

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development - Planning Division

Certificate of Appropriateness
BZH-27389

Proposal: Replace rear addition with a new rear addition

Applicant: Lisa and Anderson Mitchell, 612-203-0777

Address of Property: 2705 3rd Street North, Concrete Block House

Planning Staff: Aaron Hanauer, Senior City Planner, 612-673-2494

Date Application Deemed Complete August 3, 2012

Public Hearing: August 21, 2012

Appeal Period Expiration: August 31, 2012

Ward: 3

Neighborhood Organization: Hawthorne Neighborhood Council

Concurrent Review: n/a

Attachments:

- A. CPED Attachments
 - Zoning Context Map
 - Hawthorne Concrete Block House and Rowhouse Map
 - Aerials
 - Images
- B. Materials Submitted by Applicant
 - Application
 - Neighborhood and City Council Letters
 - Project Description
 - Images
 - Elevations
 - Site Plan
 - Floor Plans

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CLASSIFICATION:	
Period of Significance	1885-1886
Criteria of significance	Architecture (Criterion 4)
Date of local designation	1984
Applicable Design Guidelines	<i>The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Treatment of Historic Properties</i>

PROPERTY INFORMATION	
Current name	Mitchell Residence
Historic Name	Concrete Block House #5
Current Address	2705 3 rd Street North
Historic Address	2705 3 rd Street North
Original Construction Date	1885
Original Contractor	Union Stone and Building Company
Architects	Lemuel Jepson
Historic Use	Private Residence
Current Use	Private Residence
Proposed Use	Private Residence

BACKGROUND: The Hawthorne Neighborhood is home to the largest and oldest collection of concrete-block houses in the Twin Cities; eight concrete block houses as well as an eleven-unit row house remain in close proximity to one another. These homes were built by developer William N. Holway between 1885 and 1886 to promote his concrete block company.¹

The precast concrete block houses and row houses are significant as early examples of the use of concrete block as an inexpensive yet artistic architectural material; precast concrete blocks were a low-cost way to imitate stone.² The use of concrete block was not widely used until the early 1900s.³

Although the buildings were designed by individual architects, they share similar stylistic elements -- two and one half stories featuring bevel-edged blocks that resemble cut stone, side hall plans, vertical fenestration and roofs of multi-gable variety with ornamented primary façade dormers. All of the houses, with the exception of one, have retained their original concrete exteriors.

The Mitchell Residence at 2705 3rd Street North (Concrete Block House #5) was built in 1885. The house was originally built with a first-floor front porch. In 1911, an 18'x14' rear addition was added. It is unknown if the current rear addition, that has a Masonite siding exterior, dates back to 1911 or if a replacement addition was completed of the same size at a later date. The concrete block houses on 26th Avenue North had similarly sized rear additions added in the early 1900s with a concrete block to match the main house.

In 2005, the Andersons proposed a major rehabilitation project for 2705 3rd Street North that included front porches on the second and third stories, the replacement of the deteriorated windows with vinyl windows, and the replacement of the 1911 (or later) rear addition with a larger addition (22'x19'). The Heritage Preservation Commission approved the rear addition and the vinyl windows due to financial hardship; the applicant never completed the rear addition work. The City Council provided final approval for the second and third story open front porches.

SUMMARY OF APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL:

The Applicant is proposing to replace the rear addition with a one-story, flat roof addition that would have the same footprint as the existing structure. The addition is proposed to have a stucco exterior with a color to match the main structure. The Applicant is proposing to have horizontally oriented windows on the south and north elevations; the west elevation would have two vertically oriented windows and a French door. The window material is proposed to be vinyl to match the house. The addition would provide a mudroom, an additional bathroom, and bedroom. The flat roof of the structure would be built to accommodate solar panels.

¹ Millet, Larry. AIA Guide to the Twin Cities. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2007.

² National Register of Historic Places. Concrete Block Houses and Rowhouse. 1984.

³ Millet, Larry. AIA Guide to the Twin Cities. Minnesota Historical Society Press, 2007.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

Staff has received no public comment on the proposed project.

Findings as required by the Minneapolis Preservation Code:

The Planning Division of the Minneapolis Community Planning and Economic Development Department has analyzed the application based on the findings required by the Minneapolis Preservation Ordinance. Before approving a certificate of appropriateness, and based upon the evidence presented in each application submitted, the commission shall make findings based upon, but not limited to, the following:

(1) The alteration is compatible with and continues to support the criteria of significance and period of significance for which the landmark or historic district was designated.

As conditioned, the proposed alteration is compatible with and continues to support the criteria of significance and period of significance for which the landmark was designated. Concrete Block House #5 is designated for its unique architectural design and materials; the building's period of significance is from 1885-1886. The proposed rear addition will not impact the concrete block portion of the house nor the original construction. It is designed in a sensitive manner that will be subordinate to the original construction. The proposed stucco material will be complimentary to the original concrete construction.

(2) The alteration is compatible with and supports the interior and/or exterior designation in which the property was designated.

As conditioned, the proposed addition is compatible with and supports the exterior designation of the property. Concrete Block House #5 was designated for its unique architectural design and materials. The proposed rear addition respects the scale, size, and massing of the historic structure and will have limited visibility from the public right-of-way. The proposed addition also pays homage to the 1911 addition it is proposed to replace by having the same footprint.

(3) The alteration is compatible with and will ensure continued integrity of the landmark or historic district for which the district was designated.

As conditioned, the proposed work is compatible with and will ensure continued integrity of the landmark for which it is designated. The proposed addition will not affect the building's location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association.

(4) The alteration will not materially impair the significance and integrity of the landmark, historic district or nominated property under interim protection as evidenced by the consistency of alterations with the applicable design guidelines adopted by the commission.

No local guidelines have been adopted by the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission for Concrete Block House #5 or the other Concrete Block Houses.

(5) The alteration will not materially impair the significance and integrity of the landmark, historic district or nominated property under interim protection as evidenced by the consistency of alterations with the recommendations contained in The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties.

The alteration is in compliance with the *Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation*. If the addition is approved, the property will continue to be used as a single-family residence; its historic use. The proposed addition does not destroy historic materials, features, or spatial relationships that characterize the property. At the same time the proposed work will be differentiated from the original in terms of exterior material (stucco).

(6) The certificate of appropriateness conforms to all applicable regulations of this preservation ordinance and is consistent with the applicable policies of the comprehensive plan and applicable preservation policies in small area plans adopted by the city council.

The proposed work is consistent with the *Minneapolis Plan for Sustainable Growth*, the City's Comprehensive Plan. Comprehensive plan policy 8.1 states that the City will, "Preserve, maintain, and designate districts, landmarks, and historic resources which serve as reminders of the city's architecture, history, and culture." The proposed work allows the property to be maintained as a single-family residence while respecting its historic significance.

Implementation Step 8.1.1 of the comprehensive plan indicates that the City shall protect historic resources from modifications that are not sensitive to their historic significance. As conditioned, the project will be sensitive to its historical character.

(7) Destruction of any property. Before approving a certificate of appropriateness that involves the destruction, in whole or in part, of any landmark, property in an historic district or nominated property under interim protection, the commission shall make findings that the destruction is necessary to correct an unsafe or dangerous condition on the property, or that there are no reasonable alternatives to the destruction. In determining whether reasonable alternatives exist, the commission shall consider, but not be limited to, the significance of the property, the integrity of the property and the economic value or usefulness of the existing structure, including its current use, costs of renovation and feasible alternative uses. The commission may delay a final decision for a reasonable period of time to allow parties interested in preserving the property a reasonable opportunity to act to protect it.

The project does not involve the destruction of the property.

Before approving a certificate of appropriateness, and based upon the evidence presented in each application submitted, the commission shall make findings that alterations are proposed in a manner that demonstrates that the Applicant has made

adequate consideration of the following documents and regulations:

(8) *Adequate consideration of the description and statement of significance in the original nomination upon which designation of the landmark or historic district was based.*

The Applicant has given adequate consideration to the original nomination upon which the designation of the Concrete Block House was based. The original nomination emphasizes the importance of the unique exterior building material. The proposed addition, on a tertiary elevation, has limited visibility and will not damage the original exterior fabric.

(9) *Where applicable, Adequate consideration of Title 20 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, Zoning Code, Chapter 530, Site Plan Review.*

The scope of work in this application does not trigger site plan review under Title 20 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, Zoning Code, Chapter 530. As proposed, the addition would meet the all other zoning code standards and the, and glazing requirements for additions.

(10) *The typology of treatments delineated in the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties and the associated guidelines for preserving, rehabilitating, reconstructing, and restoring historic buildings.*

The application, as conditioned, complies with the rehabilitation guidelines of *the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*. The proposed addition is on a non-character defining elevation. Therefore, the character-defining features are not obscured, damaged, or destroyed. The proposed addition is modest and respectful in relationship to the size and scale of the historic building. In addition, the proposal is differentiated from the old in terms of exterior materials in a way that makes clear what is historic and what is new.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development - Planning Division recommends that the Heritage Preservation Commission adopt the above findings and **approve** the Certificate of Appropriateness to allow for a rear addition at 2705 3rd Street North subject to the following conditions:

1. The rear addition is the only work approved at this time.
2. The windows on the rear addition shall match the profile of those on the house.
3. By ordinance, approvals are valid for a period of one year from the date of the decision unless required permits are obtained and the action approval is substantially begun and proceeds in a continuous basis toward completion. Upon written request and for good cause, the planning director may grant up to a one year extension if the request is made in writing no later than August 21, 2013.
4. By ordinance, all approvals granted in this Certificate of Appropriateness shall remain in effect as long as all of the conditions and guarantees of such approvals are observed. Failure to comply with such conditions and guarantees shall constitute a violation of this Certificate of Appropriateness and may result in termination of the approval.
5. CPED-Planning Staff shall review and approve the final plans and elevations prior to building permit issuance.