

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

September 06, 2017

HDRC CASE NO: 2017-455
ADDRESS: 1830 N PINE ST
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 992 BLK 1 LOT 21
ZONING: R-6 H
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 2
DISTRICT: Government Hill Historic District
APPLICANT: Ariela Anelli
OWNER: Ariela Anelli
TYPE OF WORK: Exterior modifications, xeriscaping
REQUEST:

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

1. Install a new door and set of concrete stairs on an existing rear addition.
2. Xeriscape the front yard with decomposed granite and native plants to total 414 square feet. Plants include three pink Mulhy grass, one esperanza, one pride of Barbados, two crape myrtles, one agave yucca, and two rosemary.

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.

B. ALTERATIONS (REHABILITATION, RESTORATION, AND RECONSTRUCTION)

- 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.
- New entrances*—Ensure that new entrances, when necessary to comply with other regulations, are compatible in size, scale, shape, proportion, material, and massing with historic entrances.

Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 5, Guidelines for Site Elements

1. Topography

A. TOPOGRAPHIC FEATURES

- Historic topography*—Avoid significantly altering the topography of a property (i.e., extensive grading). Do not alter character-defining features such as berms or sloped front lawns that help define the character of the public right-of-way. Maintain the established lawn to help prevent erosion. If turf is replaced over time, new plant materials in these areas should be low-growing and suitable for the prevention of erosion.
- New construction*—Match the historic topography of adjacent lots prevalent along the block face for new construction. Do not excavate raised lots to accommodate additional building height or an additional story for new construction.
- New elements*—Minimize changes in topography resulting from new elements, like driveways and walkways, through appropriate siting and design. New site elements should work with, rather than change, character-defining topography when possible.

3. Landscape Design

A. PLANTINGS

- Historic Gardens*—Maintain front yard gardens when appropriate within a specific historic district.
- 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.

C. MULCH

Organic mulch – Organic mulch should not be used as a wholesale replacement for plant material. Organic mulch with appropriate plantings should be incorporated in areas where appropriate such as beneath a tree canopy.

i. *Inorganic mulch* – Inorganic mulch should not be used in highly-visible areas and should never be used as a wholesale replacement for plant material. Inorganic mulch with appropriate plantings should be incorporated in areas where appropriate such as along a foundation wall where moisture retention is discouraged.

D. TREES

i. *Preservation*—Preserve and protect from damage existing mature trees and heritage trees. See UDC Section 35-523 (Tree Preservation) for specific requirements.

ii. *New Trees* – Select new trees based on site conditions. Avoid planting new trees in locations that could potentially cause damage to a historic structure or other historic elements. Species selection and planting procedure should be done in accordance with guidance from the City Arborist.

iii. *Maintenance* – Proper pruning encourages healthy growth and can extend the lifespan of trees. Avoid unnecessary or harmful pruning. A certified, licensed arborist is recommended for the pruning of mature trees and heritage trees.

FINDINGS:

- a. The primary structure located at 1830 N Pine is a 1-story single family home constructed in the Craftsman style. The home is a contributing structure in the Government Hill Historic District.
- b. NEW DOOR – The applicant has proposed to install a new door on the east façade. The proposed door will be located on a rear addition. According to the Historic Design Guidelines, creating new primary entrances or window openings on the primary façade or where visible from the public right-of-way should be avoided. This door will not be visible from the public right-of-way and will not result in the loss of existing historic fabric. Staff finds the proposal consistent with the Guidelines.
- c. WINDOW REPLACEMENT – The applicant has proposed to replace three existing windows with new one over one vinyl windows. The applicant has stated that the existing windows are painted shut, and would like to replace them to ensure the windows are operable for an egress option. According to the Historic Design Guidelines, window replacement should be considered only if a window is deteriorated beyond repair. Vinyl windows are not an appropriate replacement material for a historic structure. Additionally, windows can be made operable again through standard repair and rehabilitation techniques. Staff does not find the proposal consistent with the Guidelines.
- d. XERISCAPING – The applicant has proposed to xeriscape the front yard and planting strip to include a total of

414 square feet. Plants will be native and/or drought-resistant and include the following species: three pink Mulhy grass, one esperanza, one pride of Barbados, two crape myrtles, one agave yucca, and two rosemary. The xeriscaping will also remove all existing grass and install decomposed granite. According to the Historic Design Guidelines, historic lawn areas should never be reduced by more than 50%. Additionally, there is no precedent for decomposed granite in a planting strip in this area of the Government Hill Historic District. Staff finds the proposal to xeriscape the front yard appropriate, but finds the removal of the grass in the planting strip inconsistent with the Guidelines and the development pattern of the district.

RECOMMENDATION:

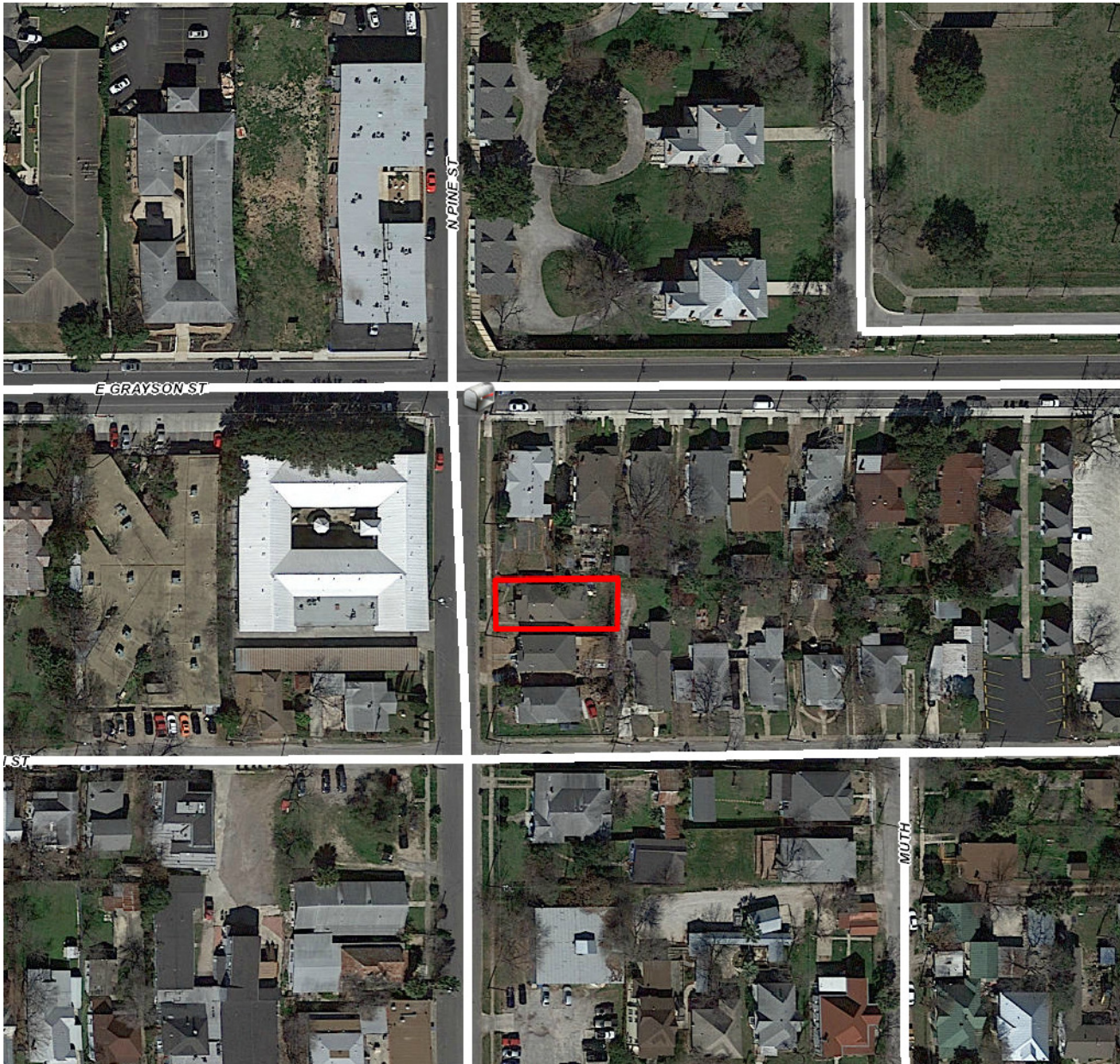
Item 1, Staff recommends approval of the new door and stairway installation based on finding b.

Item 3, Staff recommends approval of the front yard xeriscaping based on finding d with the following stipulations:

- i. That the applicant retains the grass in the planting strip between the street and the sidewalk.
- ii. That the applicant submits a completed site plan indicating the final locations and species of all plantings.

CASE MANAGER:

Stephanie Phillips



Flex Viewer

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Printed: Aug 25, 2017

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