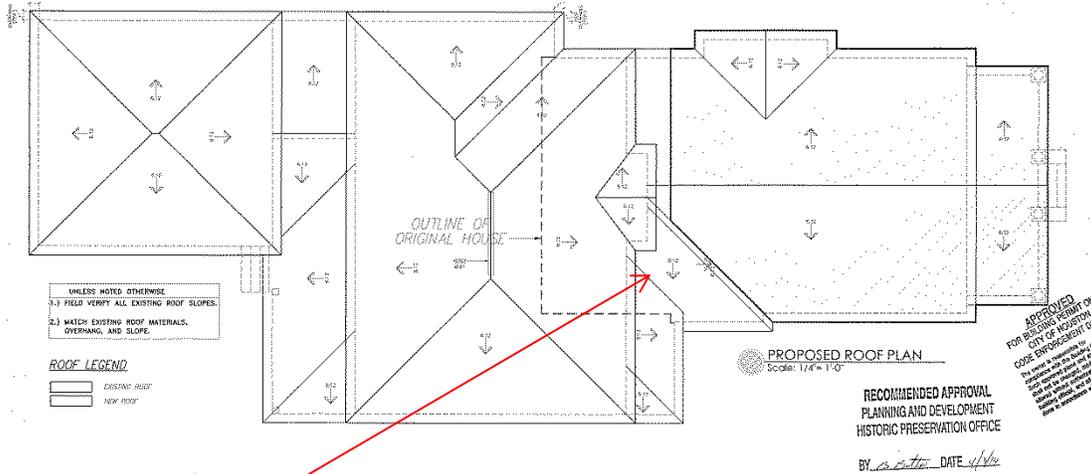
**PROPOSED**

Existing wall at kitchen had to be re-framed due to the kitchen window being relocated 2' towards the back of the home. Additional support for window and second floor framing were needed for structural integrity.



**ROOF PLAN**

APPROVED 12/12/13 AND STAMPED 4/3/14



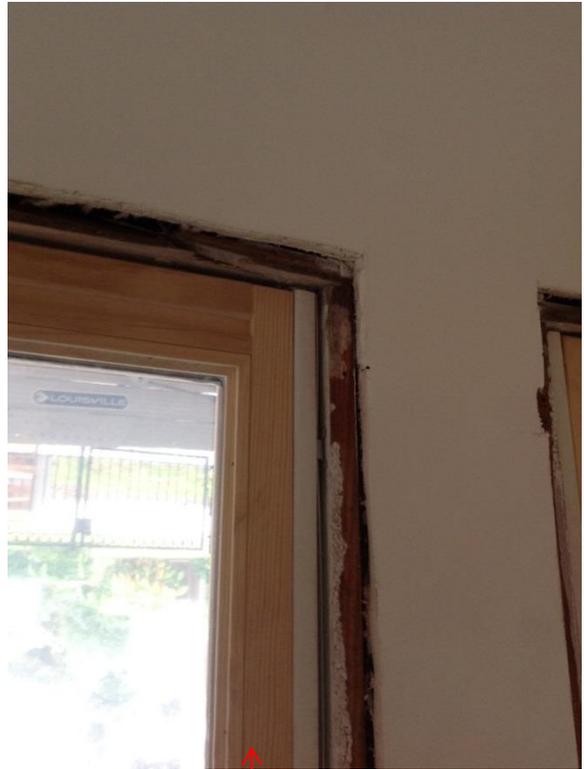
Approved hipped roof over south facing bump out

CURRENTLY EXISTING



**PHOTOS OF WINDOW FRAMES**

SUB-HEADING



New window sashes installed  
within the existing window  
frames

### PROJECT DETAILS

**Shape/Mass:** Remove the rear 16' of the original house's north side exterior wall. The new wall features new wood siding at a 4" profile matching the existing original siding.

**Windows/Doors:** Remove 15 original windows and replace with matching wood 1 over 1 interior mounted sash pack windows. These window sashes retain the existing window frames.

**Roof:** The existing south facing bump out originally featured a side facing gable. The applicant was approved to remove this gable and replace it with a hipped roof. The applicant now proposes to eliminate the hipped roof over the bump out and instead extend the existing roof structure to the rear to cover the bump out.

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**PUBLIC COMMENT**

J. Kent Marsh, AICP CUD  
1538 Arlington St., Houston Heights East Historic District

AGENDA ITEM #14 – 525 Cortlandt – Alteration Addition Revised – **OBJECT**

Removal of existing wood windows in the existing contributing structure is not necessary. Replacement of portions of siding on the existing contributing structure is not necessary. Both items reduce the historical material and historical context of the existing structure.