

LANDMARK COMMISSION MINUTES

June 25, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Michele Derr	■ Member
Christy Graham	■ Vice-Chair
Andy Lee	■ Member
Marcela Medellin	■ Chairperson
John Dickinson	■ Member
John Yates	■ Member
Joel Hartmangruber	■ Member
Noros Martin	■ P&Z Liaison
Michael Smith	■ Council Liaison

Monica Aguon, Assistant City Attorney	■ City Staff
Terry Floyd, Development Services Director	■ City Staff
Karen Montgomery-Gagné, Principal Planner/HPO	■ City Staff
Robin Marshall, Admin Assistant	■ City Staff

ABSENT:

Janel Ponder Smith	■ Member
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GUESTS:

Mr. Alejandro Rico, 2908 10 th St, applicant
Mrs. Misty Morrow, 1611 Buchanan, applicant

I. Call to Order, Introductions and Welcome

Chairperson Marcela Medellin called the meeting to order at 12:00p.m. Ms. Medellin had Commission members, staff and guests introduce themselves.

II. Review & Approval of Minutes from: May 21st, 2024

Chairperson Medellin called for review and approval of the May 21st, 2024 Landmark Commission meeting minutes. Ms. Michele Derr made a motion to approve the minutes as presented, Mr. Noros Martin seconded the motion. Minutes were unanimously approved 8-0.

Regular Agenda

III. Action Item: Design Review – 2908 10th

Consider options to address a design review application for an unfinished metal framed carport, which was constructed without building permits, since the owner has not yet provided the supplemental application/design diagram and materials list requested by the Commission.

District – West Floral Heights

Owner – Alex Rico

Chairperson Marcela Medellin introduced the case.

Karen Montgomery-Gagné presented the case. This case was before the commission last month, but members requested it be on the June agenda to present additional information. As stated by Ms. Montgomery-Gagné, there are still some key items that are outstanding. Two lots, a residential lot and a residential vacant lot that were replatted in order to be able to consider a design review case for an illegally constructed metal carport. In fall 2022 it was discovered there was an unimproved metal framed carport constructed and stop work order issued. Presented to the Commission were photos of the property when Building Inspections issued a stop order work. Staff pointed out the carport is a smaller scale than the primary historic residence, and that is critical for an accessory structure as it cannot over power the primary structure on the property and detract from the historical/architectural character, design and profile. The original design sketch Mr. Rico presented in November 2022 was shown to the Commission, and Ms. Montgomery-Gagné pointed out the sketch is what the Commission approved at that time with the condition that it not be a standing seam metal roof. It had to either be metal shingle or composition asphalt shingles. Mr. Rico decided to go with the composition asphalt shingles, the same color/texture as on the historical residence. Additional photos were presented showing carports/accessory buildings within the surrounding historical neighborhood for comparison, citing what materials were used and how they were constructed. It was pointed out that this case was unique because all the other properties had a residential building, they had a primary structure on the lot. These two lots (Mr. Rico's) had been combined because the house had to be demolished due to life/health/safety issues many years prior. So, it is very unusual to have a carport that close to the front yard setback and that visible from 10th Street, because they are normally in the side or rear yard. Shown in additional photos was the decking put on the roof by Mr. Rico, and that is when, this spring, the secondary stop work order from Building Inspections was placed. That is when the case was brought back before the Commission as he didn't have the funds/time to complete the authorized improvements within the 12-mo design review authorization permit nor requested a design review extension prior to its expiration. Moving forward, to address concerns and questions, it was looked at how this can meet the design standards. It was stated, with the situation we have, if there are appropriate conditions with this carport that is unfinished, it can come into compliance with the Secretary of the Interior Standards for rehabilitation and our City Design Standards. At this point, the metal carport is illegal and the Commission gets to determine what are appropriate conditions for it to remain. Some of the items discussed at the last meeting were to ensure all of the metal framing and components were covered with wood, so that it mirrored the design of the house. And also, to maintain some of the unique features that are on the house as to avoid detrimental impact to the historical and architectural character, of not only that property, but of the entire block which then can impact the entire district. Ms. Montgomery-Gagné presented some of the back-and-forth correspondence with Mr. Rico and stated that a new drawing from the East - West Façade, that is visible from 10th Street, was not received. A partial list of updated materials was received from Mr. Rico, and was presented to the Commission in their packet. Mr. Rico provided current pictures that

was handed out to the Commission to view, he stepped forward to present his case. Ms. Montgomery-Gagné pointed out the gable shown in the booklet on page 22, which gives a good overview of the 10th Street façade on the historic residence that Mr. Rico is trying to replicate. The wood component on the gable is what he would replicate using lap siding on the house. Mr. Rico stated no metal would be showing or seen. Chairperson Medellin asked if the window will be an actual window or just a grill with a wood frame. Mr. Rico said it will be a glass window with metal grills with a wood frame and accents which he will custom create. He stated that the columns will be covered with cedar, so the metal framework will not be seen under the roof.

Ms. Michele Derr asked if the metal rafters would be exposed, and said the objective when Mr. Rico came to the Commission, was to mimic the look of the house with the gable in the front, to have the window there, and to have the rafter tails exposed going down the sides and covered with wood – which retains the historic nature of the original structure. She stated to change any of that destroys the historic nature of the original structure. Chairperson Medellin said that everyone seems to be in agreement for the part of the gable, as Mr. Rico is trying to match that. She suggested instead of adding the soffit, if Mr. Rico could wrap the rafters individually in wood. Ms. Montgomery-Gagné pointed out to Mr. Rico where the rafters extend out from the roofline and explained that the wooden rafters are a key feature on the house, so if he could cover the rafters with wood and painted so it is similar to the primary structure. Mr. Rico said he can use a C-metal and add a plug to the end. Ms. Cristy Graham stated if the rafters were painted white, no one would know if it wasn't wood. Ms. Derr asked about the fascia piece on the front and the window, and stated confusion on what Mr. Rico is talking about using to 'mimic' the window. Mr. Rico said the pieces holding it together would be wood. Then he stated the rafters would look more square than the November 2022 drawing; he would add a cap to the end which would be painted. Ms. Montgomery-Gagné clarified that those would be the only rafters that would be painted, and there are 6-8 on the 10th Street side. Then she had Mr. Rico clarify how far the roof overhangs would extend beyond the gable, and he said it is 6-12 inches. It does not hang over the fence line, which was of concern in the past. The peak on the carport will be 6-10 feet. The supports are eight feet, and the fence is six feet tall. Mr. Rico said he will be painting the metal before he covers it in wood to reduce rust exposure. Mr. Hartmangruber stated the Commission needs drawings and those same drawings will be needed to obtain a building permit. Mr. John Dickinson stated the Commission needs a lot more detail in the drawings. Ms. Derr added that the auxiliary structure needs to mimic the look and the historic character of the house. Those key elements carry over.

Chairperson Medellin introduced a motion to table the case for the illegal metal carport at 2908 10th Street until August to allow Mr. Rico time to provide the details and drawings to the Commission. With additional specifics about the window, the type of metal, glass and wood, as well as the specifics about the rafters, their shape and whether they would be painted or covered by wood.

Mr. Noros Martin makes a motion to table and return in August. Mr. Rico says he can provide the information and drawings by August, and Ms. Montgomery-Gagné stated

that she would need all of the drawings and information by Aug 2nd, or the latest by Aug 6th. Mr. John Yates seconded the motion.

Chairperson Medellin asked if there was anyone that would like to make a public comment, and no one stepped forward. Mr. Dickinson clarified with Mr. Rico that he needs to provide detailed drawings on every aspect, trying to match the house. It needs to be very close to the design of the house. Mr. Rico can offer suggestions of alternative products if he can't find what is needed to mimic the design of the primary building. Ms. Derr pointed out that page 9 from the booklet, with the prior meetings minutes, gives the motion that refers to Mr. Rico's case. It was decided to amend the pending motion and to reference the three additional requests for information referenced on page 9 of the minutes from the last meeting.

The three requests from page 9 of the book were:

1. Drawings need to include more specifics including elevations, detailed dimensions for the east, west, and south facades (10th St) as all are visible from the public ROW.
2. Detail/outline showing covering on exposed metal rafters, supports, specifically, wood coverings to more closely match the historic residence.
3. Completed and submitted in time to be considered at the Landmark Commission's August 27, 2024 meeting.

Mr. Martin makes the motion, and Mr. Yates seconded the motion.

Chairperson Medellin called for a vote on the motion; it passed in favor; vote of 8-0.

IV. Action Item: Design Review – 1611 Buchanan

Request authorization to reconstruct a semicircular brick arch and abutment connected to the Buchanan façade using new and salvaged bricks previously removed due to safety concerns but void of appropriate approvals.

District – West Floral Heights

Owner – Misty Morrow

Staff presented the case, noting the property is in the 1600 block of Buchanan, it is one of the Tudor style homes, and was featured in the design guidelines for its unique chimney being a key architectural element. It is contributing to the district and dates back to 1929. Some of the key elements are the arches and the two cross gables. Ms. Montgomery-Gagné showed the Commission pictures from 2004, and pointed out the unique brick arch and the abutment which was an access to the side yard - a key element. Pictures were shown of cracking and long-term maintenance issues from throughout the years. When it was originally constructed it was not built with structural support, though it did hold up from 1929 to 2019. In May, two Building Inspectors went out and determined it was not structural however it still left a hole on the southwest corner of the house and no prior authorization was obtained for removal. That is when Ms. Morrow began communication with Planning and Building Inspection staff, and immediately began working on the Design Review Application. The owner indicated the archway/abutment was removed without prior approval as they deemed it a safety hazard for children in their home, trying to get into the side and back yard. That is why the Morrow's initially took it down, they didn't realize at the time they needed a demolition permit and request Landmark Commission authorization. When they spoke with the Planning Department, they said they wanted to reconstruct the arch. Ms.

Montgomery-Gagné showed the Commission pictures of the unchanged north façade, and the south and west façade where you could see the inner steel support beam and the brick veneer on the outer edge. What the Morrow's are proposing is to come back, working with a brick mason, and Mr. Morrow being a skilled wood craftsman/cabinet maker, to work together to rebuild the arch. Drawings will not need to be submitted to Building Inspections for the project because it is not structural and it is an owner-occupied residence. However, the demolition permit – after the fact- if you choose to allow this reconstruction will have to be obtained. Drawings from Mrs. Morrow were provided to the Commission to consider, to show how the owners planned to rebuild it as it was originally designed, to maintain the architectural feature. The owner stated it won't be exactly the same, they did save the bricks though may have to utilize some new bricks interspersed in how the arch is rebuilt, because some of the bricks were damaged. There were discussions back and forth with Building Inspections staff and with research from the Brick Institute, that long term it should have some level of support. Ms. Montgomery-Gagné then showed a drawing of a steel lintel that will go in the arch, so that will hopefully give the arch another 50-80 years because of the added support structure. Additional information was provided to the Commission that showed some of the key features of arches. Arches provide both a structural and a key architectural aspect, a unique feature to many buildings. It was stated that some things to consider are water penetration and the support. Staff pointed out the Commission should consider how does this project fit the national standards? There are four key items that are presented in the packet, looking at numbers 2,5,6 and 9. "Essentially you want to retain the historic character. So, in the situation where it has been removed or it is beyond repair, one will try to reconstruct so you maintain the visual, the design, the texture, the scale. In this case we feel that the owner is trying to ensure it is reconstructed exactly the same. When we look at our design guidelines, there is not a section that deals specifically with arches, so it really falls under exterior walls. We try to retain, if there are opportunities long term to continue with maintenance, that would be ideal. In this case, try to reconstruct the arch/abutment with the original appearance, design and character. Staff commented in this case owners are trying to utilize the same bricks, appropriately mix in more on the abutment portion (or the column piece), some of the new bricks being interspersed, and then trying to use those in-kind materials." Ms. Montgomery-Gagné stated, based on these reasons, staff recommend the reconstruction of the removed arch and abutment and connection to the house.

Chairperson Medellin asked if the applicant would like to make any comments. Mrs. Misty Morrow presented her case. She stated that it took her mother-in-law a lot to get the house, and it has been in the hands of other family members when she passed. Mr. and Mrs. Morrow took over possession of the house when they saw it was not being taken care of properly. They worked hard to get it back in the same shape it was when the mother-in-law purchased. The archway is the favorite spot for kids to run into the back yard. When it started to come down, Mrs. Morrow had concerns for one of the children getting hurt from falling debris. She would like to get the arch back up and make it as close as possible to the original arch, because that is part of the history of the house. She added that's what gave the house its pizazz. She will do whatever she needs to do to get the arch back.

Chairperson Medellin opened for comments to any members in the audience. No one had any comments. Ms. Derr introduced a motion to accept the design review application as presented for this property at 1611 Buchanan to rebuild the missing brick arch/support column with interior structural supports. John Dickinson seconded the motion. The motion passed with a vote of 8-0. Staff reminded the applicant they would need to obtain the missing demolition permit and any other required permits.

V. Other Business:

Chairperson Medellin opened discussion for other business.

Ms. Christy Graham presented the following business:

- Ms. Graham will be taking over the Depot Square Historic District Report.
- A reminder that the farmers market will be open 9-1 every Saturday.
- Thursday is July 4th, so they will not be having Artwalk on the first Thursday.
- Wichita Theatre is currently doing Shrek the musical. It started on June 14th and will run through July 14th.
- Stage Two has a production of the Odd Couple. The next showing will be July 5,6th, then the 26,27th of July and the final showing will be the 2nd and 3rd of August.
- The Backdoor Theater is doing the kids production of Cinderella which will be showing July 12th through the 27th.
- Downtown Development is doing what is called “Take it Outside” in Central Park on 8th and Scott on every Friday from 11-1. Bring your lunch and enjoy the entertainment.
- 615 7th Street – historic building with transom windows; building was approved for a design application and is coming along nicely. This building is in the oldest part of our historic area, and important its being saved. Downtown Development created a Facebook post about this property and the transom windows, which was read. The owner of the property pledges to create a place of entertainment; is considering a jazz lounge.

Ms. Montgomery-Gagné updated the Landmark Commission on award nominations. Staff have applied for a Texas Municipal League and also a Texas American Planning Chapter Award Nomination under historic preservation, with the community partnership initiative - West Floral Heights Historic District Plaque Project. So, we nominated that based on:

- 1) To try to encourage more training awareness working with the Wichita Falls Realtors Association. To get the word out that we have a residential district, and that the owners will need to get with the Landmark Commission when visible exterior alterations are made.

- 2) Something tangible and lasting on every home that would be very clearly seen when a property is marketed online. So, the realtor and the prospective buyer would see the marker/plaque at the entrance of the house and that would hopefully spear asking questions.

There is a free National Trust Webinar that some have signed up for on July 16th. It deals with concerns of insuring historic buildings, because it is becoming a bigger issue. The costs have gone up and people are having difficulty finding companies that will insure a historic building.

Administrative Reviews/Cases: Staff stated there were some concerns about what has happened recently in Morningside, our National Register District. It is a requirement of Certified Local Government communities to inform the Texas Historical Commission when there are alterations to National Register properties or districts, or county courthouses. So, in this case we had a homeowner have their electrician call us to see if they needed to submit anything for design review. For an electrical relocate, all seemed okay, no design review in Morningside and no other information was given, so an electrical permit was pulled. But someone started acting too soon and they began to demolish the rear detached garage, without any additional building permit approvals. It won't come before the Commission for design review, but proper permits need to be in place and we are obligated to inform the State.

Staff presented pictures of the demolition/collapse, and informed the panel the rear garage is completely gone. This apparently was demolished by a new contractor the owner had hired to take down brush, and the demolition was done while the owner was out of town. To note, we have had a good working relationship with this owner in the past. Code and Building Inspection was involved and citations were issued. The construction debris looked to be strewn across the front yard along Pembroke as the owner opted to hire the City Sanitation Dept. for removal rather than have a dumpster placed in the driveway. Due to the mess left in the yard, there were complaints that triggered investigation by Code. As of the meeting, it had been cleaned up, and the penalty fee and the demolition fee were obtained. A permit for replacing thirty windows has been obtained, but unfortunately, they will be vinyl, and then a new roof. It is Ms. Montgomery-Gagne's belief that the roof will be composition shingle, not a standing seam metal roof. Those are some of the issues that arise in a district that doesn't have the local city design guidelines.

Chairperson Medellin asked if there was any other business. There was none.

VI. Adjourn:

Next regularly scheduled meeting August 27th – 12 p.m.
Meeting adjourned at 12:56 p.m.