

Minutes

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Regular meeting

6:30 p.m. Nov. 6, 2024

Board Meeting Room of Town Hall Annex, 105 E. Corbin St.



Present: Chair Will Senner, Vice Chair Mathew Palmer and members G. Miller, Hannah Peele, Sara Riek and Bruce Spencer

Staff: Planner Joseph Hoffheimer

1. Call to order, roll call, and confirmation of quorum

Chair Will Senner called the meeting to order at 6:30 p.m. He called the roll and confirmed the presence of a quorum.

2. Commission's mission statement

Senner read the statement.

3. Agenda changes

There were no changes to the agenda.

4. Minutes review and approval

Minutes from regular meeting on Sept. 4, 2024, and regular meeting on Oct. 2, 2024.

Motion: Member G. Miller moved to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on Sept. 4, 2024, as submitted. Member Bruce Spencer seconded.

Vote: 6-0.

Motion: Miller moved to approve the minutes from the regular meeting on Oct. 2, 2024, as submitted. Senner seconded.

Vote: 6-0.

5. Written decisions review and approval

Written decisions from regular meeting on Sept. 4, 2024.

Planner Joseph Hoffheimer confirmed that the printout provided to the commissioners was an updated version which deleted the duplication of Number 3A.

Motion: Miller moved to approve the written decisions from the regular meeting on Sept. 4, 2024, as submitted. Member Sara Riek seconded.

Vote: 6-0.

6. Old business

- A. Certificate of Appropriateness Application: 158 W. King St.
Carport renovation and addition of 10-feet x 14-feet of storage (PIN 9864969445).

Senner opened the public hearing and asked whether there were any conflicts of interest or bias among the commissioners. All commissioners disclosed that they had visited the site in preparation for reviewing the application. No other conflicts of interest were disclosed.

Hoffheimer was sworn in. Laura Juel, the property owner, was sworn in to speak on behalf of the application.

Hoffheimer introduced the application by presenting the staff report. He noted that the inventory information, application materials, and applicable design standards would be entered into the record as evidence. He provided the staff comments:

- The carport is the only part of the property being altered, but the inventory information for the house, wellhouse, and garage/kitchen are included in the staff report for additional context.
- Resurfacing the patio, renovating the driveway, and some other landscaping work was approved recently via a minor work.

Juel addressed the inclusion of the Fences and Walls design standards in the application, explaining that there will be a fence around the recycling and garbage bins.

Juel gave a brief description of the patio project. The patio, which touches the carport area, will be removed and regraded to slope away from the house. The driveway will be added last, to keep rocks from rolling onto West King Street.

The commissioners reviewed the application materials.

Juel confirmed that the new windows will be aluminum-clad wood with true or simulated divided lites. She mentioned that the plans show a new window on the rear of the new addition, but that that window will no longer be included, to provide space for more shelving inside. She added that an oak leaf hydrangea will be planted in front of the building at that spot. The window on the opposite facade of the structure, facing West King Street, will still be included, as shown in the plans.

Juel confirmed that the windows will be two-over-two, to match the kitchen addition of the house. She explained that the rest of the house has one-over-one windows. Juel said the plan to replace the existing windows came from the fact that the existing windows are unprotected wood from the 1960s and were never finished inside. Juel said they are warped and do not close all the way. She added that the architect chose larger windows than the existing ones to look more consistent with the size and scale of the windows on the house. She said the opening for the windows being replaced will become slightly taller, but the width will remain the same. She also confirmed that the muntin profile will change from horizontal on the existing windows to vertical on the new ones.

Juel said the wood latticework between the columns was recommended by the architect to provide more visual weight to the columns compared to the roof. She confirmed that a new decorative fascia board would be installed across the bottom of the roofline, in front of the columns. There was discussion of whether the fascia board would change the height of the columns, but Juel confirmed that the two elements are independent of each other and that the columns will remain the same height as the existing columns, which will reach all the way to the ceiling behind the fascia board. It was determined that the drawing incorrectly shows the molding on the columns ending at the bottom of the fascia board. Juel added that the piers for the columns will remain in the same place but new footings will be poured because there are no existing footings. Juel said the main house has round columns, but the house and carport were built at different times, so they want to differentiate them visually. She said the existing

columns on the carport look skimpy, and the architect attempted to add visual weight to the columns to address this.

There was discussion of the impact the decorative choices have on the congruence with the district and the main house. There was concern that the addition of a cupola and addition of weight to the columns would add to the scale and height of the structure, which the design standards discourage.

The commissioners addressed the columns. Member Hannah Peele, Senner and Spencer said that they did not find the columns to be incongruous. Miller said he was concerned about the congruity of removing the latticework between the new columns. Spencer added that he did not see the decorative aspects as faux historic, but instead as purely aesthetic choices.

There was discussion of the south elevation. Senner noted that the existing chimney will be removed, which the design standards say is generally acceptable if it is not on a character defining elevation or visible from the street, which is consistent with this situation. Senner expressed appreciation for the lower roofline of the addition to distinguish it from the existing structure and make it visually subordinate.

Miller asked Juel to address the changes to the columns in reference to Outbuildings and Garages, Standard 2. Juel explained that they could have chosen to use one large round column, but they wanted to visually guide the eye to the backyard rather than being drawn to the post itself. Peele noted that the side porch of the house has a similar horizontal piece consistent with what is being proposed, despite having round columns instead of the proposed square ones.

Miller said he was concerned about the removal of the latticework that is visually integral to the existing structure and replacing it with latticework that does not have the same character as the existing latticework. Senner noted that this accessory structure is not visible from the street and that it is questionable whether the latticework provides character definition. Hoffheimer said the latticework is not included in the inventory, and Juel said it was added to the carport in the 1990s when the owners at the time added it for gardening purposes.

Juel confirmed the two existing light fixtures will remain and that there will not be new light fixtures.

The commissioners addressed the proposed cupola. Juel said the cupola was included in the plans to add weight and balance to the structure as a whole. Senner referenced Roofs, Standard 8, and noted that the cupola, though it is character defining for the outbuilding itself, is not readily visible from the street and is proposed to be added to a secondary structure.

Juel confirmed that the louvers in the cupola would be made of wood, painted to match the existing color profile and the louvers on the front of the carport. It was noted that a cupola on a garage exists at 325 W. Corbin St., though it was further noted that one instance of an element does not provide definitive evidence for congruence but does provide context.

The commissioners reviewed the south elevation. Juel confirmed that the footings of the columns will be brick but will be capped with bluestone to prevent rainwater from getting into the mortar of the bricks.

The commissioners reviewed the north elevation. It was noted that there will not be a visual differentiation in the siding between the addition and the existing structure, but that the visual differentiation at the roofline will demarcate where the addition begins.

The commissioners reviewed the east elevation. Juel explained that the existing door will be used, but glass will be added to restore it to its original appearance. She said the glass had been replaced with a wood panel at some point. Juel confirmed that the doors open inward.

The commissioners reviewed the west elevation. Juel confirmed that the existing louvers on either side of the existing chimney will be infilled with siding to match once the chimney is removed. She said they will have no issues getting matching siding. She explained that the louver markings on the plans were included to show where the louvers had been on the existing structure.

Juel confirmed the existing carport floor will be removed because the new column footings will have to be installed first. She said the footings will be old brick from the early 1900s to match the foundation of the house. She said new paver brick will be used for the carport floor.

There was discussion of the visibility of the structure from the street. Miller pointed out that the carport is visible from West King Street, from the side of the property where the driveway enters. Juel said three large bucket trees will be planted between the carport and the street view to minimize the visibility. She indicated where the trees would be planted – one near the patio and two near the front of the property. Other commissioners noted that they had not initially been able to see the carport at first glance. Hoffheimer pointed out that most of the changes to the structure will be blocked from view of the street because they will take place in the rear of the structure, and the west edge of the existing carport is aligned with the west edge of the house.

Senner said that after having reviewed the photo of the carport with the house in the background, his assessment of the impact of the addition of the cupola to the roof had changed. He said the vantage point of the photo provided a better perspective of the massing of the carport relative to the massing of the main house and made him feel more comfortable with the change to the roof in the context of the overall site and massing with relation to the primary structure.

Senner summarized the commissioners' discussion: He said that while there are some elements and design choices where one could offer suggestions that are more congruent, the commission has not identified anything incongruent given the mass and siting of the outbuilding; the addition of trees to address the already limited visibility from the street; the fact that some of the elements being removed were additions from later periods and not part of the original design and construction of the outbuilding; and that the modifications to the roof are, although impacting the character of the outbuilding itself, not visible from the street or impactful in the context of the primary structure and the overall design and context of the site.

Senner closed the public hearing.

Motion: Riek moved to find as fact that the 158 W. King St. application is not incongruous with the overall character of the Historic District and complies with all relevant standards of evaluation based on the commission's discussion of the application and the standards of evaluation in Section 3.12.3 of the Unified Development Ordinance because the plans are consistent with the Historic District Design Standards: Wood, Exterior Walls, Doors, Roofs, Outbuildings and Garages, Additions to Residential Buildings, Fences and Walls, and Exterior Lighting. Spencer seconded.

Vote: 5-1. Nay: Miller.

Motion: Riek moved to approve the application as modified by the applicant to remove the right window in the north elevation from the plans. Vice Chair Mathew Palmer seconded.
Vote: 5-1. Nay: Miller.

Miller clarified that he had voted against approval because he does not believe the proposal meets Outbuildings and Garages Standards 1 and 2.

7. Election of officers

The commissioners elected officers for the upcoming term, through October 2025.

Hoffheimer updated the commissioners that some potential applicants have expressed interest in serving on the commission.

Motion: Miller nominated Senner to serve as chair. Palmer seconded.
Vote: 6-0.

Motion: Riek nominated Miller to serve as vice chair.

Motion: Spencer nominated Peele to serve as vice chair.

There was discussion of the nominees' interest in eventually serving as chair. Peele expressed interest in that possibility.

Motion: Senner nominated Peele to serve as vice chair. Spencer seconded.
Vote: 6-0.

8. Historic Preservation Awards

Hoffheimer sought nominations for the Historic Preservation Awards. There was discussion of alternative names for the awards to encompass more than just preservation projects. There was discussion of including projects that had notable plans and applications, and discussion of focusing on projects that followed the rules and procedures.

9. General Updates

There were no general updates. There was a brief discussion of the question of statewide historical significance and the process for delaying demolition.

10. Adjournment

Senner adjourned the meeting at 7:44 p.m. without a vote.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph Hoffheimer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Joseph Hoffheimer
Planner
Staff support to the Historic District Commission

Approved: December 4, 2024