

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
OCTOBER 23, 2017
APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
C14H-2013-0040
Perry Estate
710 E. 41st Street

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes two projects that require a Certificate of Appropriateness as they are within the historic zone of this property, and one project that requires an advisory review as it is within the National Register District section of the property. The projects requiring a Certificate of Appropriateness are the construction of a pedestrian entry gate in the historic stone wall on the Red River Street side of the property, and the installation of a canopy over two sections of the south (principal) façade of the building. In the National Register District section of the property, the applicant proposes the installation of steel guardrails and a new garage door, both on the carriage house, which is contributing to the historic district.

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

Canopy:

The applicant proposes the construction of a detachable canopy consisting of a steel frame with a canvas cover to stretch across the entire arcaded section of the south façade of the mansion. The proposed canopy will extend from the mansion over the balustrade and will be supported by removable steel poles in the yard. It will be attached to the mansion with removable point connections that will require the removal of a small amount of plaster below the belt line in 5 locations. The point connections will attach to a blackened steel bracket and clip.

The applicant further proposes the installation of an identical, but smaller canopy on the south wall of the west wing, with a steel trellis along the south wall just east of the proposed secondary canopy.

Pedestrian Gate and Perimeter Wall:

The applicant proposes the removal of a 3'-6" section of the historic perimeter wall on the east side of the mansion for the installation of a pedestrian gate that will have a simple steel fence. The applicant further proposes the construction of a trellis on top of the stone wall.

Stairs and Railing (north elevation):

The applicant proposes to re-install a set of stairs and a steel railing with a new metal screen wall on the north elevation. There are historic photos showing the original stairs, which have been replaced by a larger set of concrete steps. The applicant proposes to remove the concrete steps and reconstruct the original steps shown in the historic photographs. The screen wall will be installed between the re-installed steps and the steps leading to the southwest wing. The proposed screen wall will be constructed at grad and will be a coated steel that can serve as a trellis for vegetation.

Southwest wing wall:

The applicant proposes the construction of a new sculptural clay masonry wall at the southwest wing of the mansion to hide the utility boxes. The wall will be 6 feet tall and will be just below the triple set of windows on this elevation.

Carriage House (National Register District property – contributing)

The applicant proposes the replacement of the existing garage door with a new garage door in the existing opening, and the installation of steel guard rails at second-story porch and window openings.

STANDARDS FOR REVIEW

The Commission's Standards for Review of applications for Certificates of Appropriateness include:

- Do not destroy the distinguishing original qualities or character of a building, structure, or site and its environment. Avoid the removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural features.
- Recognize all buildings, structures, and sites as products of their own time. Do not construct alterations which have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance.
- Contemporary design for alterations and additions to existing properties are appropriate when such alterations and additions do not destroy significant historic, architectural, or cultural material and such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property, neighborhood, or environment.
- Construct new additions or alterations to structures in such a manner that if such addition or alteration were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the structure will be unimpaired.

COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee recommended that the canopy be detachable, although they expressed the opinion that they did not like the idea of the canopy at all as it blocked the view from the primary viewshed of this property of its most significant architectural feature – the arcaded loggia. The Committee recommended temporary tents when necessary for events rather than a canopy, but if the canopy were to be used that it be semi-temporary and anchored to the house, although the Committee expressed concerns about how the canopy would be affixed to the house.

The Committee agreed to recommend approval of the pedestrian gate in the east wall.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff cannot recommend approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the canopy, for precisely the reasons stated by the committee – it will obscure the principal architectural feature of this property from its most prominent viewshed. Staff recommends that the applicant consider a transparent material for the roof of the canopy if the applicant continues to pursue the idea of the canopy, so that the arcaded loggia can be seen through the roof of the canopy. Staff is also concerned about the wear and tear on the plaster of the exterior of the house if the proposed detachable canopy is in fact detached and re-attached time after time depending on usage. Staff further cannot recommend the installation of the trellis above the historic stone perimeter wall, as this represents too much of an intrusion on the historic character of the wall and its context and surroundings. While the opening in the wall for the pedestrian gate is fine, staff does not see the need to extend the height of the wall with the trellis, as this also serves to block the view of the mansion from the primary viewshed from the southeast.

Staff recommends approval of all other aspects of the proposal.