

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

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**HDC-2024-00028**

**Address: 825 W Gordon Street**

**District: Old Allentown Historic District**

**Owner: Galva Jimenez**

**Applicant: Galva Jimenez**

**Proposal: Replace front door**

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**Building Description:** This 2½-story stonecote row house, ca 1875 is a Federal/Victorian style. The gable roof has slate shingles, snow catchers, a single dormer with a 2/2 sash window and a single chimney with drip ledges. The windows are 1/1 sash with shutters on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor. The 1<sup>st</sup> floor has a picture window with a transom. There is one basement window grille visible.

The grocer's alley door is a solid panel door with transom and a half circle above the transom. There is a concrete porch with pipe railing, a visible basement window grille and an Allentown Porch Roof. The roof profile is a cyma-curve, with simple wood brackets, asphalt shingles and squared ended rafters. The main entry is a single ¾-glazed period door with a transom. There is a 1-story garage at the rear of the property and an iron fence.

**Project Description:**

This application proposes to replace the front door of the residence, which is broken, not working, and had rotting wood, with a new metal door. Rotted wood trim will be replaced with new wood.



**Existing Door (Applicant)**



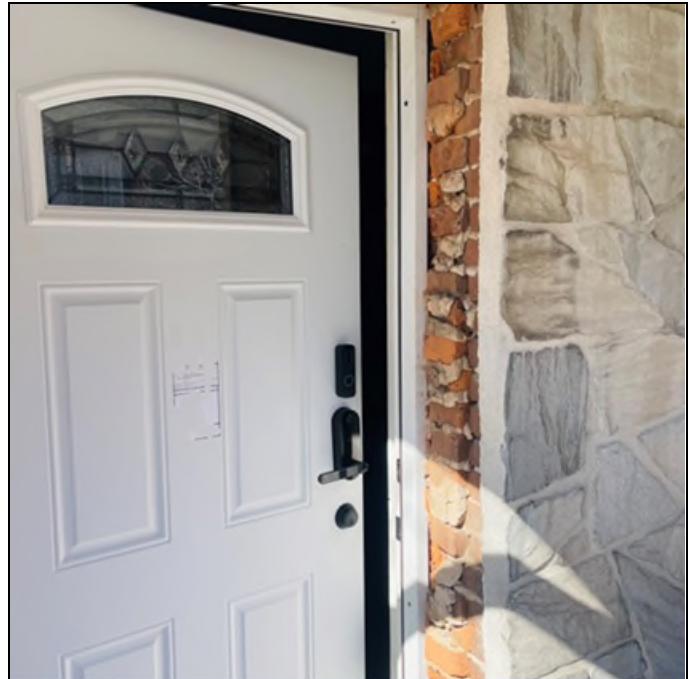
**Existing Door (Applicant)**

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**Existing Trim (Applicant)**



**Proposed Door Exterior (Applicant)**



**Proposed Door Exterior (Applicant)**



**Proposed Door Interior (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.

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**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.

**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 metal 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 bottom panel 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.

**Staff Recommendation:** It is recommended to deny the application. The original door should be retained if at all possible.

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### Draft Motions:

**Discussion:** It was noted that this application is related to a violation correction. The applicant noted he was new to Allentown and was not aware of the rules and regulations. He noted the door was in bad condition and when he tried to change the lock, the wood was bad, and he was not able to change the lock. The applicant clarified that the masonry opening was not altered, the wood trim was just removed around the opening. Generally, it was noted that the door appears to be in repairable condition and the applicant agreed to rebuild the jamb and repair the existing door, which he still has in his possession. Dave noted the existing wood could be reused and replaced as necessary and a storm door could

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be installed on the exterior, if desired by the applicant. It was also noted that there are salvage places and locksmiths around the city that could provide replacement hardware or repair the current hardware.

**Action:** Mr. Huber made a motion to deny the application presented on May 6, 2024, for the door replacement at 825 W Gordon 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. It was recommended that the original door and jamb be replaced to their original condition and that a full view storm door would be acceptable if the applicant chooses.

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