

## HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

February 01, 2017

Agenda Item No: 23

**HDRC CASE NO:** 2017-029  
**ADDRESS:** 321 REFUGIO ST  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** NCB 714 BLK 11 LOT S IRR 49.6 FT OF 13  
**ZONING:** RM-4, H  
**CITY COUNCIL DIST.:** 1  
**DISTRICT:** Lavaca Historic District  
**APPLICANT:** Criswell Humphrey/CCH Projects  
**OWNER:** Criswell Humphrey/CCH Projects  
**TYPE OF WORK:** Porch modifications, fencing  
**REQUEST:**

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to:

1. Install 6' rear wood fence with wide horizontal slats
2. Replace metal porch posts with new wood posts and brackets and modify porch fascia
3. Paint existing yellow siding a light green
4. Install decomposed granite along sidewalk
5. Remove standing seam metal roof and install composition shingles
6. Install wood hand railings on either side of front porch steps
7. Enclose front door opening and transom window

### APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

*Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 2, Exterior Maintenance and Alterations*

6. Architectural Features: Doors, Windows, and Screens

#### A. MAINTENANCE (PRESERVATION)

- i. *Openings*—Preserve existing window and door openings. Avoid enlarging or diminishing to fit stock sizes or air conditioning units. Avoid filling in historic door or window openings. Avoid creating new primary entrances or window openings on the primary façade or where visible from the public right-of-way.
- ii. *Doors*—Preserve historic doors including hardware, fanlights, sidelights, pilasters, and entablatures.

#### B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

- i. *Doors*—Replace doors, hardware, fanlight, sidelights, pilasters, and entablatures in-kind when possible and when deteriorated beyond repair. When in-kind replacement is not feasible, ensure features match the size, material, and profile of the historic element.

7. Architectural Features: Porches, Balconies, and Porte-Cocheres

#### A. MAINTENANCE (PRESERVATION)

- i. *Existing porches, balconies, and porte-cocheres*—Preserve porches, balconies, and porte-cocheres. Do not add new porches, balconies, or porte-cocheres where not historically present.
- ii. *Balusters*—Preserve existing balusters. When replacement is necessary, replace in-kind when possible or with balusters that match the originals in terms of materials, spacing, profile, dimension, finish, and height of the railing.
- iii. *Floors*—Preserve original wood or concrete porch floors. Do not cover original porch floors of wood or concrete with carpet, tile, or other materials unless they were used historically.

#### B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

- i. *Front porches*—Refrain from enclosing front porches. Approved screen panels should be simple in design as to not change the character of the structure or the historic fabric.
- ii. *Side and rear porches*—Refrain from enclosing side and rear porches, particularly when connected to the main porch or balcony. Original architectural details should not be obscured by any screening or enclosure materials. Alterations to side and rear porches should result in a space that functions, and is visually interpreted as, a porch.

- iii. *Replacement*—Replace in-kind porches, balconies, porte-cocheres, and related elements, such as ceilings, floors, and columns, when such features are deteriorated beyond repair. When in-kind replacement is not feasible, the design should be compatible in scale, massing, and detail while materials should match in color, texture, dimensions, and finish.
- iv. *Adding elements*—Design replacement elements, such as stairs, to be simple so as to not distract from the historic character of the building. Do not add new elements and details that create a false historic appearance.
- v. *Reconstruction*—Reconstruct porches, balconies, and porte-cocheres based on accurate evidence of the original, such as photographs. If no such evidence exists, the design should be based on the architectural style of the building and historic patterns.

### *Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 5, Guidelines for Site Elements*

## 2. Fences and Walls

### B. NEW FENCES AND WALLS

- i. *Design*—New fences and walls should appear similar to those used historically within the district in terms of their scale, transparency, and character. Design of fence should respond to the design and materials of the house or main structure.
- ii. *Location*—Avoid installing a fence or wall in a location where one did not historically exist, particularly within the front yard. The appropriateness of a front yard fence or wall is dependent on conditions within a specific historic district. New front yard fences or wall should not be introduced within historic districts that have not historically had them.
- iii. *Height*—Limit the height of new fences and walls within the front yard to a maximum of four feet. The appropriateness of a front yard fence is dependent on conditions within a specific historic district. New front yard fences should not be introduced within historic districts that have not historically had them. If a taller fence or wall existed historically, additional height may be considered. The height of a new retaining wall should not exceed the height of the slope it retains.
- v. *Appropriate materials*—Construct new fences or walls of materials similar to fence materials historically used in the district. Select materials that are similar in scale, texture, color, and form as those historically used in the district, and that are compatible with the main structure. Screening incompatible uses—Review alternative fence heights and materials for appropriateness where residential properties are adjacent to commercial or other potentially incompatible uses.

### C. PRIVACY FENCES AND WALLS

- i. *Relationship to front facade*—Set privacy fences back from the front façade of the building, rather than aligning them with the front façade of the structure to reduce their visual prominence.
- ii. *Location* – Do not use privacy fences in front yards.

## 3. Landscape Design

### A. PLANTINGS

- i. *Historic Gardens*—Maintain front yard gardens when appropriate within a specific historic district.
- ii. *Historic Lawns*—Do not fully remove and replace traditional lawn areas with impervious hardscape. Limit the removal of lawn areas to mulched planting beds or pervious hardscapes in locations where they would historically be found, such as along fences, walkways, or drives. Low-growing plantings should be used in historic lawn areas; invasive or large-scale species should be avoided. Historic lawn areas should never be reduced by more than 50%.
- iii. *Native xeric plant materials*—Select native and/or xeric plants that thrive in local conditions and reduce watering usage. See UDC Appendix E: San Antonio Recommended Plant List—All Suited to Xeriscape Planting Methods, for a list of appropriate materials and planting methods. Select plant materials with a similar character, growth habit, and light requirements as those being replaced.
- iv. *Plant palettes*—If a varied plant palette is used, incorporate species of taller heights, such informal elements should be restrained to small areas of the front yard or to the rear or side yard so as not to obstruct views of or otherwise distract from the historic structure.
- v. *Maintenance*—Maintain existing landscape features. Do not introduce landscape elements that will obscure the historic structure or are located as to retain moisture on walls or foundations (e.g., dense foundation plantings or vines) or as to cause damage.

### B. ROCKS OR HARDSCAPE

- i. *Impervious surfaces*—Do not introduce large pavers, asphalt, or other impervious surfaces where they were not historically located.
- ii. *Pervious and semi-pervious surfaces*—New pervious hardscapes should be limited to areas that are not highly visible, and should not be used as wholesale replacement for plantings. If used, small plantings should be incorporated into the design.

iii. *Rock mulch and gravel* - Do not use rock mulch or gravel as a wholesale replacement for lawn area. If used, plantings should be incorporated into the design.

## **FINDINGS:**

- a. The structure is a one-story folk Victorian home. It is a contributing structure located in the Lavaca Historic District, which was designated June 10, 2004.
- b. The applicant received a stop work order as work was done to the porch posts, new hand railing and front door without approval.
- c. The proposed 6' wood privacy fence would be behind the front façade, located in the left and side yard. It would replace an existing 4' chainlink fence. The proposed fence is made of 4" wide cedar planks installed horizontally. According to the Guidelines for Site Elements, new fences should appear similar to those used historically within the district in terms of their scale, character, location, and height. Staff finds the proposed location, height, and material consistent with fences that would historically be found when the neighborhood was developed. Staff finds the horizontal design to be modern, but that it does not have adverse effect on the structure or historic district of Lavaca.
- d. There are two existing non-original metal posts with narrow wooden fascia, and 2 spindle columns along the porch facades with decorative brackets. The 2 metal posts and the one spindle porch column are removed. The three proposed new wood columns are wood 3.5" x 5.5" painted white installed at the two corners, and one framing the front door. The proposed posts include simple, straight brackets. There is also a proposed 9" wide, and 18'-3" long fascia on the porch with exposed rafter tails. According to the Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance and Alterations 7.B.v., porches should be reconstructed based on evidence, but if no evidence exists porches should be designed based on the architectural style of the building and historic patterns. Staff finds that folk Victorian homes typically have evenly spaced porch columns and that the two existing porch columns with decorative brackets at the porch walls are original. This is sufficient evidence upon which to base the design of the porch columns and brackets. The existing condition should be replicated. Staff recommends the proposed columns and brackets match the spindle columns and brackets and the proposed columns are evenly spaced consistent with the style of home. In regards to the fascia and overhangs, staff finds the fascia is typically the same height on each side of folk Victorian porches and that rafter tails are not exposed. Staff finds the eave profile should be consistent with the eave profile of the porch that was removed without approval.
- e. The existing colors are light yellow with white trim. The proposed paint color is a light green with white trim. Staff finds the colors appropriate.
- f. There is a small front lawn area with many various plant materials. The proposed landscaping removes the lawn area in the front yard and within the planting strip. The proposed decomposed granite is in the planting strip and in the 50% of the front yard from the left property line until the driveway, with native plantings installed throughout. According to the Guidelines for Site Elements, 3. B. ii., new pervious hardscapes should not be used as wholesale replacement for plantings. If used, small plantings should be incorporated into the design. Staff finds the proposed landscape design is not consistent with the Guidelines. Sod is incorporated in about 30% of the lawn. Staff recommends that sod be incorporated into the design to consist of 50% of the front yard so that the historic lawn is retained.
- g. The home features a cross-gabled roof with a standing seam metal roof. The proposed new roof material is gray composition shingles in a 3-tab pattern. According to the Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance and Alterations 3.B.iv., replace roofing materials in-kind when necessary, or select materials consistent with the building style when replacement in-kind is not possible. Staff finds the proposal to install composition shingles on the folk Victorian home consistent with the Guidelines. Folk Victorians typically have roofs with either standing seam metal or shingles.
- h. There is no existing balustrade. The proposed railing is along the front steps to the front porch. According to the Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance and Alterations 7.B.v., reconstruct porches based on evidence, but if no evidence exists design based on the architectural style of the building and historic patterns. Staff finds that folk Victorian homes typically have railing when there are several steps. Staff finds the hand railings are not consistent with the Guidelines. If a hand rail is needed for safety, staff recommends a minimal metal handrail along the left side of the steps.
- i. There are two existing front entrances. The proposed enclosure is of the door facing the side, and the front door facing the street will remain. According to the Guidelines for Exterior Maintenance and Alterations 6.A.i,

existing window and door openings should be retained and not altered. Staff finds the proposal to enclose the front door opening not consistent with the Guidelines.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Staff recommends approval of item #1 through #5 based on findings a through h with the following stipulations:

1. That the proposed columns and brackets match the existing columns and brackets.
2. That the proposed columns are evenly spaced.
3. That the eave profile is consistent with the eave profile of the porch that was removed without approval.
4. That sod is incorporated so that the historic lawn area remains at 50%.

Staff does not recommend approval of item #6 and #7 based on finding i.

**CASE MANAGER:**

Lauren Sage

**CASE COMMENTS:**

The applicant received a stop work order as work was done without approval. The applicant has provided the required application and the post-work application fee has been paid.





## Flex Viewer

Powered by ArcGIS Server

Printed: Jan 24, 2017

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321 Refugio St  
San Antonio, Texas

Street View - Mar 2016



Currently shown: Mar 2016

2007 2016





323 Refugio St  
San Antonio, Texas



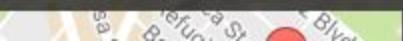
Street View - May 2011



Currently shown: May 2011

2007

2016





We added the hand railing and added the wood Posts



We removed metal posts that were not in operating status. They were all broken.

~~Added~~

we want to replace this Fence with a wooden Fence  
6' Feet high





We Sealed  
a door that  
was here



**PLOT (SITE) PLAN**

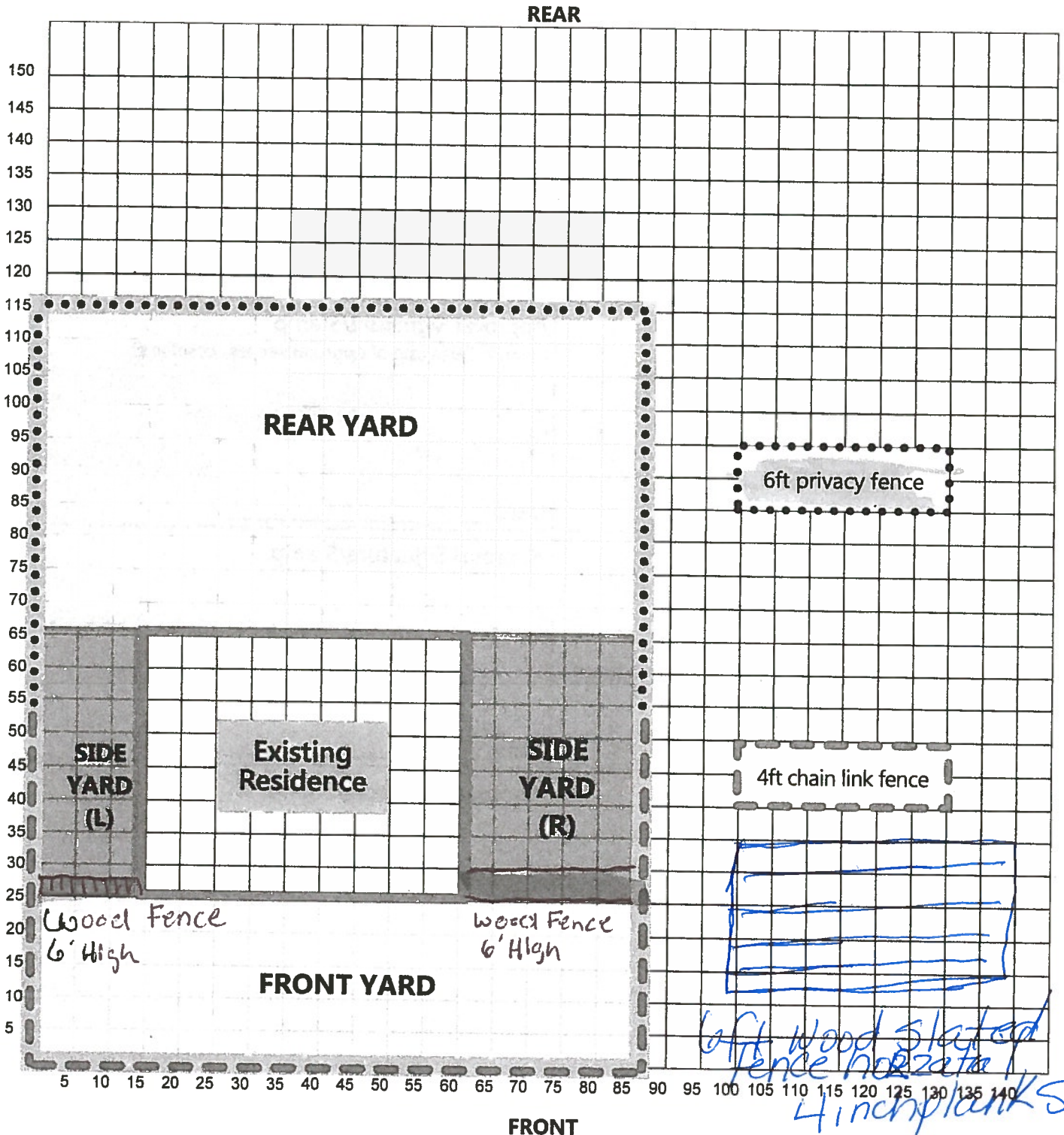
(SAMPLE ONLY)

Address: 321 Refugio San Antonio TX 78210

Lot: \_\_\_\_\_

Block: \_\_\_\_\_

NCB: \_\_\_\_\_



I certify that the above plot plan shows all improvements on this property and that there will be no construction over easements. I also certify that I will build in compliance with the UDC and the 2015 IRC.

*[Handwritten signature]*



