

**HISTORIC ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD  
CITY OF ALLENTOWN, PENNSYLVANIA  
August 31, 2020**

**FINAL REVIEW**

**Address:** 1444 W Linden Street –

**Case #** HDC-2020-00027 - Proposal to repair the porch columns, header and wall

**Historic District:** West Park

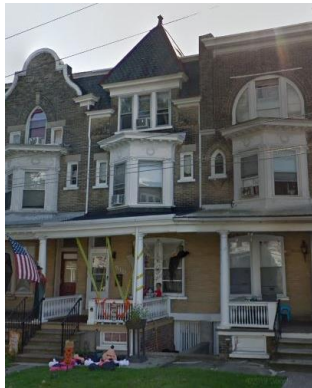
**Property Owner:** Luis Vega

**Address:** 1444 W Linden St, Allentown, PA 18102

**Applicant:** Modern View Remodeling

**Applicant's Address:** 1013 Timberidge Ln, Allentown, PA 18106

**Building description, period, style defining features:** This structure is a 3 story, attached tan brick dwelling with Mansard roof, front facing Flemish gable, a triple window on the third floor featuring center pointed arch, second floor double-angled oriel window, full front porch with Doric columns and original turned balustrade. The building dates form c 1900 and is Edwardian in style.



**Proposed alterations:** It is proposed to repair the porch columns, header, and wall.

**Staff Approvals:** N/A

**Violations:**

- 07/09/19 - COMPLAINT - PORCH ROOF FALLING DOWN AFFECTING 1446 LINDEN ST. - DB/JA
- 3/20/2020 COMPLAINT PORCH ROOF GM/PY; VIOLATION LETTER SENT FOR PORCH

**Background:**

**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

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:** 5.1.11 Guidelines for Existing Buildings and Structures, 1. Repairs, Replacement and Alternative Materials, 7. Porches and Stoops

**Evaluation, effect on historic district, recommendations:** The proposal as amended to be the repair of the porch header, posts, and wall near the posts is historically appropriate. The new work must match the old in appearance and materials. The location and description of the wall repair should be discussed. It is not clear where that is occurring.

*(from 8/3/20 meeting)*

**Evaluation, effect on historic district, recommendations:**

*The porch is in need of repair. The header needs to be replaced likely due to a leaking box gutter. The box gutter must be repaired and repainted. A new header should be sized by a structural engineer and it should be wrapped in 1 x wood and painted. The new Column must match the old as closely as possible, The new post could be fiberglass. Fiberglass is hard to distinguish from wood and would be historically appropriate.*

**Discussion:** *There was a complicated discussion of this project. It was complicated by the fact that the described work was not being proposed in the end. Mr. Sadiua provided additional photographs of work done at the property which appeared to be not historically appropriate. In the end it was understood that the work done was just support work to allow the replacement of the beam and column, but if that was the case, it was located in the wrong location. The applicant said he planned to replace the column and beam to match the historic, however that was not stated in the submission for HARB review. The HARB thought the applicant should have an engineer or architect involved to be sure the work was structurally adequate. In conclusion the HARB said they could not act on the proposal as submitted and voted to table the project until a revised submission was made for the work actually being done.*

**Motion:** *The HARB upon motion by Mr. Brobst and seconded by Mr. Huber agreed to table the project for more details and information.*

**Discussion:** The neighboring property owner at 1446 W Linden St attended the meeting and asked to share information on the deteriorated porch at 1444. She informed the HARB that the porch work and inappropriate supports have been in place for 3 ½ years and predate the current owner. The modifications that occurred to the porch have led to deterioration of her porch and the center column between the properties. Repeated efforts to get the property owner to fix the porch have been unsuccessful. The problem was now a Property Maintenance violation. Mr. Sadiua said that Property Maintenance required the work to be reviewed and approved by HARB which has delayed their deadline for repairs to be completed.

The HARB thanked the neighbor for the information which was helpful in understanding the issues. The property owner was not in attendance but the HARB was forced to take an action on the proposal due to the lapse of time since the initial submission for review. Mr. Fillman pointed out that the proposal indicated the porch would be repaired to match 1442 W Linden, but that repair work was inappropriately done and done without HARB review or a COA. Mr. Fillman asked if there was a way that emergency city funds could be used to do the repairs and a lien placed on the property. The answer to that was not clear.

In conclusion the HARB reasoned they had to deny the project because the applicant was not in attendance, the time period for review would end soon, and the proposed work was based on a porch that was not appropriately repaired. They stipulated that detailed architectural drawings and specifications be submitted with the future submission for review.

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

1. The proposal to repair the porch columns, header and wall at 1444 W Linden Street was not represented.
2. The amended proposal to restore the porch to the appearance of the porch at 1442 W Linden St is not historically appropriate. That porch was modified inappropriately without HARB review or COA.
3. The porch alterations and inappropriate support system have been in place for approximately 3 ½ years and are causing deterioration on a neighboring property.
4. The altered porch must be returned to the original historic appearance and materials or approved alternate materials. Unaltered porches are located on the block and can be used as a guide for the work.
5. The applicant must return to HARB with detailed and scaled architectural drawings and specifications showing the proposed restoration work.

**HARB ACTION:** The proposal to DENY a COA was unanimously approved. (5-0; motion carried: motion carried: Brobst, Fillman, Huber, Jackson, Roberts)

