

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

December 20, 2017

HDRC CASE NO: 2017-620
ADDRESS: 403 GILLESPIE
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 1745 BLK 8 S 51.5 FT OF 5 & 6 ARB A7
ZONING: R-6 H
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 1
DISTRICT: Tobin Hill Historic District
APPLICANT: Daniel Eicher
OWNER: Daniel Eicher
TYPE OF WORK: Xeriscaping
APPLICATION RECEIVED: November 28, 2017
60-DAY REVIEW: January 27, 2018
REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for approval to Xeriscape the front, side, and rear yards of the property located at 403 Gillespie.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 5, Guidelines for Site Elements

1. Topography

A. TOPOGRAPHIC FEATURES

- i. *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.
- ii. *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.
- iii. *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

- 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.

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.

4. Residential Streetscapes

A. PLANTING STRIPS

- i. *Street trees*—Protect and encourage healthy street trees in planting strips. Replace damaged or dead trees with trees of a similar species, size, and growth habit as recommended by the City Arborist.
- ii. *Lawns*— Maintain the use of traditional lawn in planting strips or low plantings where a consistent pattern has been retained along the block frontage. If mulch or gravel beds are used, low-growing plantings should be incorporated into the design.
- iii. *Alternative materials*—Do not introduce impervious hardscape, raised planting beds, or other materials into planting strips where they were not historically found.

B. PARKWAYS AND PLANTED MEDIANS

- i. *Historic plantings*—Maintain the park-like character of historic parkways and planted medians by preserving mature vegetation and retaining historic design elements. Replace damaged or dead plant materials with species of a like size, growth habit, and ornamental characteristics.
- ii. *Hardscape*—Do not introduce new pavers, concrete, or other hardscape materials into parkways and planted medians where they were not historically found.

C. STREET ELEMENTS

- i. *Site elements*—Preserve historic street lights, street markers, roundabouts, and other unique site elements found within the public right-of-way as street improvements and other public works projects are completed over time.
- ii. *Historic paving materials*—Retain historic paving materials, such as brick pavers or colored paving, within the public right-of-way and repair in place with like materials.

5. Sidewalks, Walkways, Driveways, and Curbing

A. SIDEWALKS AND WALKWAYS

- i. *Maintenance*—Repair minor cracking, settling, or jamming along sidewalks to prevent uneven surfaces. Retain and repair historic sidewalk and walkway paving materials—often brick or concrete—in place.
- ii. *Replacement materials*—Replace those portions of sidewalks or walkways that are deteriorated beyond repair. Every effort should be made to match existing sidewalk color and material.
- iii. *Width and alignment*— Follow the historic alignment, configuration, and width of sidewalks and walkways. Alter the historic width or alignment only where absolutely necessary to accommodate the preservation of a significant tree.
- iv. *Stamped concrete*—Preserve stamped street names, business insignias, or other historic elements of sidewalks and walkways when replacement is necessary.
- v. *ADA compliance*—Limit removal of historic sidewalk materials to the immediate intersection when ramps are added to address ADA requirements.

B. DRIVEWAYS

- i. *Driveway configuration*—Retain and repair in place historic driveway configurations, such as ribbon drives. Incorporate

a similar driveway configuration—materials, width, and design—to that historically found on the site. Historic driveways are typically no wider than 10 feet. Pervious paving surfaces may be considered where replacement is necessary to increase stormwater infiltration.

ii. *Curb cuts and ramps*—Maintain the width and configuration of original curb cuts when replacing historic driveways. Avoid introducing new curb cuts where not historically found.

C. CURBING

i. *Historic curbing*—Retain historic curbing wherever possible. Historic curbing in San Antonio is typically constructed of concrete with a curved or angular profile.

ii. *Replacement curbing*—Replace curbing in-kind when deteriorated beyond repair. Where in-kind replacement is not be feasible, use a comparable substitute that duplicates the color, texture, durability, and profile of the original. Retaining walls and curbing should not be added to the sidewalk design unless absolutely necessary.

FINDINGS:

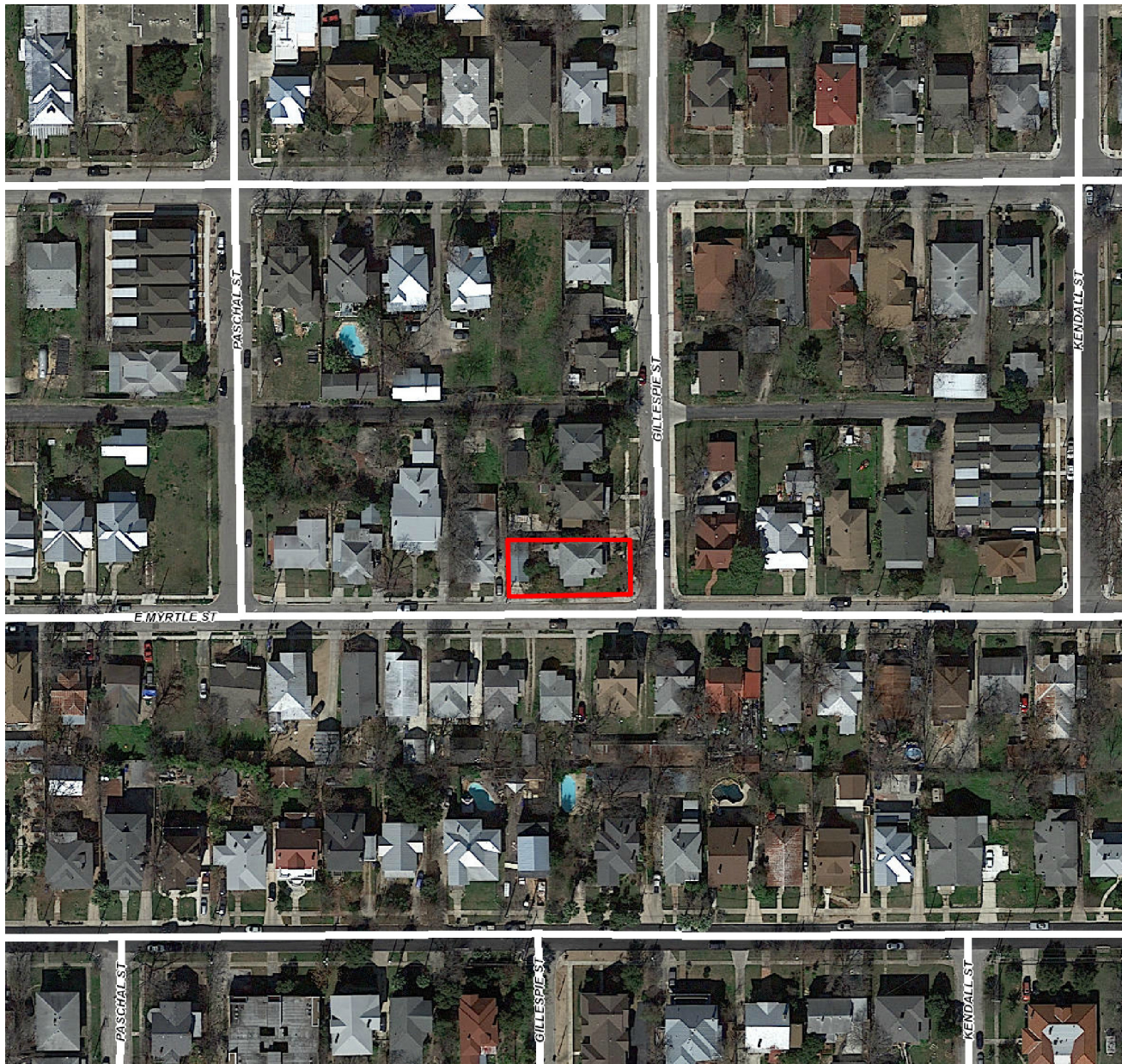
- a. The primary structure located at 403 Gillespie is a 2-1/2 story single family home constructed in 1918 in the Craftsman style. The home is situated on the corner of Gillespie and E Myrtle and features a hipped roof with hipped front dormer, a full-width 1-story porch with square columns, a prominent cream brick chimney on the south façade, and several paired or ganged wood windows. The structure is contributing to the Tobin Hill Historic District.
- b. The applicant has proposed to xeriscape the front side, and rear yards. The proposal includes mulhy grasses, succulents, agave, sage palm, rosemary, mandarin trees, cacti, Texas sage, crepe myrtle, primrose jasmine, and bottle brush. The proposed xeriscaping will install decomposed granite and some native groundcover between plantings. According to the Historic Design Guidelines, historic lawn areas should never be reduced by more than 50% for the purpose of installing hardscaping or impervious cover. The proposed xeriscaping plan retains over 50% of landscaped coverage and incorporates native and drought-resistant plants that are appropriate in scale and will not obscure the historic structure. Staff finds the proposal consistent.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval of the proposed xeriscaping based on findings a and b.

CASE MANAGER:

Stephanie Phillips



Flex Viewer

Powered by ArcGIS Server

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Dec 5, 2017 at 1:07:57 PM
370-498 Gillespie St
San Antonio TX 78212
United States



Dec 5, 2017 at 1:07:33 PM
403 Gillespie St
San Antonio TX 78212
United States



Dec 5, 2017 at 1:09:30 PM
403 Gillespie St
San Antonio TX 78212
United States



Dec 5, 2017 at 1:09:11 PM

401-429 E Myrtle St

San Antonio TX 78212

United States



Dec 5, 2017 at 1:09:05 PM
401-429 E Myrtle St
San Antonio TX 78212
United States



11/30/17

403 Gillespie Street--Description of Project

Landscaping per attached diagram. A gravel path will run from the front pad around the side of the house to the side gate. The path will measure 45 inches wide and will be made of $\frac{3}{8}$ " pink granite. The front yard will be planted with groundcover and native, drought-tolerant plants. Shorted plants were intentionally selected so as to not obstruct views of or otherwise distract from the house. Plants to be used include: sago palm, rosemary, salvia, texas sage, yucca, agave, vitex, liriopse, purple heart, madarin, muhly grass and bottlebrush.

In areas without ground cover the yard will be filled with decompsed granite and river rock in select areas.

