

**HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD  
CITY OF ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA  
October 4, 2021  
FINAL REVIEW**

**Property Location:** 229 N. 10th

**Agenda Item:** 2.f.

**Case:** HDC-2021-00023

**Meeting Date:** October 4, 2021

**Property Owner/Applicant:** Cathy Young (owner)/Jason Hill of Chelsea Capital Group (property manager)

**Building description, period, style defining features:**

This 3-story brick row house, ca 1890 is Composite in style. The mansard roof has a double dormer covered with aluminum siding with a gable roof, corbelled brick brackets and pommels at the ends of the dentilated cornice, scalloped slate and a single chimney. The windows are 1/1 sash with Eastlake lintels. The main entry is a single door with transom, boarded shut grocer's alley and a visible basement window grille. The stoop has iron pipe railing. A projecting flower design in stone decorates the corner and middle of the front wall. A patch of brickote has been removed to reveal red brick beneath.



**Proposed alterations:**

1. Removal of existing garage, using the concrete pad as a carport.
2. Installation of a new 3' high and 16' long wood picket fence with gate in the rear yard.

### **Evaluation of Proposed Project:**

The proposed garage and demolition of a new fence will have a minor negative impact to the historic property but will not have a direct impact to the main historic building. The garage is detached from the main building and located along the rear property line. According to historic Sanborn fire insurance maps, the garage was a later addition to the property and was constructed between 1911 and 1932. It does not appear to contribute to the historic character of the main building. The wood and brick masonry structure may be original, but the garage door has been replaced and the rear windows infilled. The garage appears to be in fair to poor condition with evidence of efflorescence and open joints at the brick masonry and water infiltration at the wood roof structure. The proposed new fence is wood picket, 3 feet in height. Wood pickets are appropriate and consistent with the Guidelines. The fence is proposed to be setback from the street and a new concrete pad will be poured for a parking area.

### **Historic District Impact:**

The proposed demolition will have a minor impact to the surrounding historic district, in that it will change the existing rhythm of a rear alley within the district. The change will only be visible from the rear alley, North Hazel Street. A variety of scale, design, and materials is already present across the garages on this alley. The proposed demolition does not appear to rise to the level of a significant negative impact to the historic character of the district.

### **HARB Discussion**

The criterion for demolition presents 5 main points, two of which are not relevant to this application, the other three have been applied with responses provided by the client that meet the criteria for demolition.

JH stated he met with two contractors on site, one would not give an estimate stating it is beyond repair. Cost to repair is twice the cost to remove.

CY echoed this, stated it is beyond repair, the wood structure is rotted, door doesn't open, sagging structure, roof leaks.

DH asked how it got this bad, was it during current or previous ownership.

JH stated the disrepair predates his involvement on the project.

CY repairs happened under her ownership, by previous property managers that performed the work improperly.

AJ suffers the loss of the streetwall on the corner property would feel more comfortable with something being done on the edge of the property versus pulling it back. Does not find the argument of ease of parking to be justification for the loss of original fabric and the streetwall,

DH agrees.

JH referenced compatibility and relevance of the proposed application since there are other carports in the immediate neighborhood and KP accessed Google Streetview to show this condition.

GL suggested maintaining a portion of the existing brick wall to provide the edge or boundary to the property, in addition car ports and pads do exist on the adjacent blocks creating precedent

DH referenced a previous application that approved a similar solution

HARB suggested retaining a portion of the wall, pointing, and capping it with a masonry material.

CY agreed this was a good solution.

**Recommendation(s):**

Demolition of existing structures for parking is not generally recommended. However, the existing garage does not appear to be a contributing resource to the surrounding historic district nor is it a significant feature of the main historic building. According to the Guidelines demolition criteria, a structure's location on a primary, secondary, or alleyway should be considered, as should the hierarchy of accessory structures to primary structures. The applicant stated that they consulted two licensed professionals on the feasibility of rehabilitation. It is recommended that the applicant clarify the existing conditions and these opinions of feasibility for HARB's consideration.

**Action**

Motion to approve demolition of garage and partial demolition of the existing brick wall along the property edge down to knee wall height of 3'-0", repoint the wall and add a brick or cast stone coping, ensure the existing concrete pad is in good condition, repair as needed and provide adequate drainage was made by HARB member Patricia Jackson, motion was seconded by HARB member Glenn Lichtenwalner. Motion carried with unanimous support.