

**CITY OF ALLENTOWN
HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
FINAL REVIEW SHEET
NOVEMBER 6, 2017**

Case #HDC-2017-00012 – Proposal to demolish the detached garage.

Property located at: 621 W Gordon Street

Agenda #1

Historic District: Fairgrounds

Case #HDC-2017-00012

Meeting date: November 6, 2017

Property Owner: Redevelopment Authority

Address: 435 W Hamilton St, Allentown,
PA 18101

Applicant: same

Applicant's Address: same

Building description, period, style, defining features: This 2½-story brick row house, ca 1870 is Italianate in style. The gable roof has shingles, a single dormer and a shared chimney. The windows are 2/2 sash with arched Italianate lintels. The main entry is a single glazed door with divided transom and carved door surround on a paneled concrete porch with iron pipe railing. At the rear there is a detached, CMU garage with roll-up door.



Proposed alterations: It is proposed to demolish the detached garage.

Staff Approvals: n/a

Background: HARB Case # 86-1-OF Approved February 3, 1986; City Council approval February 19, 1986

Proposal: Applicant proposes to remove cement porch with galvanized pipe railing in seriously dilapidated condition to replace with wooden porch stoop and banister. Applicant amendments: would like to get by without banister.

HARB amendment: gave applicant option of having a simple iron post banister with no intermediate posts or balustrades, or no banister at all if acceptable to Inspections. Rationale: The stoop size will be 50 x 28" with a sidewalk to entrance height of 56". Applicant was reminded to put sand in his final paint to reduce the chances of creating a slippery surface. Appearance will be of a flat landing and two steps down to sidewalk.

Violations: n/a

Guideline Citation: SIS 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment. **Allentown Guidelines for Historic Districts: 5.** Guidelines for Existing Buildings and Structures, 3. Demolition

Evaluation, effect on historic district, recommendations: The existing, detached, concrete block garage is in structurally poor condition. The garage shows up on Sanborn Maps sometime between 1911 and 1932. The concrete block wall material points to the later date, c. 1930. The garage does not have distinguishing features. Its demolition will not have an adverse effect on the alley or historic district. The treatment of the site after demolition needs discussion. If parking desired, the existing concrete pad should be replaced if in cracked and poor condition.

Discussion: The applicant described in further detail the condition of the garage, pointing out the large cracks in the CMU walls and the sagging lintel. There was little opposition to the demolition of the garage from the HARB. The applicant said a parking pad was desired after the structure was demolished, and that it was impossible to get inside to see the condition of the existing concrete slab. He hoped to keep it and the short concrete foundation wall (curb) around the perimeter. He said he would repair the existing slab or replace it if it was not in repairable condition. He went on to say the house was currently vacant. The Redevelopment Authority hoped to renovate it soon.

Motion: The HARB upon motion by Mr. Sell and seconded by Mr. Brobst adopted the proposal that City Council issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed work described herein:

1. The proposal to demolish the detached garage at 621 W Gordon Street was presented by Alex LoPiccolo.
2. Because the structure is in very deteriorated condition and not a contributing resource in the historic district, the HARB did not object to its demolition.
3. The CMU walls and roof will be demolished.
4. The existing short foundation wall will be retained and repaired if needed.
5. The existing concrete slab will be retained and repaired for off-street parking.
6. If the existing concrete slab is not repairable it will be replaced in kind.

The proposal to recommend a COA was unanimously approved. (7-0; motion carried; Brobst, Huber, Jackson, Olson, Renaut, Roberts, Sell)