



CITY OF ALLENTOWN

No. 30739

RESOLUTION

R182 - 2023

Introduced by the Administration on October 18, 2023

Denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness – 1410 W. Linden Street

Resolved by the Council of the City of Allentown, That

WHEREAS a Certificate of Appropriateness is required under the provisions of the Act of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania No.167, June 13, 1961 (P.L.282) known as the Pennsylvania Historic District Act; and City of Allentown has adopted a Historic District Ordinance, Article 1391, under the provisions allowed in the Pennsylvania Historic District Act; and

WHEREAS the owner, Miriam Montanez, applied to the Historical Architectural Review Board (HARB) for a Certificate of Appropriateness to legalize the replacement of the front porch, as described in the attached final report; and

WHEREAS the HARB held a meeting on said matter on October 2, 2023, where a representative for the applicant was not in attendance; and

WHEREAS based on the statements and evidence presented, the HARB made the following findings of fact, as detailed in the attached case report:

1. The porch was significantly altered without a building permit or HARB approval.
2. A first notice of violation was issued to the property owner on July 19, 2022 for the inappropriate alteration of the front porch, and a second notice of violation was issued to the property owner on August 25, 2022.
3. On numerous occasions, the applicant requested to table the review for one to two months to allow time to work with a contractor to create a scope of work to correct the violation. Requests to table the review were made and granted at the following HARB meetings: November 7, 2022; December 5, 2022; February 6, 2023; April 3, 2023; August 7, 2023; and September 5, 2023
4. The applicant or a representative actively participated in the reviews at the following HARB meetings: May 1, 2023; June 5, 2023; and July 10, 2023.
5. The HARB found that the violation has been open for more than a year and little progress has been made to appropriately correct the violation.
6. The HARB found that the matter could no longer be tabled without a direct request from the applicant.

WHEREAS, based on the above findings of fact, the HARB agreed on the motion not to legalize the replacement of the front porch, and recommended to City Council denial of a Certificate of Appropriateness as detailed in the attached case report.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Allentown that a Certificate of Appropriateness is hereby denied for the above referenced exterior alteration.

| | Yea | Nay |
|-------------------------------|-----|-----|
| Candida Affa | X | |
| Ce-Ce Gerlach | X | |
| Cynthia Y. Mota | X | |
| Santo Napoli | X | |
| Natalie Santos | X | |
| Ed Zucal | X | |
| Daryl Hendricks, President | X | |
| TOTAL | 7 | 0 |

THIS IS TO CERTIFY, That the above copy of Resolution No. 30739 was adopted by the City Council of Allentown on the 1st day of November, 2023, and is on file in the City Clerk's Office.

Michelle P. M...

 City Clerk

**Historical Architectural Review Board
COA Final Review Sheet**

HDC-2022-00058

Address: 1410 W. Linden Street

District: West Park Historic District

Applicant: Miriam Montanez, Owner

Proposal: Legalize porch replacement (Violation Correction)

Building Description:

This 3-story brick row house, ca 1911 is porch house. The mansard roof has a square projecting double dormer, white fish scale shingles, ornate ironwork around the edge of the cornice which has decorative wood brackets and a carved keystone over the center of the 1/1 sash dormer windows with a carved wood lintel and brick lintel. The 2nd floor has a bay with 1/1 sash windows and beveled glass transom, there is a projecting cornice with decorative wood brackets and a repeat of the keystones above each window. The wooden porch has a single 3/4-glazed door with a transom, carved pillars with classic columns, turned balustrade and railing. There is a visible basement window and the concrete steps have wrought iron railings.

Project Description:

On July 19, 2022, a first Notice of Violation was issued by staff to the property owner of 1410 W. Linden Street for replacing the front porch without permits or HARB approval. A second Notice of Violation was issued on August 25, 2022. The owner cut the carved wood capitals and removed the turned wood columns and replaced the features with brick piers. The turned wood balusters and railings were also removed and replaced with brick. Finally, the porch steps and floor were covered with ceramic tile. The steps and floor were previously painted concrete. The property owner originally sought to legalize the removal of the columns, capitals, balusters, and railings and the installation of the brick piers, railings, and ceramic tile. She is now seeking approval for a restoration plan.



**1410 W. Linden Street after replacement.
(Applicant)**



**1410 W. Linden Street porch after replacement.
(Applicant)**

**Historical Architectural Review Board
COA Final Review Sheet**



**1410 W. Linden Street porch prior to replacement, 2021.
(Easton Architects)**



**Original decorative wood porch balusters, railings, columns,
and capitals, c. 2004. (HARB files)**

Applicable Guidelines:

Chapter 3.7 – Porches & Steps

3.7.3 Repair and restore existing porches and steps whenever possible. Salvage, repair, and reuse existing components including deck floor boards, railings, balusters, posts, and decorative trim. Repair and restore basement level windows or metal grates that are part of the porch base.

3.7.4 Replace individual deteriorated components in-kind with new materials matching the original in material composition, size, shape, profile, dimension, appearance, and finish. Custom fabrication is encouraged and may be necessary to provide an exact match. Where an exact match of the historic element cannot be found or fabricated, the new element should match the original as closely as possible.

3.7.5 Retain and repair original handrails or railings. Replace in-kind if repair is not feasible. Replacement handrails should match the existing in material, size, and appearance as closely as possible. Installation of handrails where they did not previously exist is generally not recommended due to the visual and physical impact on historic fabric; however, installation of a simple, compatible design may be acceptable for the purpose of safety and ease of access.

3.7.7 Replace porches only if repair and select replacement is not feasible. A full demolition and rebuild is rarely necessary except in cases of severe deterioration and life safety concerns. Replicate the original design as closely as possible, allowing for structural and code requirements. Install flashing and waterproofing at all connections between the porch and main building.

3.7.8 If in-kind replacement is not feasible, replace with appropriate alternate materials that respect the original appearance and are durable. Composite wood decking is an appropriate alternate for tongue-and-groove wood floors if boards are similar to the original dimensions. Ceramic tile, carpet, or cementitious coatings over wood are not appropriate floor materials. Steel, iron, and aluminum railings are acceptable replacements. Vinyl railings and trim are not appropriate alternate materials for wood elements. Use of dimensional lumber for visible parts of a porch is not appropriate.

Historical Architectural Review Board COA Final Review Sheet

Observations & Comments:

The property at 1410 W. Linden Street has a richly detailed façade and is exemplar for its metal cresting and decorative carved wood elements. The columns, capitals, and balusters contributed greatly to the character-defining elements of the building's façade. The loss of those features has negatively impacted the building's architectural significance. The removal of the wood features and installation of brick piers and railings, as well as the addition of ceramic tile flooring, do not comply with the historic district's design guidelines. The guidelines advocate for repair and restoration and, when not possible, replacement in-kind. The staff notes that prior to replacement, no outstanding violations existed on the property, and there was no indication that the porch presented a dangerous or unsafe condition. Staff contends that the porch was in repairable condition.

The brick piers and railings do not replicate the historic in material composition, size, shape, profile, dimension, appearance, or finish and do not comply with Guidelines 3.7.4 or 3.7.5. Staff recommends removing the brick and replicating the historic columns, capitals, balusters, and railings. In the revised scope, the contractor proposes to install 8-inch wood columns and states that they match the dimension of the original. Staff finds the round wood columns to be an acceptable match.

The contractor has indicated that the Ionic scroll, which was cut from the larger capital, will be replaced in kind. Staff requests the specifications of this element be submitted prior to making a recommendation. Similarly, the contractor has discussed with staff an option for creating a new column base, and staff has requested additional information.

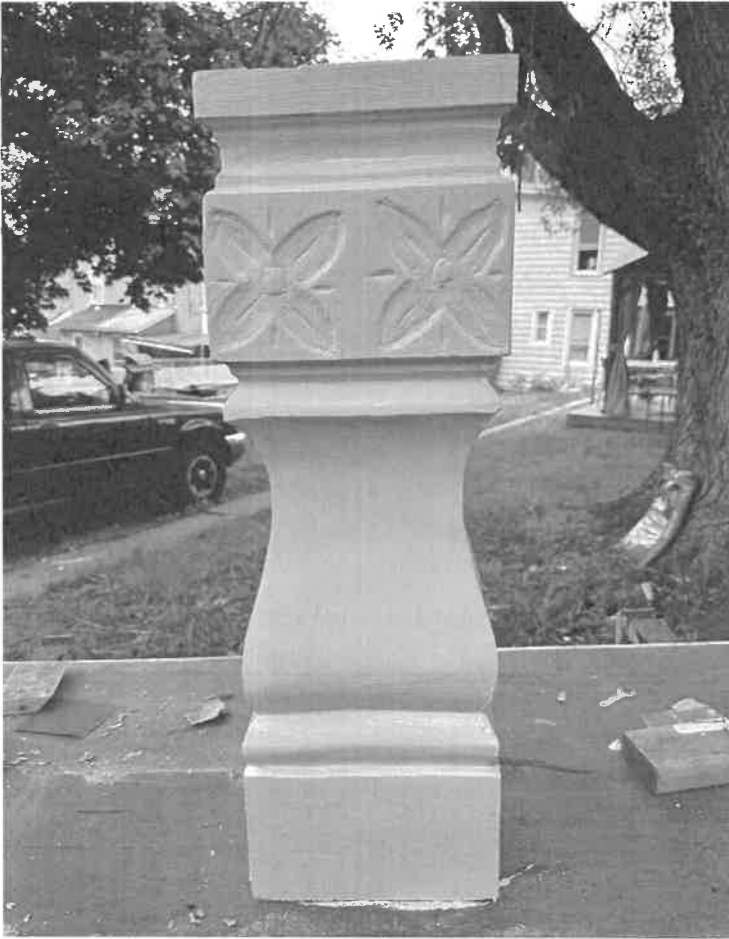
The applicant proposes to install wood balusters that are similar to, though not an exact match of, the original. According to the drawing, the top and bottom rail would be less substantial than the original. Staff suggests finding a railing that more closely replicates the original size and profile and asks the HARB to comment on the proposed balusters.

While the original porch decking and steps had been removed at some point in the past and replaced with concrete, the installation of ceramic tile on the steps and floor do not comply with Guideline 3.7.8. Staff recommended removing the tile and re-exposing the painted concrete steps and floor. The contractor has agreed to reverse the installation of the tile.

July 10, 2023 Revision:

The applicant submitted a revised column base for review. The photograph of the sample base more accurately replicates the historic base in design and appearance. Staff recommends approval of the proposed base, provided the incised design is also included at the plinth. Staff notes that the HARB has requested that the applicant provide further details on the Ionic scroll at the capital, as well as balusters and railings that more closely replicate the original.

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**Detail of new column base.
(Applicant)**

Staff Recommendation:

Denial, pursuant to Chapter 3, Section 3.7 Porches & Steps.

HARB Discussion:

The HARB discussed how to move forward without the applicant present, noting that the application has been tabled for many months at the applicant's request to allow for a number of additional details to be provided. Ms. Keller stated that the applicant has not submitted a request to table the application and is not present, so the HARB would need to act. Mr. Jordan commented that quite a bit of progress had been made to correct the violation, though not in the past few months. The HARB discussed denying the application, since progress has been halted, and the property has remained in violation for well over a year.

Action:

Mr. Jordon moved to deny the application presented on 10/2/2023 to legalize the porch replacement at 1410 W. Linden Street, pursuant to Chapter 3, Section 3.7 Porches & Steps. Mr. Huber seconded the motion, which carried with unanimous support.