



CITY OF ALLENTOWN

No. 30878

RESOLUTION

R99 - 2024

Introduced by the Administration on June 5, 2024

Denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness – 222 N West Street

Resolved by the Council of the City of Allentown, That

WHEREAS a Certificate of Appropriateness is required under the provisions of the Act of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania No.167, June 13, 1961 (P.L.282) known as the Pennsylvania Historic District Act; and City of Allentown has adopted a Historic District Ordinance, Article 1391, under the provisions allowed in the Pennsylvania Historic District Act; and

WHEREAS the owner, Jose Alfonso Capellan Vicente, applied to the Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB) for a Certificate of Appropriateness to replace the existing wooden door with a fiberglass surface door, as described in the attached final report; and

WHEREAS the HARB held a meeting on said matter on May 6, 2023, where the applicant was not in attendance for representation; and

WHEREAS based on the statements and evidence presented, the HARB made the following findings of fact, as detailed in the attached case report:

1. The applicant applied for the review and is not related to a violation.
2. The application was tabled at the April 1st HARB meeting; applicant was not present.
3. Applicant was not present during the May 6th HARB meeting.
4. No evidence was presented that the existing door could not be repaired.
5. The replacement door proposed does not meet the Design Guidelines.

WHEREAS, based on the above findings of fact, the HARB agreed on the motion not to recommend approval for the replacement of the front door as proposed, and recommended to City Council denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness as detailed in the attached case report.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Allentown that a Certificate of Appropriateness is hereby denied for the above referenced exterior alteration.

	Yea	Nay
Candida Affa	X	
Ce-Ce Gerlach	X	
Daryl Hendricks	X	
Santo Napoli	X	
Natalie Santos	X	
Ed Zucal	X	
Cynthia Y. Mota, President	X	
TOTAL	7	0

THIS IS TO CERTIFY, That the above copy of Resolution No. 30878 was adopted by the City Council of Allentown on the 26th day of June, 2024, and is on file in the City Clerk's Office.



City Clerk

**Historical Architectural Review Board
COA Preliminary Review Sheet**

HDC-2024-00025

Address: 222 N West Street

District: West Park Historic District

Owner: Jose Capellan Vicente

Applicant: Jose Capellan Vicente

Proposal: Replace front door

Building Description: This 3-story brick house, ca 1905 is a porch house. The roof has a projecting cornice with brackets, a brick dentilated cornice, 1/1 sash windows and brick lintels. The 2nd floor has pilasters from the mid wall to the roof and the windows are 1/1 sash with brick lintels (arch top on the 3rd floor). The front door contains decorative moldings, including the address in the bottom panel, as well as a transom. The steps are concrete and the cornice has aluminum covering. There is a 2-story ell with 1/1 sash windows with brick lintels.

Project Description:

This application proposes to replace the front door of the residence, which is damaged and does not closed properly, with a smooth fiberglass surface door that is 36" x 80".



Front Elevation (Directory)



Existing Door (Applicant)

**Historical Architectural Review Board
COA Preliminary Review Sheet**



Sample Replacement (Applicant)

Applicable Guidelines:

Section 3.6 – Doors

3.6.5 Repair and restore historic doors whenever possible rather than replace them. Historic doors include front doors, rear doors, and grocer's alley doors. Original materials should not be discarded. If repair and reuse is not possible, salvage may be an option and the existing feature used as a template for replication.

3.6.6 Repair, restore, and reuse existing door frames, jambs, threshold, fixed transoms, and similar components. Existing components are usually historic wood. Replace in-kind if existing materials are severely deteriorated. Replicate the profile and width of door frames, jambs, and transoms in order to preserve the solid-to-void ratio of the entrance.

3.6.7 Repair, restore, and reuse hardware whenever possible. Replace hardware in-kind if necessary. New hardware should match the original hardware as closely as possible if the original hardware remains. If not, hardware that is compatible with the era of construction and style of the building is recommended. Avoid replacing historic hardware with digital locks, combination locks, keypads, or similar technology.

3.6.8 Replace doors in-kind if repair is not feasible. Replacement doors should duplicate the original in material, design, size, profile, and operation. Original doors may be used as a template for replication. Wood is the most appropriate material for residential doors. Paneled wood doors should have the same number, size, and profile of panels as the historic door. If the original design is unknown, the building's style and date of construction should inform the appropriate replacement.

Historical Architectural Review Board COA Preliminary Review Sheet

3.6.9 Replace with durable alternate materials if in-kind replacement is not feasible. Composite wood doors and fiberglass doors are acceptable replacements if new doors match the original in size, style, configuration, detail, and appearance. However, these products are not recommended from a sustainability perspective. They have shorter lifespan and deteriorate when exposed to moisture, weathering, and temperature variation. For replacement doors, avoid metal doors (including metal doors that imitate paneled wood), as they do not have the same appearance and texture of historic wood. Avoid pre-hung doors (doors that are purchased already installed in a frame) when replacing a door, because these require the removal of historic fabric and can change the size of the opening.

3.6.10 Preserve the size of the existing door opening. New doors should be custom sized if necessary. Avoid enlarging or filling in original door openings to fit new stock sizes. This alteration will impact the historic character of the building. This action will also require a Building Permit because it changes the amount of enclosed space on a façade.

3.6.11 Consider replacement of a previously altered door with a historically appropriate wood door.

3.6.12 Avoid replacing of a historic door solely for the purpose of improving thermal performance. This intervention is not appropriate for historic material. Install weatherproofing or a storm door prior to replacement.

3.6.13 Avoid creating new door openings on the primary façade. New side or rear doors should be minimally visible from the street. The size and location of new openings should be compatible with the rest of the façade. This type of work will also require a Building Permit.

Observations & Comments: If the door is beyond feasible repair, replacement with the proposed fiberglass door is not historically appropriate. Ideally, the wood door with original, character defining detailing would be retained and repaired. This door contains an immense amount of character defining features, including the house number detailing. From the photographs, it does not appear that the door material is in poor condition, so perhaps upgrades to the hardware and/or weatherization is more appropriate, instead of replacement. There also appears to be a transom above the door. Given the proposed replacement door dimensions are 36" x 80", one would assume they plan on either removing the transom or framing down to accommodate the size differential, which is also not historically appropriate.

Staff Recommendation: It is recommended to retain the door if at all possible.

Discussion: It was noted that this is the second month the application has been on the agenda and the applicant was not present, although they mentioned to staff that they would be present at this meeting. Given the 45 day decision timeline, action is required to be taken on the application by the HARB. This application is not related to a violation. It was noted that no evidence was presented that indicated the door could not be repaired.

Actions: Mr. Franzone made a motion to deny the application presented on May 6, 2024 for the replacement of doors at 222 N West Street because it did not comply with the Guidelines for Historic Districts: Chapter 3, Section 3.6 – Doors and there were no known unique circumstances that would apply.

Mr. Hart seconded the motion, which carried with unanimous support.