

**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**

**Application Date:** March 2, 2016

**Applicant:** Suzanne Burck, owner

**Property:** 811 Hemphill Street, Tract 7, Block 396, Baker W R NSBB Subdivision. The property includes a historic 784 square foot, one-story wood frame single-family residence situated on a 2,069 square foot interior lot.

**Significance:** Contributing cottage residence, constructed circa 1910, located in the Old Sixth Ward Historic District.

**Proposal:** Alteration – Construct two sets of front steps (a set on either side of the porch)

- Each set of steps will feature 4 risers and have a handrail that will meet code and Old Sixth Ward Design Guideline specifications.

See enclosed application materials and detailed project description on p. 4-13 for further details.

**Public Comment:** No public comment received at this time.

**Civic Association:** No comment received at this time.

**Recommendation:** Approval

**HAHC Action:** -

**APPROVAL CRITERIA**

**ALTERATIONS, REHABILITATIONS, RESTORATIONS AND ADDITIONS**

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

- | <b>S</b>                            | <b>D</b>                 | <b>NA</b>                           | <b>S - satisfies</b> | <b>D - does not satisfy</b>   | <b>NA - not applicable</b> |  |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------|----------------------|---|----------------------------|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | (1)                  | The proposed activity must retain and preserve the historical character of the property;  |                            |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | (2)                  | The proposed activity must contribute to the continued availability of the property for a contemporary use;   |                            |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | (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;   |                            |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | (4)                  | The proposed activity must preserve the distinguishing qualities or character of the building, structure, object or site and its environment;   |                            |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | (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;  |                            |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | (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;   |                            |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | (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;         |                            |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | (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;  |                            |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | (9)                  | The proposed design for any exterior alterations or addition must not destroy significant historical, architectural, archaeological or cultural material, including but not limited to siding, windows, doors and porch elements and must be compatible with the size, scale, material and character of the property and the area in which it is located; |                            |  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/>            | (10)                 | The proposed alteration or addition must be compatible with the massing, size, scale material and character of the property and the context area; and   |                            |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/>            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | (11)                 | The distance from the property line to the front and side walls, porches, and exterior features of any proposed addition or alteration must be compatible with the distance to the property line of similar elements of existing contributing structures in the context area.   |                            |  |

**OLD SIXTH WARD DESIGN GUIDELINES**

- |                                     |                          |                          |   |  |  |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|--|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | In accordance with Sec. 33-276, the proposed activity must comply with the City Council approved Design Guidelines. |  |  |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|--|--|



PROPERTY LOCATION  
OLD SIXTH WARD HISTORIC DISTRICT



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

**INVENTORY PHOTO**



**CURRENT PHOTO**



**EAST ELEVATION – FRONT FACING HEMPHILL STREET**

**CURRENT STEPS**

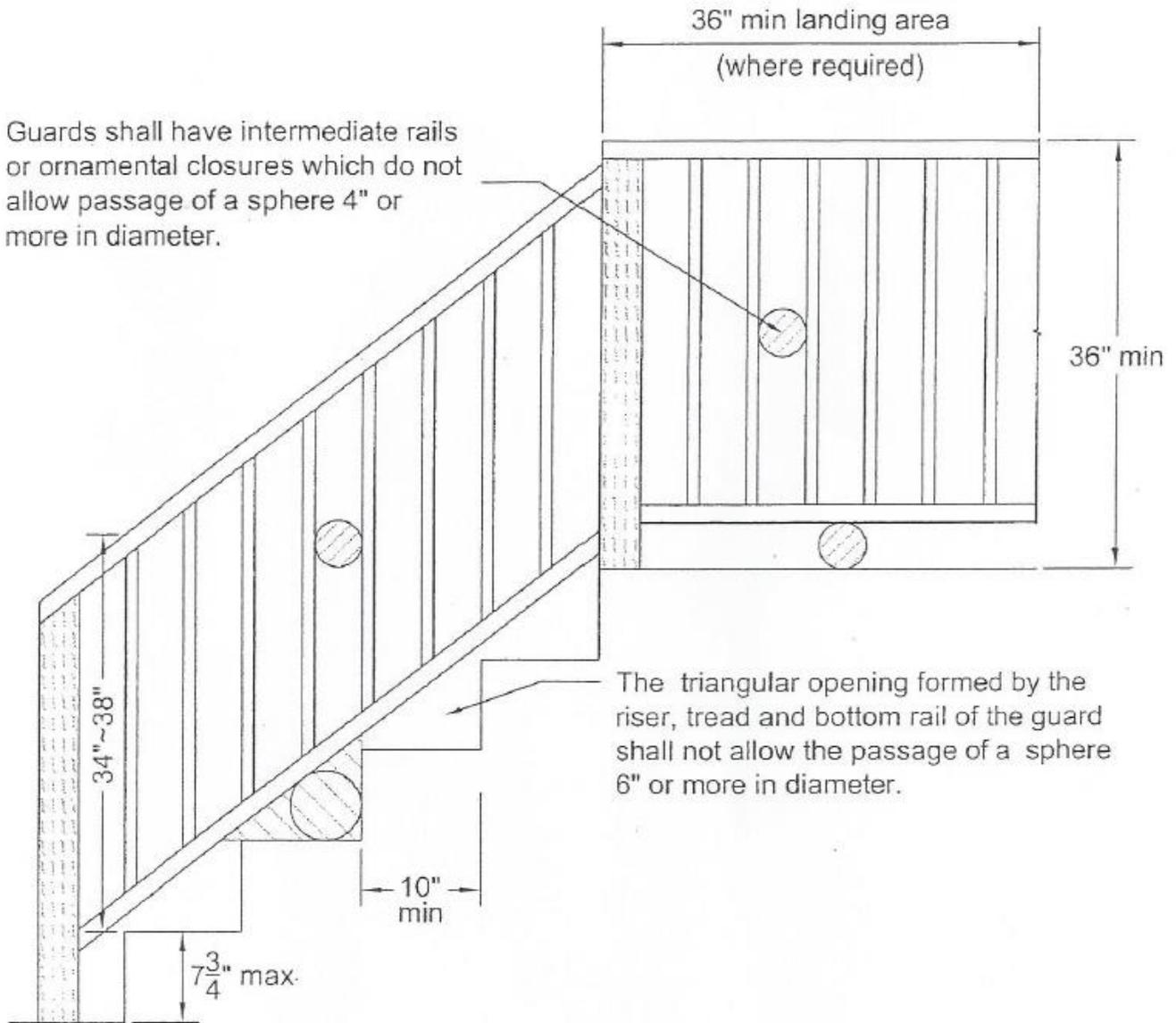


**EAST ELEVATION – FRONT FACING HEMPHILL STREET**

**CURRENT STEPS**

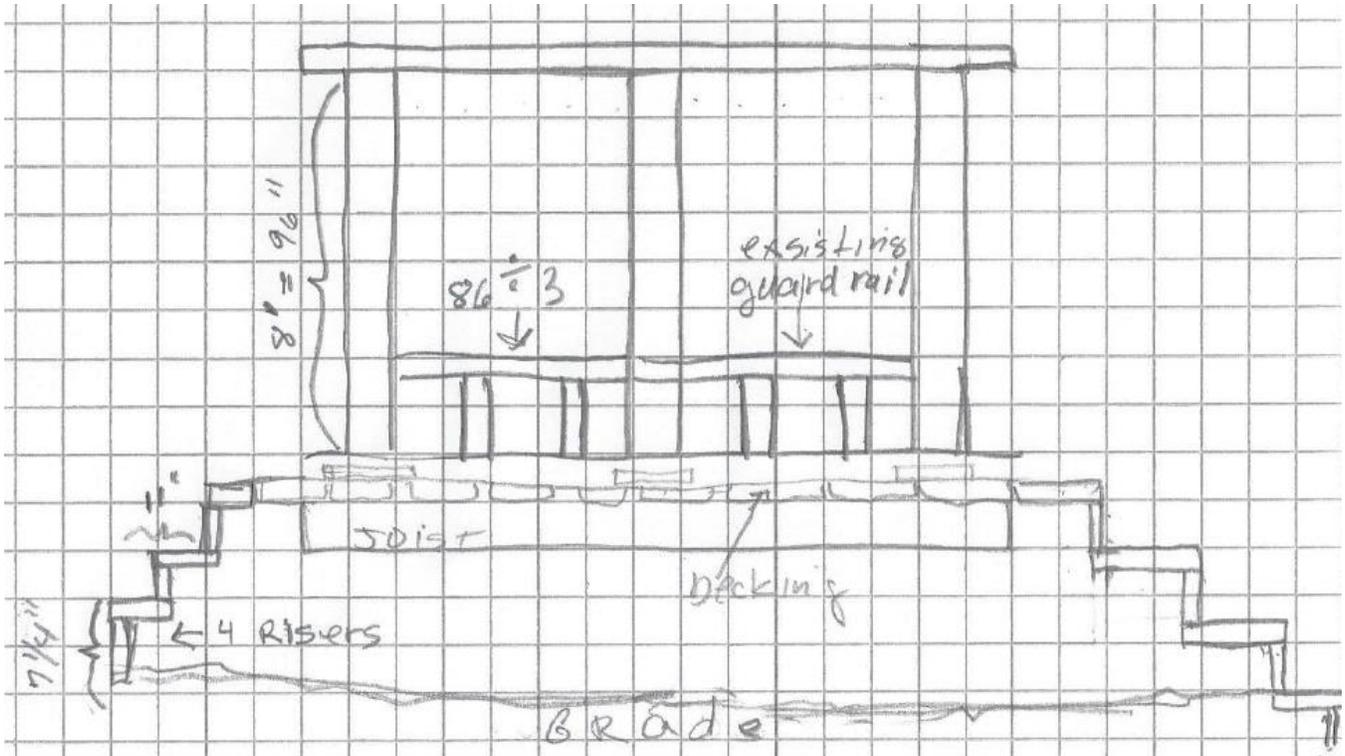


**CODE ENFORCEMENT DRAWINGS**  
(PROPOSED HANDRAIL SPECIFICATIONS)



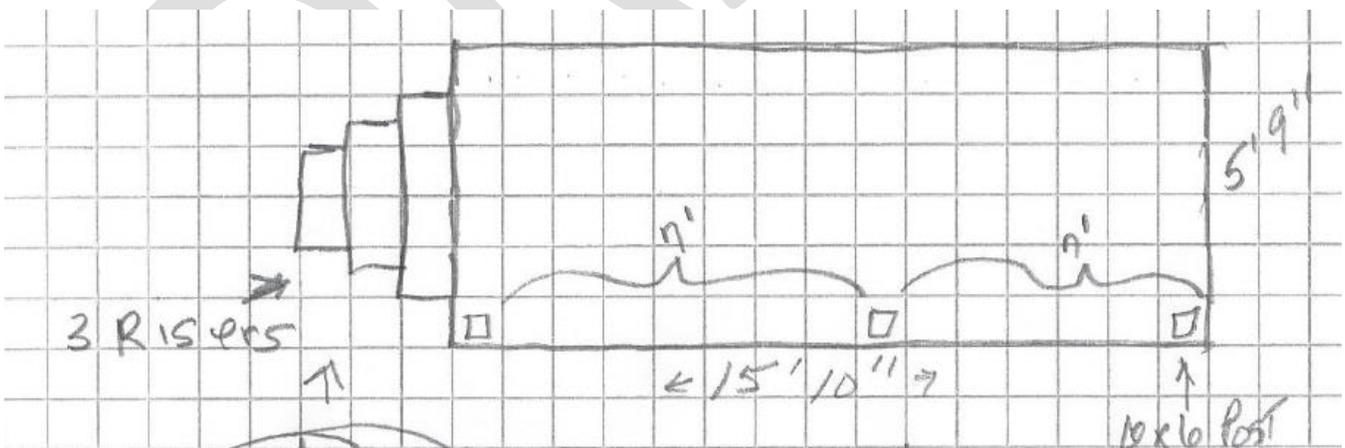
**PROPOSED STEPS**

**FRONT ELEVATION**



**PLAN VIEW**

**(PREVIOUS CONFIGURATION)**



311 REPORT PHOTO

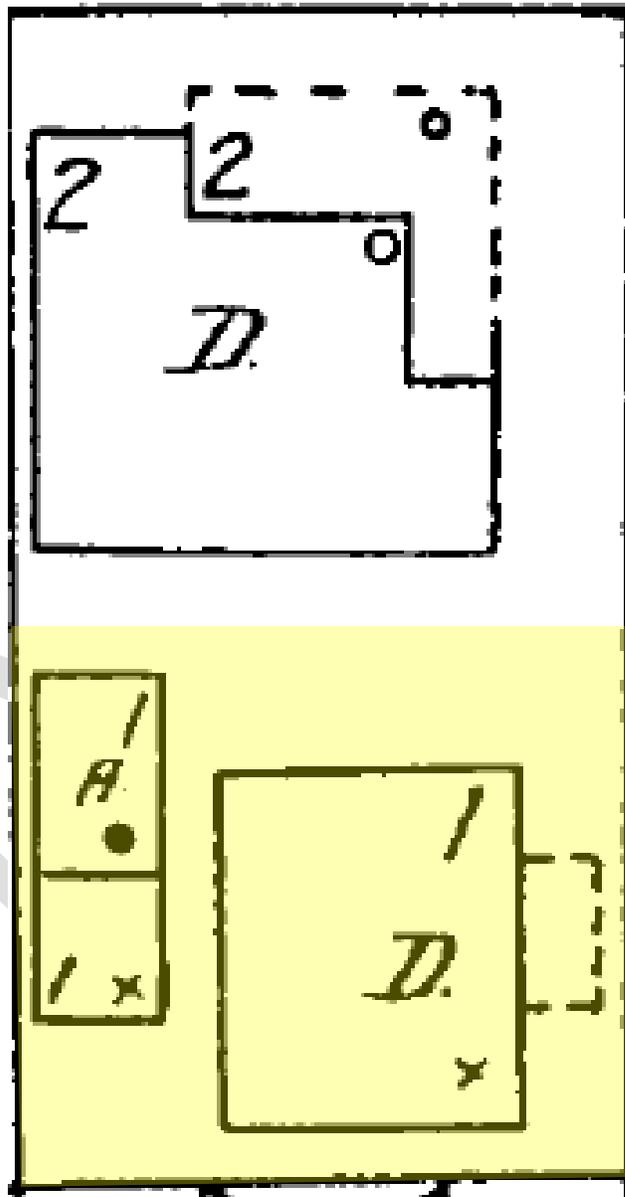


A Red Tag was issued on February 23, 2016, for doing work without a permit and to obtain all necessary permits.

A second follow up Red Tag was issued on March 8, 2016.

SANBORN MAP

2203



## OLD SIXTH WARD DESIGN GUIDELINES

### PORCHES

2. Porches: Front porches are an essential characteristic of the Old Sixth Ward house and are highly recommended for compatible new construction. Porches should be a minimum of 6 feet deep with 8 feet of headroom. It is recommended that porches are at least half as wide as the overall width of the structure.

a. Columns: Porches should be defined by a series of similar columns spaced in a regular manner. In cases where there is an unusually long colonnade (a row of columns), the corner columns may be differentiated, generally by being more massive.

b. Porch Beam: The porch beam is the horizontal element spanning across the tops of the columns. A properly proportioned porch beam is important to achieving a convincing porch design. It should be a clearly expressed element dropping below and distinct from any soffit or eave. The porch beam should be at least as deep as the width of a typical column, and preferably about 1.5 to 2 times the column width.

c. Guardrails are required for any porch that is more than 30 inches above the adjacent grade. Guardrails shall consist of a series of repetitive vertical balusters spanning between a lower rail and a top guardrail. They should be fairly open, generally with at least 50% open area. Avoid solid panels or "pony walls."

Baluster designs may vary greatly, ranging from simple 2x2 square pickets to turned posts. Flat boards cut into a decorative, repetitive pattern are also acceptable.

CITY OF HOUSTON BUILDING CODE REGULATIONS

INTERNATIONAL RESIDENTIAL CODE

SECTION R312

GUARDS

R312.1 Guards. Porches, balconies, ramps or raised floor surfaces located more than 30 inches (762 mm) above the floor or grade below shall have guards not less than 36 inches (914 mm) in height. Open sides of stairs with a total rise of more than 30 inches (762 mm) above the floor or grade below shall have guards not less than 34 inches (864 mm) in height measured vertically from the nosing of the treads.

Porches and decks which are enclosed with insect screening shall be equipped with guards where the walking surface is located more than 30 inches (762 mm) above the floor or grade below.

R312.2 Guard opening limitations. Required guards on open sides of stairways, raised floor areas, balconies and porches shall have intermediate rails or ornamental closures which do not allow passage of a sphere 4 inches (102mm) or more in diameter.

Exceptions:

- 1. The triangular openings formed by the riser, tread and bottom rail of a guard at the open side of a stairway are permitted to be of such a size that a sphere 6 inches (152 mm) cannot pass through.
2. Openings for required guards on the sides of stair treads shall not allow a sphere 4 3/8 inches (107 mm) to pass through.

R311.5.6 Handrails. Handrails shall be provided on at least one side of each continuous run of treads or flight with four or more risers.

R311.5.6.1 Height. Handrail height, measured vertically from the sloped plane adjoining the tread nosing, or finish surface of ramp slope, shall be not less than 34 inches (864 mm) and not more than 38 inches (965 mm).

R311.5.6.2 Continuity. Handrails for stairways shall be continuous for the full length of the flight, from a point directly above the top riser of the flight to a point directly above the lowest riser of the flight. Handrail ends shall be returned or shall terminate in newel posts or safety terminals. Handrails adjacent to a wall shall have a space of not less than 1 1/2 inch (38 mm) between the wall and the handrails.

Exceptions:

- 1. Handrails shall be permitted to be interrupted by a newel post at the turn.
2. The use of a volute, turnout, starting easing or starting newel shall be allowed over the lowest tread.

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## PROJECT DETAILS

**Shape/Mass:** The existing porch is 15'-10" wide and 5'-9" deep. Three 6" x 6" x 8' columns support the existing porch roof. The porch finished floor is approximately 29 inches above grade. Previously, the porch featured non-original makeshift steps constructed from concrete block.

The owner attempted to repair the steps and was received a Red Tag for doing work without a permit. The current stairs likely do not meet City Building Code.

The applicant proposes to construct a new set of steps that meets the required code. Each tread will be 11" in depth and each riser will be 7¼" in height. As proposed, the steps are four risers high and require a handrail; the handrail will need to meet code requirements. The handrail will be a 34" in height and will include a balustrade (intermediate rails) spaced no more than 4" apart. The proposed stairs and handrail will meet City of Houston Building Code. The existing guardrail, porch columns, porch flooring and roof is to remain. See drawings and photos for more detail.

**Exterior Materials:** The non-original steps were constructed out of concrete block.

The current steps are constructed from wood.

The proposed steps will be constructed from wood. See drawings and photos for more detail.

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