

**HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD
CITY OF ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA
March 12, 2020
FINAL REVIEW**

Item #1- Case # HDC-2020-000002 - Proposal to amend existing COA from 2009

Property located at: 323 N 9th Street

Agenda #1

Historic District: Old Allentown

Case # HDC-2020-000002

Meeting date: March 2, 2020

Property Owner: RACA

Address: 245 N 6th St, Allentown, PA
18102

Applicant: same

Applicant's Address: same

Building description, period, style defining features: This structure is a 2 bay, 3 story semi-detached dwelling with a Mansard roof, wall dormer, projecting cornice, 1 over 1 double hung windows, and a rear ell with double story side porch. There is a wood storefront with recessed entry at the front. The storefront has been altered over time and the right side display window converted into a door. The house dates from the late 19th century and is Queen Anne in style. The house is in deteriorated condition.





Proposed alterations: Amend existing COA from 2009 including wood aluminum clad windows instead of repair/replace wood windows, install new doors to match 2009 architects plans, install 3 tab shingles on gable dormers, retain existing 2nd entrance on main façade instead of restore storefront window, retain existing exterior stair case on side porch instead of remove stair case.

Staff Approvals: N/A

Violations: N/A

Background: N/A

Guideline Citation: **SIS 6** Deteriorated features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials.

SIS 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and 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, 1. Repairs, Replacement and Alternative Materials, 3. Roofing, 5. Windows, 6. Doors, 7. Porches and Stoops 8. Storefronts

Evaluation, effect on historic district, recommendations: Most of the proposed amendments meet our historic guidelines with the following comments or issues:

1. Keeping the second door on the storefront is the most difficult issues to evaluate for this amendment. Because the door is already existing, the Historic Ordinance would (generally) allow it to remain. The door should be replaced to be more historically appropriate in material, configuration, and trim. The door should be wood or smooth fiberglass with deeper recessed panels; the configuration should be solid with panels (4 or 6) of half glass with 2 lower panels; trim should be repaired and potentially equalized on either side of the door by slightly shifting the door to the right. If the door swing is changed to the opposite side, glass should be considered for replacement of the solid panel on the recess return. It is also recommended to paint the door dark to resemble the appearance of the glass on the rest of the storefront. The existing concrete steps will need to be replaced to extend in front of the second door. The steps should have bullnose profile (A second suggestion is to look at relocating the door to the side of the recess, but there does not seem to be adequate dimension to do this.) A scaled drawings is recommended.
2. Aluminum clad windows instead of wood window replacements meet our historic guidelines. The current windows appear to be mostly 1 over 1. Color should be reviewed.
3. 3 tab shingles instead of slate on the dormer roofs meet our historic guidelines. Charcoal gray color is recommended.
4. The side exit stair exists, and its evaluation is similar to keeping the second front door. The stair will need a need railing and guard which should be historically compatible with existing historic railings. A scaled drawing is recommended.

Discussion: The applicants explained that they found additional problems with the house. The major problem being a structural bulge in the side brick wall. Mr. Smith said they would need to reconstruct the brick side wall and remove the slate roof to reduce weight on the side wall. He proposed to remove all of the slate roofing and replace with Slateline shingles. The HARB asked that the rolled metal ridge caps be reinstalled on the new Slateline roof. The applicants agreed to do that and said they planned to repair the wood shingles in the dormer gable.

The applicants explained they needed to keep the house a 2 unit dwelling. The project had funding that led to keeping the second living unit. Options for the door in the storefront were discussed. Mr. Fillman suggested using a glass door to give a more similar appearance to the former display window. A wood and glass door was preferred to a metal and glass door. The

suggestion to reverse the swing of the door and replace the plywood in the entry return with glass and adding a step were discussed and supported. Other items concerning the front façade were cleaning and repointing the brick.

At the side of the building the exit stair on the rear porch and the replacement railing reviewed. Repairing the stair and installing an open railing were supported as well as matching the first floor railing for the second level of the porch. Mr. Sell questioned whether the second means of egress was necessary for the second unit. The applicants said they would research the code and remove it if it was not required.

Mr. Brobst suggested also researching whether steel reinforcements could be used to stabilize the side brick wall instead of reconstructing it. He had past experience with using internal vertical steel columns to save unsound veneer walls. The applicants said they would research the possibility.

The final few items discussed were keeping the wood garage door, a mail slot instead of a mailbox, and the proposed light fixture. It was agreed a light specification would be submitted to Mr. Kimmerly for staff approval.

Motion: The HARB upon motion by Mr. Huber 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 amend existing COA from 2009 at 323 N 9th Street was represented by Kelly McEllroy and Scotty Smith.
2. The existing deteriorated wood windows may be replaced with aluminum clad wood windows to fit the size of the existing windows.
3. The existing doorway in the historic storefront may remain. The door will be replaced with a full light wood door, hinged on the right and the historic storefront return panel will be restored to glass.
4. The existing slate roof and slate dormers may be replaced with GAF Slateline fiberglass shingles in the Antique Slate color.
5. The historic wood shingles in the front dormer gable will be restored or replaced in kind.
6. The structurally failing side brick wall will be taken down and reconstructed with new brick to match the existing as closely as possible. In lieu of reconstruction steel columns may be inserted on the interior of the failing brick wall and the brick pulled back in, stabilized, and repointed.
7. If the brick wall is reconstructed new openings for windows may be added. The new openings to be evenly spaced and appropriately aligned and match the size of the front façade windows. New aluminum clad double hung windows may be installed in the new openings on the first and second floor. The windows must be trimmed to match the windows on the front facade.
8. At the side of the building the existing exit stair will be repaired if stair required for egress from second floor apartment. If it is not required it will be removed.
9. New 2nd floor railing and stair railing will be fabricated to match 1st floor historic railing.
10. Where the rear second floor addition is to be removed, railing and post to match historic will be installed.
11. Mail slots will be used instead of mailboxes.
12. New light fixtures will be submitted to the city for staff review.
13. The existing wood garage door will be repaired and reused if possible.
14. All other work as described in the COA approved by City Council in 2009 shall be completed as described therein.

The proposal to issue a COA was unanimously approved. (6-0; motion carried; Brobst, Fillman, Huber, Jackson, Roberts, Sell).