

Historic Landmark Commission
September 26, 2011
Permits in National Register Historic Districts
NRD-2011-0079
West Austin Park – Shelter House
1317 W. 10th Street

PROPOSAL

Replace roof, replace light fixtures, replace windows, repair and repaint wood trim on the Shelter House.

RESEARCH

See attached memo from Parks & Recreation Department staff.

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

The following work is proposed for West Austin Park Shelter House:

1. Roof replacement
 - a. The existing wooden shingle roof is badly deteriorated and failing. The proposal calls for replacing the roof with wood shingles with a wood ridge cap as indicated in historic photos, and metal valley flashing.
 - b. In replacing wooden shingle roofs on historic buildings, PARD will reference NPS Preservation Brief 19: The Repair and Replacement of Historic Wooden Shingle Roofs.
2. Replacement of lighting fixtures
 - a. The proposal calls for replacing seven exterior light fixtures with low-profile, under-eave LCD lighting.
3. Window replacement
 - a. The project proposes to replace five windows that are badly deteriorated with broken or rotten frames, sills, and louvers. Replacement windows will be 1:1 wood sash windows as is shown in historic photos. If additional protection is needed, a Lexan (or similar material) “screen” may be placed over windows.
4. Repair/replace woodwork
 - a. The proposal calls for repair or replacing with like material all deteriorated woodwork including roofing elements, barge board and window trim as needed. Whenever possible, repair will take precedence over replacement.
5. Paint
 - a. The proposal calls for painting all trim and doors with no/low VOC paint in a color that matches the existing paint.

STAFF COMMENTS

West Austin Park is a contributing resource in the West Line National Register Historic District. The West Line NRD has no design guidelines. Design guidelines in other historic districts address retention of historic materials and hiding new mechanical systems to the extent possible to minimize any visual intrusion into the historic character of the building and/or district.

- The distinguishing original qualities or character of a property and its environment shall not be destroyed. Removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features should be avoided.
- All properties shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations which have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance shall be discouraged.
- Changes that have taken place in the course of time may have acquired significance in their own right, and shall be recognized and respected.
- Distinctive stylistic features or examples of skilled craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be treated with sensitivity.
- Deteriorated architectural features shall be repaired rather than replaced whenever possible. In the event replacement is necessary, the new material should match the material being replaced in composition, design, color, texture, and other visual qualities. Repair or replacement of missing architectural features should be based on an accurate duplication of features, substantiated by historical, physical, or pictorial evidence.
- Conceal the installation of protective or code-required mechanical systems whenever possible so as not to intrude upon or detract from the aesthetic and historical qualities of the property, except where concealment would result in the alteration or destruction of historically-significant materials or spaces.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the approval of the work as proposed with the following amendments:

1. Final selection of replacement light fixtures shall be presented to staff for administrative review.

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TO: Alyson McGee, Deputy Historic Preservation Officer, City of Austin

FROM: Kim McKnight, Historic Preservation Specialist, PARD

DATE: September 22, 2011

**SUBJECT: Updated: Back-up information for National Register Permit:
West Austin Shelter House Improvements**

Cc: Kelly Snook, Assistant Director, PARD
Marty Stump, Project Manager Supervisor, PARD
Brian Block, Development Administrator, PARD
Tony Arnold, Division Manager, Facility Services, PARD
Troy Houtman, Division Manager, Grounds Maintenance, PARD
Jeff Larsen, Parks Ground Manager, PARD
Marjorie Moore, Chairperson, Friends of West Austin Park
Jessica Wassenaar, Committee member, Friends of West Austin Park
Charlie McCabe, Executive Director, Austin Parks Foundation

Brief Project Description and Stakeholders

PARD is collaborating with the Austin Parks Foundation (APF) and Friends of West Austin on a grant project funded by the APF Community Initiated Improvement Project grant program. The project will allow for major repairs to the West Austin Shelter House (bathhouse). West Austin Park lies in the West Line National Register District and therefore, PARD will work with the Historic Preservation Office (HPO) to ensure that the appropriate National Register permits are obtained for the scope of work described in the grant application. This memo describes the scope of work in detail and provides an architectural description of the buildings and structures. The grant application is attached to this memo for reference (Appendix A).

Timeline and Next Steps

The Historic Landmark Commission (HLC) meets on the fourth Monday of each month. In order to present our case (considered a “public hearing”) to the HLC on **Monday, September 26**, we will need to submit our National Register application to Alyson McGee, Deputy Historic Preservation Officer, by **Friday, September 9**. Marty Stump and Kim McKnight at PARD have prepared the National Register permit application with the input and involvement of the Friends of West Austin Park and the HPO. City ordinance requires that all property owners within 500 feet, those who have City utility service address within 500 feet, and registered environmental or neighborhood organizations whose declared boundaries are within 500 feet, be notified when an application is scheduled for a public hearing. The address for West Austin Park is listed as 1317 West 10th Street. Once the National Register application is submitted, the HPO will conduct the notification process. Kim McKnight met with Alyson McGee, Deputy



Historic Preservation Officer, and representatives from Friends of West Austin Park on Tuesday, August 23, 2011.

History and Character-defining Features: West Austin Shelter House

The West Austin Shelter House (Fig. 3), commonly referred to as a bathhouse, is one of several early “shelter houses” built by the City of Austin Parks and Recreation Department. Constructed in 1930, the shelter house was designed in a Tudor Revival Style, which was meant to complement the architectural style of the adjacent neighborhood. The early shelter houses were designed to be multi-purpose facilities and early photos (Fig. 2) show that they were often used for performances and games. Other shelter houses that date from the 1930s include Shipe Park (log traditional), Palm Park (NPS Rustic), Eastwoods Park (NPS Rustic), Bailey Park (NPS Rustic) and Little Stacy Park (Mission Revival). A photo of West Austin Shelter House is included in the Hugo Kuehne Architectural Archives Collection at the Austin History Center. It is widely thought that Kuehne, a prominent architect and early supporter of Austin parks, designed the shelter houses at West Austin Park, Pease Park, Shipe Park, Eastwoods Park and Little Stacy Park.

The red brick, one-story West Austin Shelter House consists of two square rooms connected by a steeply gabled wooden roof. The area between the bathrooms is open and was traditionally used for performances and games. The gable ends feature non-structural decorative half-timbering. A recently located original photograph shows that the bargeboards (also called gableboards or vergeboards) hung from the projecting end of the gable roof. Further, the wooden shingle roof was topped with wooden ridge cap shingles (Fig. 3). The shelter house was originally elevated from the ground (Fig. 2) by steps, but is now at grade. This change does affect the way the building is sited, but modifications were probably made to accommodate ADA upgrades.

West Line National Register District

West Austin Park lies in the West Line National Register Historic District (2005). The West Austin Shelter House and Pool are specifically listed as contributing to the district. Because the West Austin Shelter House is listed in the National Register of Historic Places, all work will require review from the HPO and HLC.

Scope of Work

The following work is proposed for West Austin Park and will require review by the Historic Preservation Office (references grant proposal by Friends of West Austin Park):

1. Roof replacement
 - a. The existing wooden shingle roof is badly deteriorated and failing (Fig. 5 & 6). The proposal calls for the replacement of the roof. The project budget specifies wooden shingles as the roofing material.
 - b. Considerations: Historic photos show that the ridgeline of the roof had wooden ridge cap shingles (Fig. 1), but this feature was eventually replaced by metal flashing. Wooden ridge cap shingles are recommended

as the part of the re-roofing as are decorative bargeboards that are shown in Figure 3. Flashing along the valleys of the roof should be sensitively installed.

- c. In the replacement of wooden shingle roofs on historic buildings, PARD will reference *NPS Preservation Brief 19: The Repair and Replacement of Historic Wooden Shingle Roofs* (Appendix B).
2. Replacement of lighting fixtures
 - a. The proposal calls for the replacement of seven exterior and three interior lighting fixtures (Fig. 6).
 - b. Considerations: As a part of the National Register application process, specific information about the type of exterior light fixtures will be requested. PARD recommends low-profile, under-eave LCD lighting as opposed to large fixtures.
3. Window replacement
 - a. The project calls for the replacement of five windows. The windows are badly deteriorated with broken or rotten frames, sills, and louvers.
 - b. The grant proposal specifies acrylic block as the replacement material.
 - c. Considerations: Historic photographs show that the windows were originally 1:1 wood sash windows (Fig. 1). In many conversations with representatives of West Austin Park as well as PARD staff, it was decided that the replacement windows will be 1:1 wood sash windows with tempered glass. Should further protection be necessary, a “screen” can be constructed using Lexan or a similar material. This treatment is used at both the Lions Municipal Golf Course Club House and North Austin Substation at Sparky Park. For ventilation, a passive vent system incorporating electric bath fans will be installed in each restroom. A low-profile square vent will be installed on the back side of the roof (apx. 4" x12"x12").
4. Repair/replace woodwork
 - a. The grant proposal calls for the repair or replacement of all deteriorated woodwork including roofing elements and window trim.
 - b. Considerations: Whenever possible, repair should take precedence over replacement.
5. Paint
 - a. The grant proposal calls for painting the entire interior and exterior of the building with no/low VOC paint: “Building includes 2 restrooms, storage room, area between the two bathrooms and entire exterior of structure.” In clarifying with committee members, it was confirmed that only the wooden trim on the building would be repainted as the painting of exterior brick would not be permitted.
 - b. Considerations: Graffiti removal is a challenging issue (Fig. 7). Removal of graffiti must be done carefully and no products can be used that are deleterious to the integrity of the brick and mortar. An excellent reference, *NPS Preservation Brief 38: Removing Graffiti from Historic Masonry*, is attached. (Appendix C).



Because West Austin Park Shelter House contributes to the West Line National Register Historic District, all work will follow the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation*, which is attached to this memo (Appendix D).

PARD requests that photos be taken to thoroughly document the building before any repairs are made. After the work, PARD would like photo documentation of the work completed. We will discuss documentation of the project at an on-site meeting to be determined as soon as possible.

Concluding Remarks

PARD greatly appreciates the time and effort that the Friends of West Austin Park have expended in preparing this grant proposal. We further appreciate the Austin Parks Foundation for their support. We look forward to working together on this and future projects.

Photos of West Austin Shelter House are attached. Further, the following documents are attached:

- West Austin Park 2011 Grant Application to APF (Appendix A)
- *NPS Preservation Brief 19: The Repair and Replacement of Historic Wooden Shingle Roofs* (Appendix B)
- *NPS Preservation Brief 38: Removing Graffiti from Historic Masonry* (Appendix C)
- *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation* (Appendix D)



Figure 1: Historic photo of West Austin Shelter House, constructed in 1930.



Figure 2: Historic photo of West Austin Shelter House constructed in 1930.



Figure 3: Historic photo of West Austin Shelter House constructed in 1930. Note decorative bargeboards and wooden ridge cap shingles.



Figure 4: Current photo of West Austin Shelter House constructed in 1930.



Figure 5: Roof details on West Austin Shelter House.



Figure 6: Roof and lighting details on West Austin Shelter House.



Figure 7: Graffiti on West Austin Shelter House.