

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

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**HDC-2023-00091**

**Address: 425 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street**

**District: Old Allentown Historic District**

**Applicant: Necido Paulino, owner**

**Proposal: Legalize the installation of ceramic tile on front porch and steps. (violation correction)**

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**Building Description:**

This 3-story brick row house, ca 1890 is Eastlake in style. The mansard roof has fish scaled slate shingles, a dentilated cornice, one dormer with wood fish scaling shingles, small windows next to the dormer which has a stained glass window. The window lintels are Eastlake with a patterned brick over lintels and two basement window grilles are visible. The main entry is a single glazed door with transom. There is a concrete porch with an Allentown Porch roof. The roof profile is concave, decorative beaded balusters in the roof ends, wood brackets, rafters have scroll-sawn ends and asphalt shingles.

**Project Description:**

This application is looking to legalize the installation of ceramic tile on the front porch and steps at 425 N. 10<sup>th</sup> Street. The porch and steps historically had a concrete finish but were resurfaced with tile between 2019 and 2023.



**Photo showing the installation of tile on the front porch and steps of 425 N. 10th Street, 2023.  
(Staff Street View)**



**Photo showing the condition of the porch and steps prior to alterations, 2019.  
(Google Street View)**



**Detail of porch, 2023.  
(Staff Street View)**



**Detail of porch, 2023  
(Staff Street View)**

**Applicable Guidelines:**

**Chapter 3.7 – Porches & Steps**

**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.

**3.7.6** Consider restoration of previously altered porches with historically appropriate elements. Consult historic photographs to identify the original appearance. If the building is part of a pair or an attached row that was designed together, consult nearby buildings for examples.

**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.

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### **Observations & Comments:**

Guideline 3.7.8 notes that alternate porch materials, such as composite wood decking, may be appropriate if similar to the appearance of the original floorboards. The guideline specifically notes that ceramic tile, carpet, or cementitious coatings over wood are not appropriate floor materials. Staff contends that the tile is not an appropriate porch material whether installed over wood or concrete and recommends removing the tiles and repairing the existing concrete slab to better comply with the design guidelines.

### **Staff Recommendation:**

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

### **Presenters:**

- Christine Ussler (HARB Consultant) introduced the project.
- There was no representation for the applicant.

**Discussion:** The applicants were not present last month or this month to discuss the violation. Due to the length of time since the application was submitted, action was required. It was agreed the installation of tile was not supported in the Guidelines for Historic Districts and that there were no unique circumstances evident.

**Actions:** Mr. Huber made a motion to DENY the application presented on February 5th, 2024, to legalize the installation of ceramic tile on the front porch and steps at 425 N. 10th Street because it did not comply with the Guidelines for Historic Districts and there were no know unique circumstances that would apply.

Mr. Hart seconded the motion, which carried with unanimous support.