

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Application Date: January 7, 2015

Applicant: Nick Eronko, Bungalow Revival, for Heather Andrews, owner

Property: 540 Columbia Street, Lot 22, Block 286, Houston Heights Subdivision. The property includes a historic 1,840 square foot, one-story wood frame single-family residence and a detached garage situated on a 6,600 square foot (50' x 132') interior lot.

Significance: Contributing bungalow residence, constructed circa 1920, located in the Houston Heights Historic District South.

Proposal: Alteration/Relocation – Resubmittal: At the November HAHC meeting, the applicant was denied an application to move the house 8' closer to the north property line, from current 10'-9" setback to 3'. Construct a 1,553 square foot addition and attached garage behind and on top of the rear 27.5% of the 1,840 square foot residence. The project also included the following alterations:

- Removal of two original wood windows on the north side
- Removal of one original window on the south side
- Installation of two wood windows in new openings on the south side
- Replacement of non-original aluminum windows with wood windows
- Replacement of vinyl, cementitious, wood and asbestos siding with wood 117
- Removal of a non-original front stoop and exposure of a previously enclosed inset front porch

The resubmittal includes the following changes:

- The second floor is inset 1' on both (north and south) sides.
- The square footage of the addition has been reduced to 1,512 sf.

See enclosed application materials and detailed project description on p. 8-25 for further details.

Public Comment: One opposed. See Attachment A.

Civic Association: No comment received.

Recommendation: Denial - does not satisfy criteria

HAHC Action: Approved

All materials in exterior walls, including windows, siding, framing lumber, and interior shiplap must be retained except where removal or replacement has been explicitly approved by HAHC. Shiplap is an integral structural component of the exterior wall assembly in balloon framed structures and its removal can cause torqueing, twisting and collapse of exterior walls. Shiplap may be carefully shored and removed in small portions to insulate, run wire or plumbing, and should be replaced when the work is complete. Maintenance and minor in-kind repairs of exterior materials may be undertaken without HAHC approval, but if extensive damage of any exterior wall element is encountered during construction, contact staff before removing or replacing the materials. A revised COA may be required.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Basis for Issuance: HAHC Approval
Effective: January 29, 2015



PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

COA valid for one year from effective date. COA is in addition to any other permits or approvals required by municipal, state and federal law. Permit plans must be stamped by Planning & Development Department for COA compliance prior to submitting for building or sign permits. Any revisions to the approved project scope may require a new COA.

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;
Although the project involves many positive alterations to return the house to a more appropriate historic character, beginning the second floor of the addition on top of the residence, 14'-7" forward of the original rear wall, and extending both side walls back on the first floor with no delineation between the original house and the addition on the north wall muddles the original form of the residence and damages its historic character. In addition, moving the house from 10'-9" to 3' of the north property line eliminates the historic context of the residence, which is currently centered on the lot. The current lot configuration is typical for the Heights and should be preserved.
- (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;
By beginning the second floor of the addition on top of the residence, 14'-7" forward of the original rear wall this proposal overwhelms the historic residence. In addition, moving the house from 10'-9" to 3' of the north property line eliminates the historic context of the residence which is currently centered on the lot.
- (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;
- (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;
The proposed addition would be built on the rear 27.5% of the original house, which will impact a significant amount of the original structure and is essentially irreversible.
- (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;
Constructing the addition on top of the rear 27.5% of the original house overwhelms it. The removal of three original wood windows (out of eight remaining) and re-arrangement of window openings permanently removes significant historic material.

- (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.

**RELOCATION OF A LANDMARK, PROTECTED LANDMARK
OR CONTRIBUTING STRUCTURE**

Sec. 33-243(a): HAHC shall issue a certificate of appropriateness for the relocation of any landmark, protected landmark, contributing structure upon finding that the application satisfies **one or more** the following criteria:

S D NA

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

- (1) The landmark, contributing structure or potentially contributing structure:

- (a) Has architectural or historical value independent of its physical location that will not be diminished with relocation;
This contributing structure is one piece of a larger whole that makes up the Houston Heights Historic District South. The current, original site placement of the house is typical for historic homes in Houston Heights and is part of this house's original historic character, which will be diminished by moving the house to an atypical and non-historic setback.
- (b) Can be moved without significant damage to its physical integrity;
Nothing has been provided by the applicant to address this criterion or demonstrate whether moving the house will or will not damage the physical integrity of the house.
- (c) Will be relocated to an area that is compatible with the historical and architectural character of the landmark, contributing structure or potentially contributing structure; and
This contributing structure is one piece of a larger whole that makes up the Houston Heights Historic District South. The house's current original site placement is part of its original historic character. The house features original side setbacks of 10'-9" and 10'-2", which is typical of contributing structures in the historic district; a 3' side setback is atypical. Moving the house on site to an atypical side setback will compromise the historic character of this house, the lot on which it sits, and the blockface overall.
- (d) If located in an historic district, can be relocated without significantly diminishing the integrity of the historic district in which it is located.
Altering the historic site placement pattern of contributing structures diminishes the historic character and integrity of the overall historic district. Although moving only one contributing house might not 'significantly' diminish the integrity of the district, allowing contributing structures to be moved on site without good cause will significantly compromise the historic integrity and value of the district as more applicants request relocation of contributing structures on site in order to accommodate oversized additions.
- (2) The relocation is necessary to protect the landmark, contributing structure or potentially contributing structure from demolition resulting from a public improvement project;
- (3) The applicant has established an unreasonable economic hardship pursuant to the criteria of section 33-247(c):
- (4) The applicant has established unusual or compelling circumstances pursuant to the criteria of section 33-247(d):



PROPERTY LOCATION
HOUSTON HEIGHTS HISTORIC DISTRICT SOUTH

- Building Classification**
- Contributing
 - Non-Contributing
 - Park



540 Columbia

INVENTORY PHOTO



NEIGHBORING PROPERTIES



542 Columbia Street – Contributing – 1920 (neighbor)



536 Columbia Street – Contributing – 1920 (neighbor)



541 Columbia Street – Contributing – 1920 (across street)



537 Columbia Street – Contributing – 1920 (across street)



535 Columbia Street – Contributing – 1920 (across street)



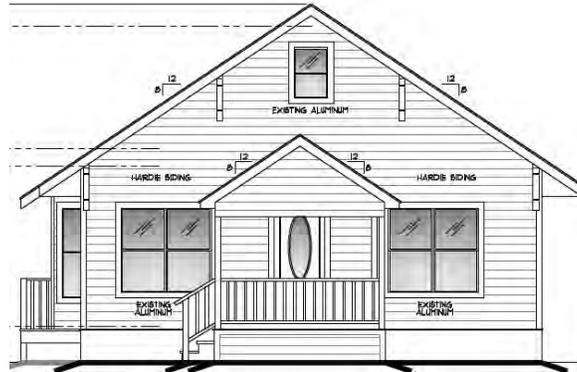
531 Columbia Street – Contributing – 1920 (across street)

542 COLUMBIA
CONTRIBUTING NEIGHBOR IMMEDIATELY NORTH

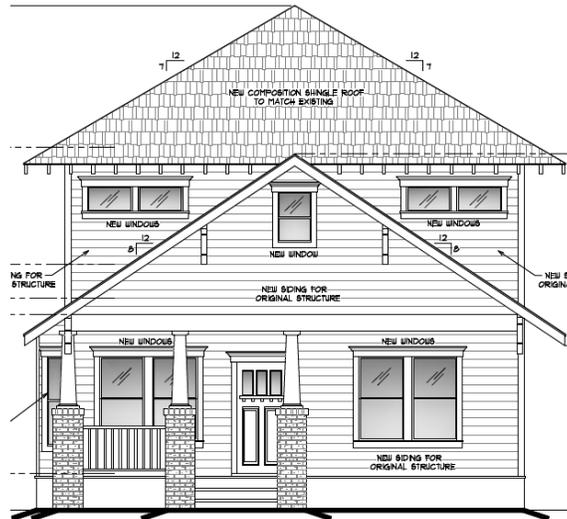


WEST ELEVATION – FRONT FACING COLUMBIA STREET

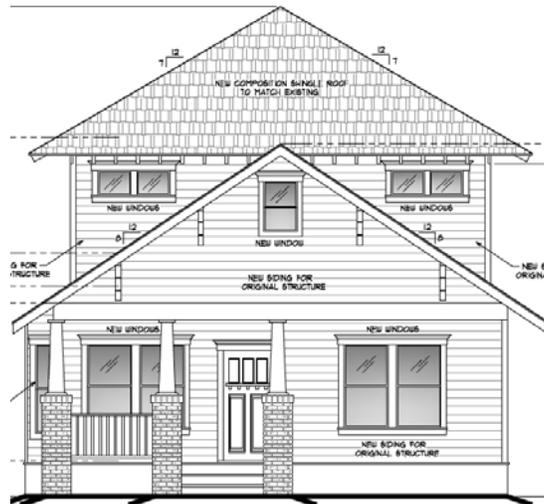
EXISTING



DENIED – 11/20/14

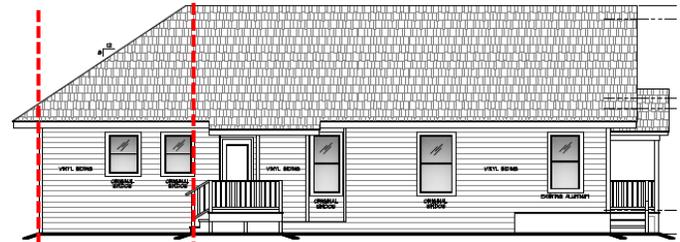


PROPOSED

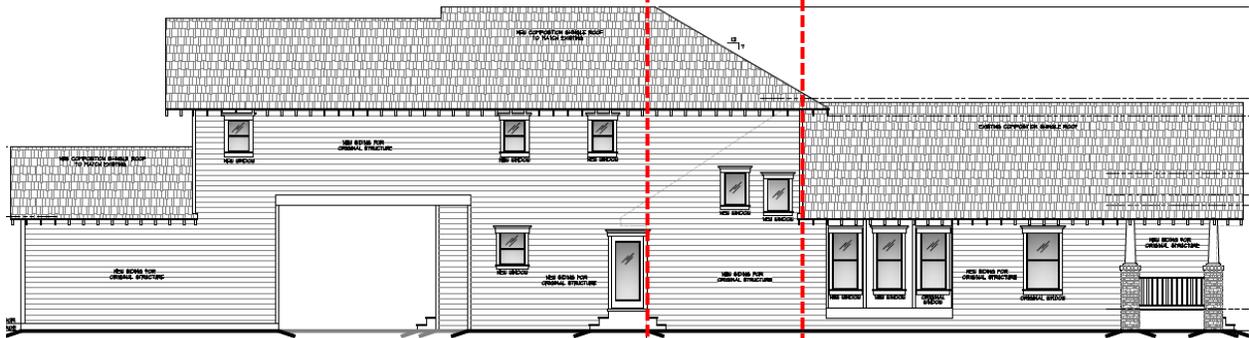


NORTH SIDE ELEVATION

EXISTING



DENIED – 11/20/14



PROPOSED



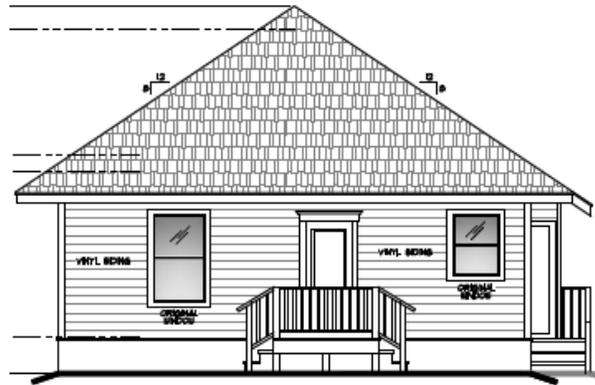
ORIGINAL WINDOWS TO BE REMOVED

START OF ADDITION

ORIGINAL REAR WALL

EAST (REAR) ELEVATION

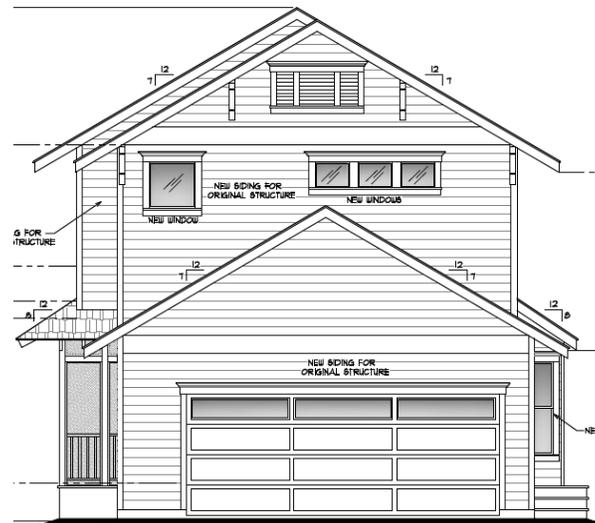
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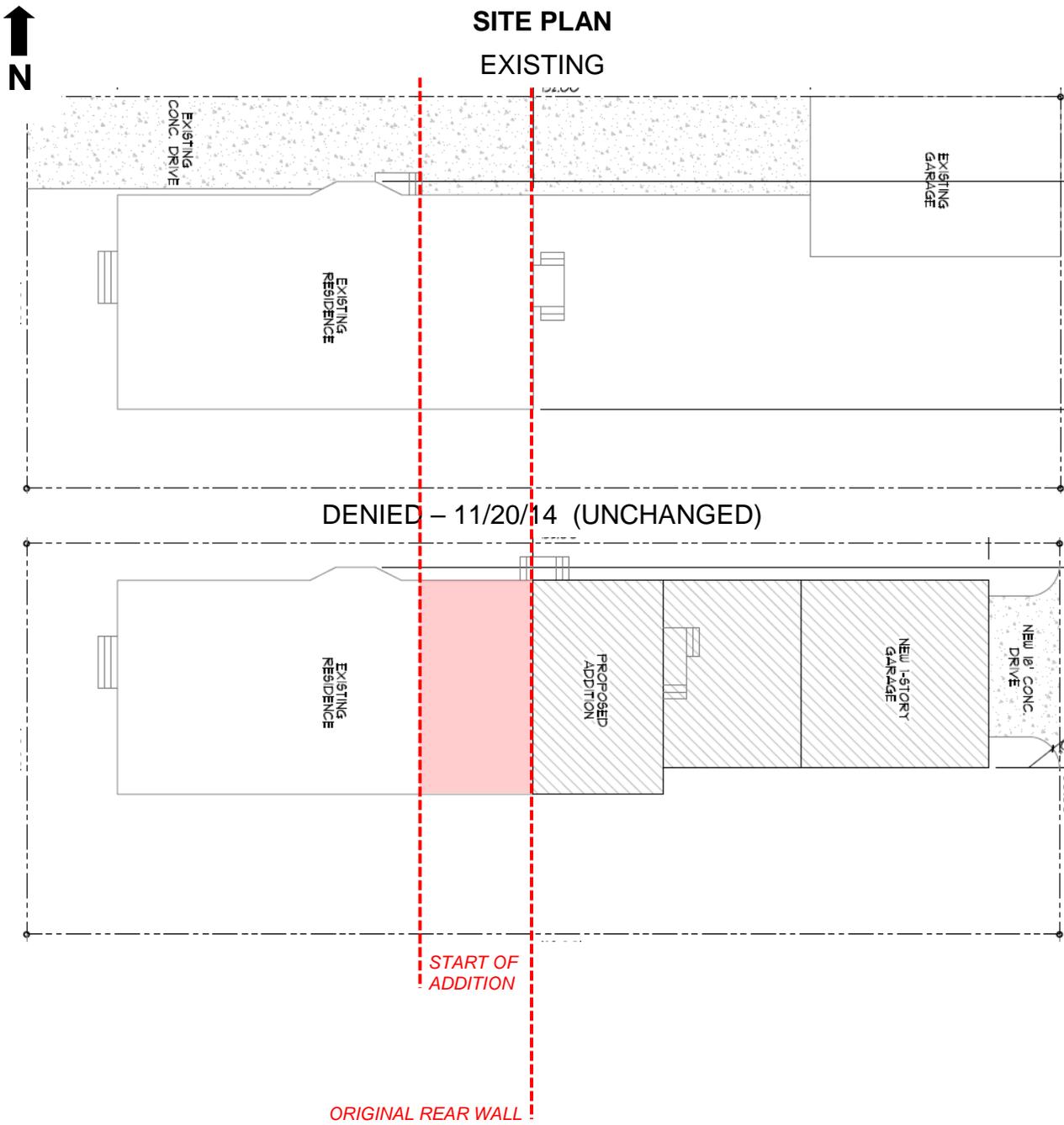


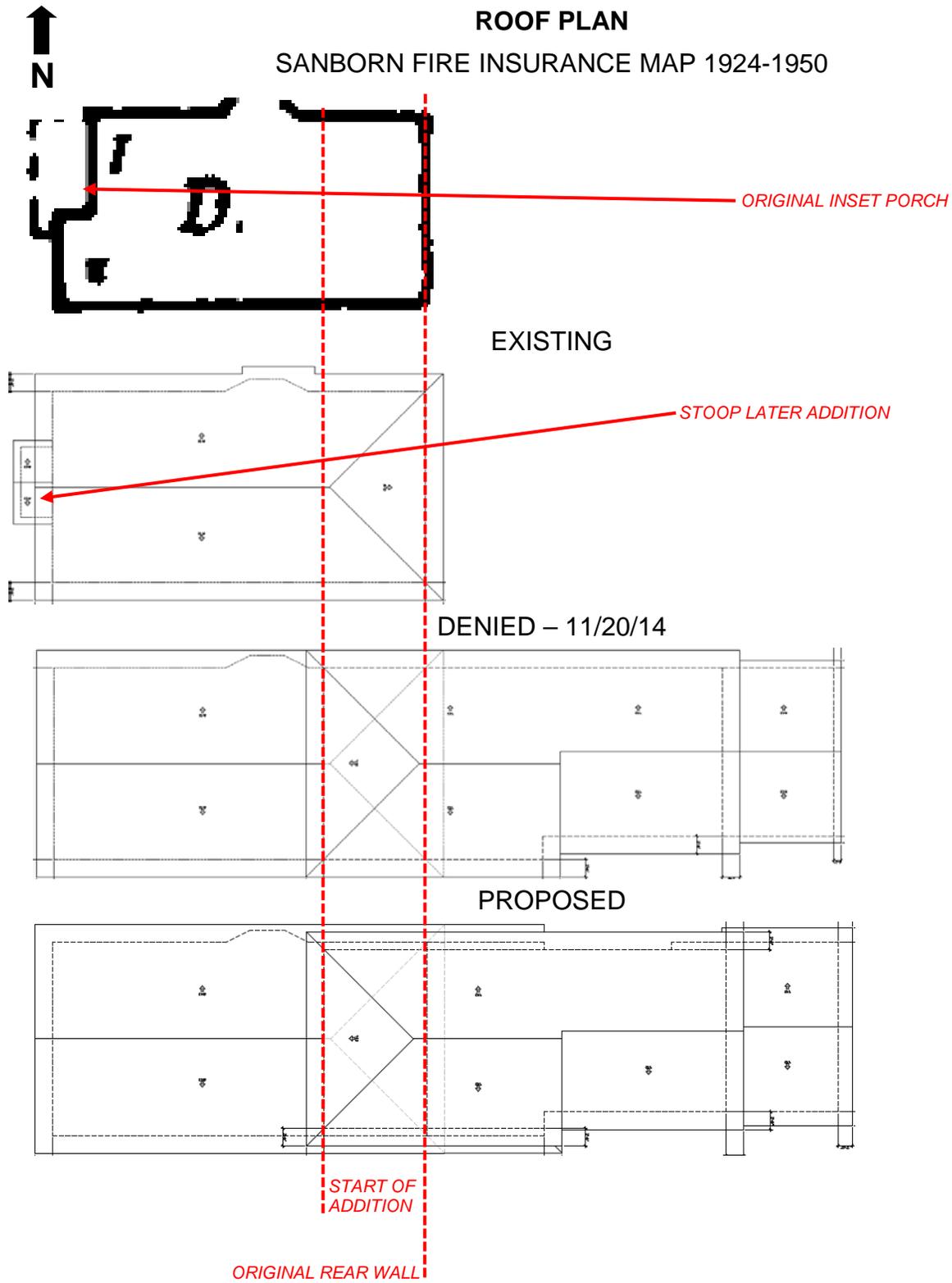
DENIED - 11/20/14



PROPOSED



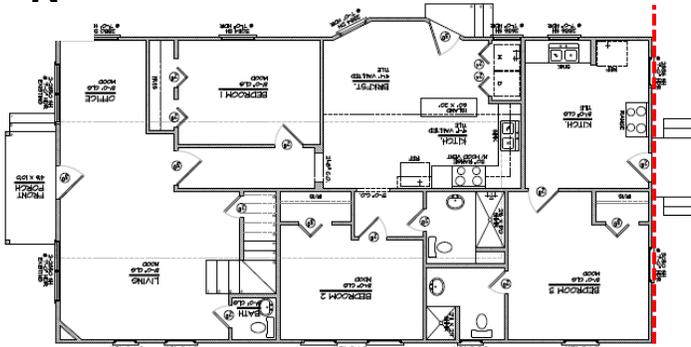




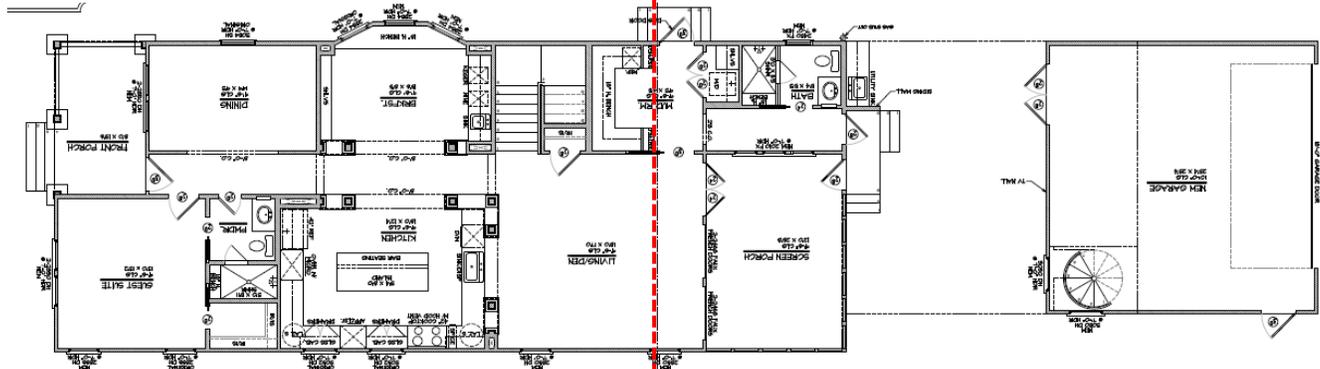


FIRST FLOOR PLAN

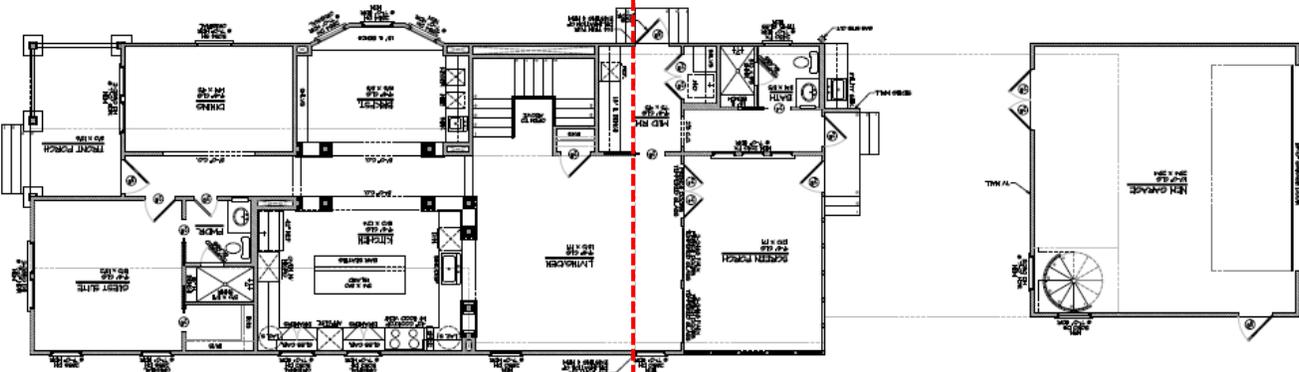
EXISTING



DENIED - 11/20/14



PROPOSED

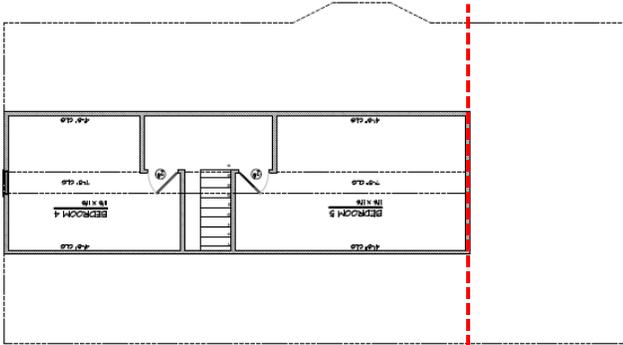


ORIGINAL REAR WALL

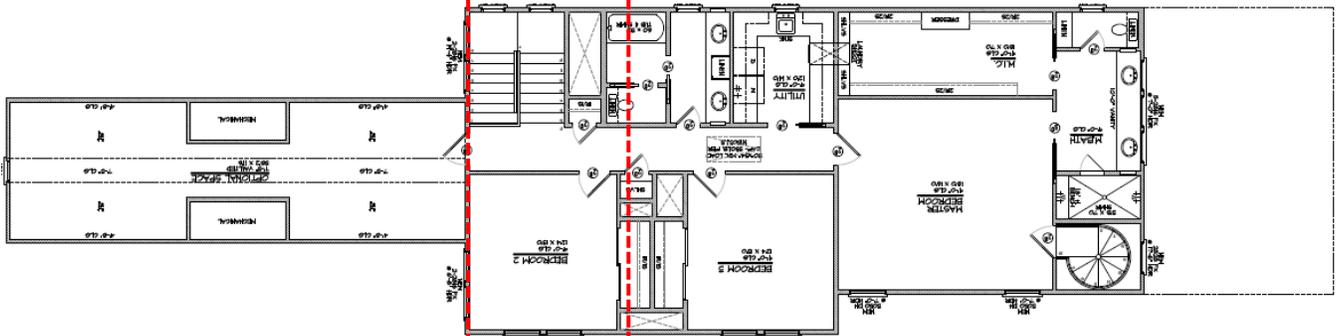


SECOND FLOOR PLAN

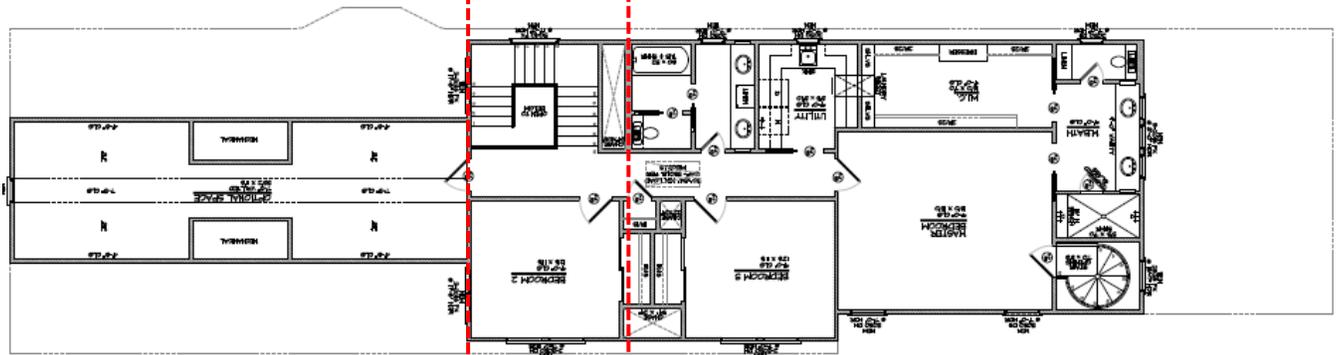
EXISTING



DENIED - 11/20/14



PROPOSED



START OF ADDITION

ORIGINAL REAR WALL

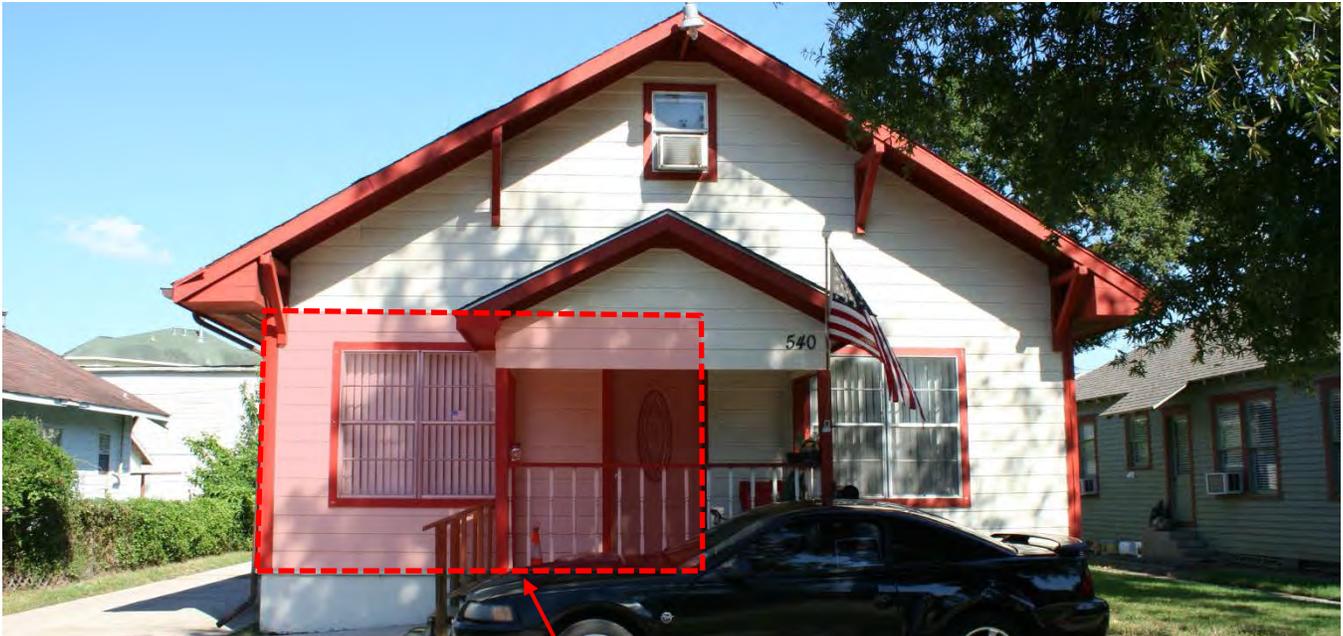
NEIGHBORING PROPERTIES

2014 AERIAL VIEW



EXISTING WINDOWS AND SIDING

WEST (FRONT) WALL



*NON-ORIGINAL ALUMINUM WINDOWS, DOOR AND STOOP
TO BE REMOVED*

LOCATION OF ENCLOSED INSET PORCH TO BE RE-OPENED

EXISTING WINDOWS AND SIDING

NORTH WALL

*ORIGINAL WINDOWS TO BE REMOVED
(SEE DETAIL BELOW)*

ORIGINAL WINDOWS TO BE RETAINED



ALUMINUM WINDOW TO BE REMOVED

METAL DOOR AND A/C OPENING TO BE REPLACED WITH WOOD WINDOWS

ORIGINAL WINDOWS TO BE REMOVED



NORTH WALL SIDING DETAILS



NO SIDING UNDER VINYL



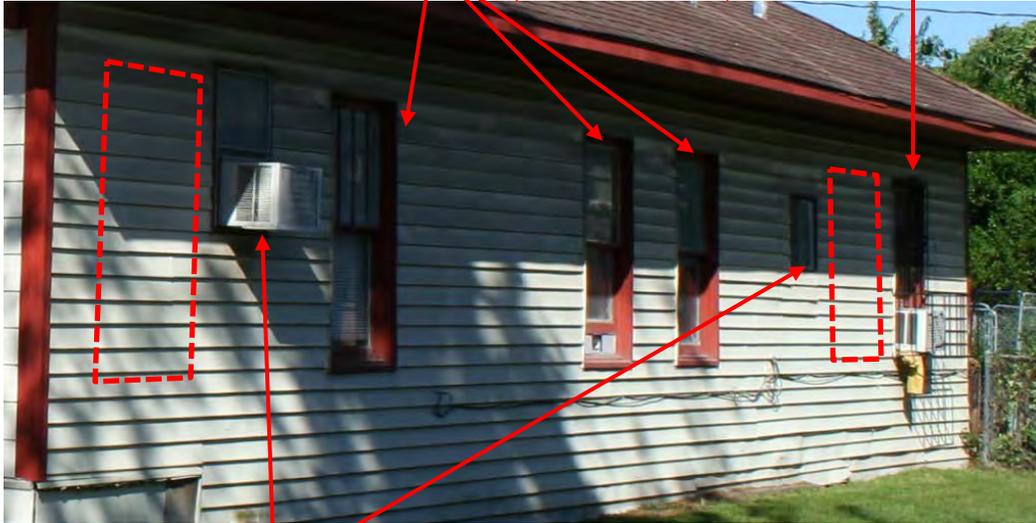
*PAINTED AND UNPAINTED
WOOD BEVEL LAP UNDER
VINYL*

EXISTING WINDOWS AND SIDING

SOUTH WALL

ORIGINAL WINDOWS TO BE RETAINED

*ORIGINAL WINDOW TO BE REMOVED
(SEE DETAIL BELOW)*



ALUMINUM WINDOWS TO BE REMOVED

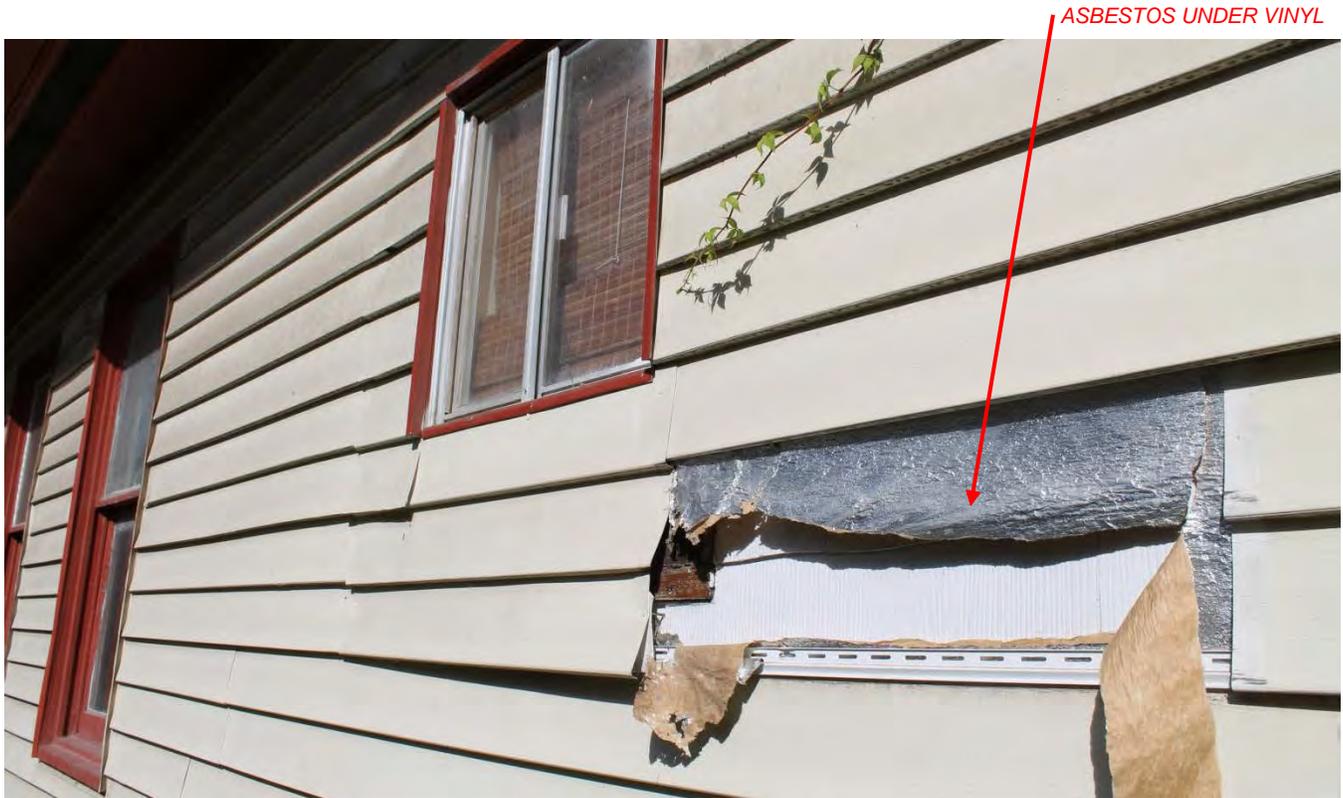


PROPOSED NEW WINDOW OPENINGS



ROT IN SILL

SOUTH WALL SIDING DETAILS



NON-ORIGINAL STRUCTURAL MATERIALS

PROPOSED PORCH COLUMNS



CAPITAL: 13 ½"

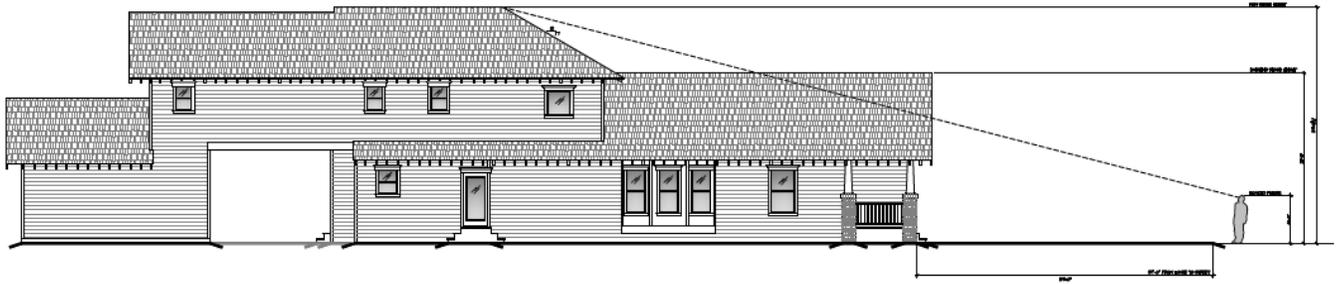
NARROWEST: 9 ½"

WIDEST: 12 ½"

BASE: 16 ½"

PEDESTAL: 23"

LINE OF SIGHT ELEVATION



PROJECT DETAILS

Shape/Mass: The existing residence measures 29'-1" wide (including a 2'-1" bay on the north side) by 57'-7" deep with a 21'-3" ridge height and a 9'-10" eave height. An existing non-original front stoop will be removed and the original inset front porch measuring 13'-6" wide by 8' deep will be re-exposed. The addition will extend 16'8" at the first floor in line with both side walls. A garage measuring 24' wide by 24' deep will be separated from the ground floor addition by a 17'-7" breezeway bridged by the second floor of the proposed addition. The proposed second floor will begin 39'-8" (72.5%) from the front wall and extend 55'-9" back with its rear wall 15'-11" forward of the garage's rear wall. It will be inset 1' on both sides. The addition will feature a ridge height of 29'-6" and an eave height of 20'.

Setbacks: The existing residence features an 11'-7" west (front) setback, a 10'-9" north side setback and a 10'-2" south side setback. The residence is proposed to be moved 7'9" to the north, reducing the north setback to 3' and increasing the south setback to 17'-11". The addition will feature a matching north setback of 3', a south setback of 21'-3" and an east (rear) setback of 9'-11" forward of the rear garage wall.

Foundation: The existing residence features a pier and beam foundation with a finished floor of height of 2'-2" to remain. The proposed addition will feature a pier and beam foundation with a matching 2'-2" finished floor height and a slab on grade for the attached garage.

Windows/Doors: The existing residence features three double hung wood 4/1 windows, four double hung wood 1/1 windows and five non-original aluminum windows. All aluminum windows will be removed and replaced with new double hung wood 1/1 windows. Three 4/1 wood windows will be retained. One 4/1 wood window exhibits rot in the sill and will be removed. Two double hung wood 1/1 windows will be removed and the openings will be patched with siding. One non-original door and one window unit air conditioner in the north side bay will be removed and replaced with double hung wood 1/1 windows. Two double hung wood 1/1 windows will be installed in new openings on the south wall. The non-original metal front door with oval lite will be removed and replaced with a wood door with 3 lites and dentil shelf. The addition will feature double hung wood 1/1 windows, an overhead garage door and single lite side and rear doors.

Exterior Materials: The existing residence features vinyl siding over a mix of horizontal lap cementitious, bevel lap wood and asbestos tile, all of which will be removed and replaced with wood with a 117 profile. The currently enclosed inset front porch will be re-exposed and feature tapered wood columns on brick pedestals.

Roof: The existing residence features a front gable with an 8/12 pitch and a 2'-6" eave overhang clad in composition shingles. The eaves have been partially closed and will be re-opened exposing original rafter tails to remain. A non-original front gabled stoop will be removed. The addition will feature a hip with a 7/12 pitch and a 2'-6" eave overhang clad in composition shingles. The attached garage will feature a rear-facing gable with a 6/12 pitch clad in composition shingles.

Front Elevation: The existing residence measures 27' wide with a bay bump out extending 2'-1" on the north side.
(West) A non-original stop with stamped metal front door and projecting gable is centered on the wall and will be removed. One pair of aluminum windows on the south side of the wall and the gable window will be removed and replaced with wood windows. One pair of aluminum windows on the north side of the wall will be removed along with a portion of the wall measuring 13'-6" wide to restore a previously enclosed inset porch. A new pair of wood windows and a wood front door will be installed in the back wall of the restored porch. The porch will feature four (three visible) new tapered wood columns on brick pedestals, wood balustrades and wood front steps. The second floor of the addition will feature two pairs of fixed wood windows.

Side Elevation: The existing residence features, from west to east, one aluminum window, two wood windows, an opening for a window unit air conditioner, a stamped metal door, and two wood windows. The door, air conditioner opening and one wood window are located on a centrally located bay. The aluminum window and a portion of the wall measuring 8' wide will be removed to re-expose a previously enclosed inset porch which will feature tapered wood columns on brick pedestals and a wood balustrade. Of the four wood windows, two will remain. The two wood windows at the east end will be removed and patched with siding. The wood window on the central bay and the wood window between the bay and the re-opened porch will both remain. The door on the bay will be removed, the air conditioner opening will be enlarged and two new wood windows will be installed. Two new fixed wood windows will be installed in a new vertical extension of the wall between the first floor and the proposed second floor. The addition will extend 16'-8" back on the ground floor and feature a wood and glass door and a wood window. The second floor will join the first floor addition and one-story garage over a 17'-7" breezeway and feature three wood windows.

Side Elevation: The existing residence features, from west to east, one aluminum window to be removed, three wood windows to be retained, one aluminum window to be removed and one wood window to be removed and the opening patched with siding. The wood window to be removed exhibits wood rot in the sill. One new opening will be created immediately west of the removed window and a new wood window will be installed. One new window opening will be created at the far west of the wall. The proposed addition will extend 16'-8" back on the first floor and feature one wood window and an enclosed inset porch. The second floor will join the first floor addition and one-story garage over a 17'-7" breezeway and feature six wood windows. The garage will feature one wood window and one door.

Rear Elevation: Elevation not visible from right of way. See elevation drawings for details.
(East)

ATTACHMENT A
PUBLIC COMMENT

Houston Heights South Historic District

Certificate of Appropriateness Applications for the January 2015 HAHC Meeting

Comments/Concerns from J. Kent Marsh

540 Columbia – OBJECT

The proposed relocation of the existing structure to 3 feet from the side property line will diminish the historic context of the district. Typically, houses were offset at an approximately 6 feet on one side and 12 feet on the other or 7 feet on one side and 14 feet on the other with the remaining lot width being the structure. This setback relationship allowed adequate width for a front-loaded driveway with the remaining side lot setback being about one-half the width setback for the driveway. This typical setback establishes a pattern/rhythm for side setbacks along the blockface that are similar and proportional. The proposed revision to a 3 foot side setback will disrupt that established rhythm and thus detract from the established historic context of the district.

The proposed addition over the existing structure will not support the historic nature of the existing structure in that the addition will look like the existing structure rather than being separated visually from the existing historic structure. This proposal will result in a blending of visual elements of old and new, which is objectionable to the resulting historic character of both the existing structure and the district as a whole.

620 Columbia – OBJECT

The placement of an addition on top of the existing historic structure lessens the visual priority that should be given to the existing historic structure. The blending of visual between the existing and the proposed further reduces this relationship so that it is difficult to determine visual where the existing historic structure ends and the non-historic structure begins. There is ample room on the existing lot so that the addition does not have to be on top of the existing historic structure.

The removal of existing historic windows lessens the historic fabric of the district and is not necessary. This is not a replacement of existing windows in the same location, this is a complete removal of the existing windows and should not be allowed.

642 Columbia – OBJECT

One of the hallmarks of this district is the balanced visual appearance of the elevations of the homes. This new construction has ample opportunity to emulate that balance but is instead an unbalanced, lopsided front elevation with a significantly stronger visual left side than right side. This type of character is not in context with the district. While it is not necessary or beneficial to copy the exact visual appearance of contributing structures, the emulation of principle relationships ensures the non-contributing structures will visually fit into the existing historic context and not be an egocentric testimony to just being different.

The addition of the horizontal window to the front façade is not compatible with the typical vertical orientation of windows in the district and while the exact dimensions of windows of contributing structures should not be copied the continuity of utilizing the same ratio relationship will help the new construction visually fit into the district.

825 Columbia – OBJECT

The existing historic structure is visually overwhelmed by the proposed addition to the point that the existing historic structure becomes visually subservient to the addition. This relationship is not in character with the existing historic context of the district. The frontal plane of the proposed existing/addition will result in a proportion much greater than the frontal plane of the existing structure alone and will not result in a relationship that is in context with the district. Historic context should be measured with the existing contributing structures on the blockface only. Using all structures, contributing and non-contributing, will result in a dilution of the historic character of the district and eventual loss to the point that there is no character remaining.

525 Cortlandt – NO OBJECTION

The proposed replacement of some of the existing window sashes may not be necessary. I will rely on the experience of the historic preservation building inspector to make the determination about the needed replacement. The standard process is to attempt to repair the historic sashes first. If the repair is not possible, the sashes should be restored to as close to original as possible. Only after repair or restoration is not possible should replacement be considered. The notion that replacement of windows for energy conservation purposes alone is misplaced and not beneficial.

544 Harvard – OBJECT

While I don't usually object to the placement of stairs on the front elevation that face the street, in this case, without a door in the façade, the stairs really go to nowhere visually and look awkward. There are many

examples of side facing doors with steps from the side of the house. This steps and no door relationship is not supportive of the character of the district. The steps should remain from the side as in the original proposal. I have no objection to the brick wingwalls on the steps if the steps are to the side. However, if the steps are allowed in the front toward the street, they should not be more embellished with brick than the side steps. Placing brick on front facing steps just exacerbates the visual steps-to-nowhere look.