

HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

February 19, 2020

HDRC CASE NO: 2020-050
ADDRESS: 118 BOSTON
LEGAL DESCRIPTION: NCB 578 BLK D LOT 4
ZONING: RM-4, H
CITY COUNCIL DIST.: 2
DISTRICT: Dignowity Hill Historic District
APPLICANT: Robert Lee/LINDLEE LLC
OWNER: Robert Lee/LINDLEE LLC
TYPE OF WORK: Construction of a 1-story, single family residential structure
APPLICATION RECEIVED: January 20, 2020
60-DAY REVIEW: March 20, 2020
CASE MANAGER: Edward Hall
REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting conceptual approval to construct a 1-story, single family residential structure on the vacant lot at 118 Boston, located within the Dignowity Hill Historic District. This lot is located at the corner of Boston Street and Lowe Street.

APPLICABLE CITATIONS:

Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 4, Guidelines for New Construction

1. Building and Entrance Orientation

A. FAÇADE ORIENTATION

- i. Setbacks*—Align front facades of new buildings with front facades of adjacent buildings where a consistent setback has been established along the street frontage. Use the median setback of buildings along the street frontage where a variety of setbacks exist. Refer to UDC Article 3, Division 2. Base Zoning Districts for applicable setback requirements.
- ii. Orientation*—Orient the front façade of new buildings to be consistent with the predominant orientation of historic buildings along the street frontage.

B. ENTRANCES

- i. Orientation*—Orient primary building entrances, porches, and landings to be consistent with those historically found along the street frontage. Typically, historic building entrances are oriented towards the primary street.

2. Building Massing and Form

A. SCALE AND MASS

- i. Similar height and scale*—Design new construction so that its height and overall scale are consistent with nearby historic buildings. In residential districts, the height and scale of new construction should not exceed that of the majority of historic buildings by more than one-story. In commercial districts, building height shall conform to the established pattern. If there is no more than a 50% variation in the scale of buildings on the adjacent block faces, then the height of the new building shall not exceed the tallest building on the adjacent block face by more than 10%.
- ii. Transitions*—Utilize step-downs in building height, wall-plane offsets, and other variations in building massing to provide a visual transition when the height of new construction exceeds that of adjacent historic buildings by more than one-half story.
- iii. Foundation and floor heights*—Align foundation and floor-to-floor heights (including porches and balconies) within one foot of floor-to-floor heights on adjacent historic structures.

B. ROOF FORM

- i. Similar roof forms*—Incorporate roof forms—pitch, overhangs, and orientation—that are consistent with those predominantly found on the block. Roof forms on residential building types are typically sloped, while roof forms on nonresidential building types are more typically flat and screened by an ornamental parapet wall.

ii. Façade configuration—The primary façade of new commercial buildings should be in keeping with established patterns. Maintaining horizontal elements within adjacent cap, middle, and base precedents will establish a consistent street wall through the alignment of horizontal parts. Avoid blank walls, particularly on elevations visible from the street. No new façade should exceed 40 linear feet without being penetrated by windows, entryways, or other defined bays.

D. LOT COVERAGE

i. Building to lot ratio—New construction should be consistent with adjacent historic buildings in terms of the building to lot ratio. Limit the building footprint for new construction to no more than 50 percent of the total lot area, unless adjacent historic buildings establish a precedent with a greater building to lot ratio.

3. Materials and Textures

A. NEW MATERIALS

i. Complementary materials—Use materials that complement the type, color, and texture of materials traditionally found in the district. Materials should not be so dissimilar as to distract from the historic interpretation of the district. For example, corrugated metal siding would not be appropriate for a new structure in a district comprised of homes with wood siding.

ii. Alternative use of traditional materials—Consider using traditional materials, such as wood siding, in a new way to provide visual interest in new construction while still ensuring compatibility.

iii. Roof materials—Select roof materials that are similar in terms of form, color, and texture to traditionally used in the district.

iv. Metal roofs—Construct new metal roofs in a similar fashion as historic metal roofs. Refer to the Guidelines for Alterations and Maintenance section for additional specifications regarding metal roofs.

v. Imitation or synthetic materials—Do not use vinyl siding, plastic, or corrugated metal sheeting. Contemporary materials not traditionally used in the district, such as brick or simulated stone veneer and Hardie Board or other fiberboard siding, may be appropriate for new construction in some locations as long as new materials are visually similar to the traditional material in dimension, finish, and texture. EIFS is not recommended as a substitute for actual stucco.

4. Architectural Details

A. GENERAL

i. Historic context—Design new buildings to reflect their time while respecting the historic context. While new construction should not attempt to mirror or replicate historic features, new structures should not be so dissimilar as to distract from or diminish the historic interpretation of the district.

ii. Architectural details—Incorporate architectural details that are in keeping with the predominant architectural style along the block face or within the district when one exists. Details should be simple in design and should complement, but not visually compete with, the character of the adjacent historic structures or other historic structures within the district. Architectural details that are more ornate or elaborate than those found within the district are inappropriate.

iii. Contemporary interpretations—Consider integrating contemporary interpretations of traditional designs and details for new construction. Use of contemporary window moldings and door surroundings, for example, can provide visual interest while helping to convey the fact that the structure is new. Modern materials should be implemented in a way that does not distract from the historic structure.

5. Garages and Outbuildings

A. DESIGN AND CHARACTER

v. Garage doors—Incorporate garage doors with similar proportions and materials as those traditionally found in the district.

6. Mechanical Equipment and Roof Appurtenances

A. LOCATION AND SITING

i. Visibility—Do not locate utility boxes, air conditioners, rooftop mechanical equipment, skylights, satellite dishes, and other roof appurtenances on primary facades, front-facing roof slopes, in front yards, or in other locations that are clearly visible from the public right-of-way.

ii. Service Areas—Locate service areas towards the rear of the site to minimize visibility from the public right-of-way.

B. SCREENING

- i. Building-mounted equipment*—Paint devices mounted on secondary facades and other exposed hardware, frames, and piping to match the color scheme of the primary structure or screen them with landscaping.
 - ii. Freestanding equipment*—Screen service areas, air conditioning units, and other mechanical equipment from public view using a fence, hedge, or other enclosure.
 - iii. Roof-mounted equipment*—Screen and set back devices mounted on the roof to avoid view from public right-of-way.
- Historic Design Guidelines, Chapter 5, Guidelines for Site Elements

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.
- iv. Prohibited materials*—Do not use exposed concrete masonry units (CMU), Keystone or similar interlocking retaining wall systems, concrete block, vinyl fencing, or chain link fencing.
- 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.

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.

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.

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.

7. Off-Street Parking

A. LOCATION

- i. Preferred location*—Place parking areas for non-residential and mixed-use structures at the rear of the site, behind primary structures to hide them from the public right-of-way. On corner lots, place parking areas behind the primary structure and set them back as far as possible from the side streets. Parking areas to the side of the primary structure are acceptable when location behind the structure is not feasible. See UDC Section 35-310 for district-specific standards.
- ii. Front*—Do not add off-street parking areas within the front yard setback as to not disrupt the continuity of the streetscape.
- iii. Access*—Design off-street parking areas to be accessed from alleys or secondary streets rather than from principal streets whenever possible.

B. DESIGN

- i. Screening*—Screen off-street parking areas with a landscape buffer, wall, or ornamental fence two to four feet high—or a combination of these methods. Landscape buffers are preferred due to their ability to absorb carbon dioxide. See UDC Section 35-510 for buffer requirements.
- ii. Materials*—Use permeable parking surfaces when possible to reduce run-off and flooding. See UDC Section 35-526(j) for specific standards.
- iii. Parking structures*—Design new parking structures to be similar in scale, materials, and rhythm of the surrounding historic district when new parking structures are necessary.

FINDINGS:

- a. The applicant is requesting conceptual approval to construct a 1-story, single family residential structure on the vacant lot at 118 Boston, located within the Dignowity Hill Historic District. This lot is located at the corner of

Boston Street and Lowe Street.

- b. **CONCEPTUAL APPROVAL** – Conceptual approval is the review of general design ideas and principles (such as scale and setback). Specific design details reviewed at this stage are not binding and may only be approved through a Certificate of Appropriateness for final approval.
- c. **CONTEXT & DEVELOPMENT PATTERN** – The context and historic development pattern of Boston Street features 1-story, single family residential structures. Recently, the Historic and Design Review Commission has approved new construction featuring 2-story structures.
- d. **SETBACKS & ORIENTATION** – According to the Guidelines for New Construction, the front facades of new buildings are to align with front facades of adjacent buildings where a consistent setback has been established along the street frontage. Additionally, the orientation of new construction should be consistent with the historic examples found on the block. The applicant has proposed a front setback that is consistent with that of the neighboring historic structure, and an orientation that addresses Boston Street. Generally, staff finds that both the proposed setback and orientation are appropriate; however, staff finds that a setback that is greater than that of the neighboring historic structure's setback would be more appropriate.
- e. **ENTRANCES** – According the Guidelines for New Construction 1.B.i. primary building entrances should be orientated towards the primary street. The applicant has proposed a primary entrance that is oriented toward Boston Street. Staff finds this to be appropriate and consistent with the Guidelines.
- f. **SCALE & MASS** – Per the Guidelines for New Construction 2.A.i., a height and massing similar to historic structures in the vicinity of the proposed new construction should be used. In residential districts, the height and scale of new construction should not exceed that of the majority of historic buildings by more than one-story. The applicant has proposed new construction that features 1-story, and an overall height of 18' – 7". Staff finds the proposed height to be appropriate and consistent with the Guidelines.
- g. **FOUNDATION & FLOOR HEIGHTS** – According to the Guidelines for New Construction 2.A.iii., foundation and floor heights should be aligned within one (1) foot of neighboring structure's foundation and floor heights. Historic structures on this block feature foundation heights that are between one and three feet in height. The applicant has proposed a foundation height of between fifteen (15) and twenty-one (21) inches. Staff finds the proposed foundation heights to be appropriate and consistent with the Guidelines.
- h. **ROOF FORM** – The applicant has proposed roof forms that include both front and side gabled roofs. The applicant has proposed for the side gabled roof to feature a shorter ridge line than that of the intersecting gable, resulting in a dormer-like element. Staff finds this to be inappropriate, and that the applicant should modify the roof forms to feature a matching ridge height. This can be accomplished either through the raising or lowering of either of the existing ridge lines, or through the creation of a hipped form to tie into the rear of the side gabled roof form.
- i. **LOT COVERAGE** – Per the Guidelines, the building footprint for new construction should be no more than fifty (50) percent of the size of the total lot area. The applicant's application documents do not clarify the proposed lot coverage. The applicant is responsible for complying with the Guidelines regarding lot coverage.
- j. **MATERIALS** – The applicant has proposed materials that include composite siding with a four (4) inch exposure, cedar siding with a four (4) inch exposure, a composition shingle roof, and wood columns. Generally, staff finds the proposed materials to be appropriate. The proposed composite siding should feature a smooth finish and a thickness of approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ ".
- k. **WINDOW MATERIALS** – The applicant has not specified window materials at this time. Staff finds that a double-hung, one-over-one wood windows or aluminum-clad wood windows should be used. Meeting rails must be no taller than 1.25" and stiles no wider than 2.25". White manufacturer's color is not allowed, and color selection must be presented to staff. There should be a minimum of two inches in depth between the front face of the window trim and the front face of the top window sash. This must be accomplished by recessing the window sufficiently within the opening or with the installation of additional window trim to add thickness. Window trim must feature traditional dimensions and architecturally appropriate sill detail. Window track components must be painted to match the window trim or concealed by a wood window screen set within the opening.
- l. **FENESTRATION PROFILE** – The applicant has proposed a number of windows that feature traditional sizes and profiles, including one over one and two over two profiles. Generally, staff finds the proposed fenestration profiles to be appropriate and consistent with the Guidelines. Staff finds that the applicant should study the introduction of fenestration on the rear elevation.
- m. **ARCHITECTURAL DETAILS** – Generally staff finds the proposed architectural details to be appropriate; however, staff finds that the applicant should modify the proposed ridge heights, as noted in finding h.
- n. **DRIVEWAY** – The applicant has proposed a ribbon strip driveway at the rear (south) of the property to provide access from Lowe Street. Staff finds the location of the proposed driveway to be appropriate; however, the width

of the proposed driveway should not exceed ten (10) feet in width.

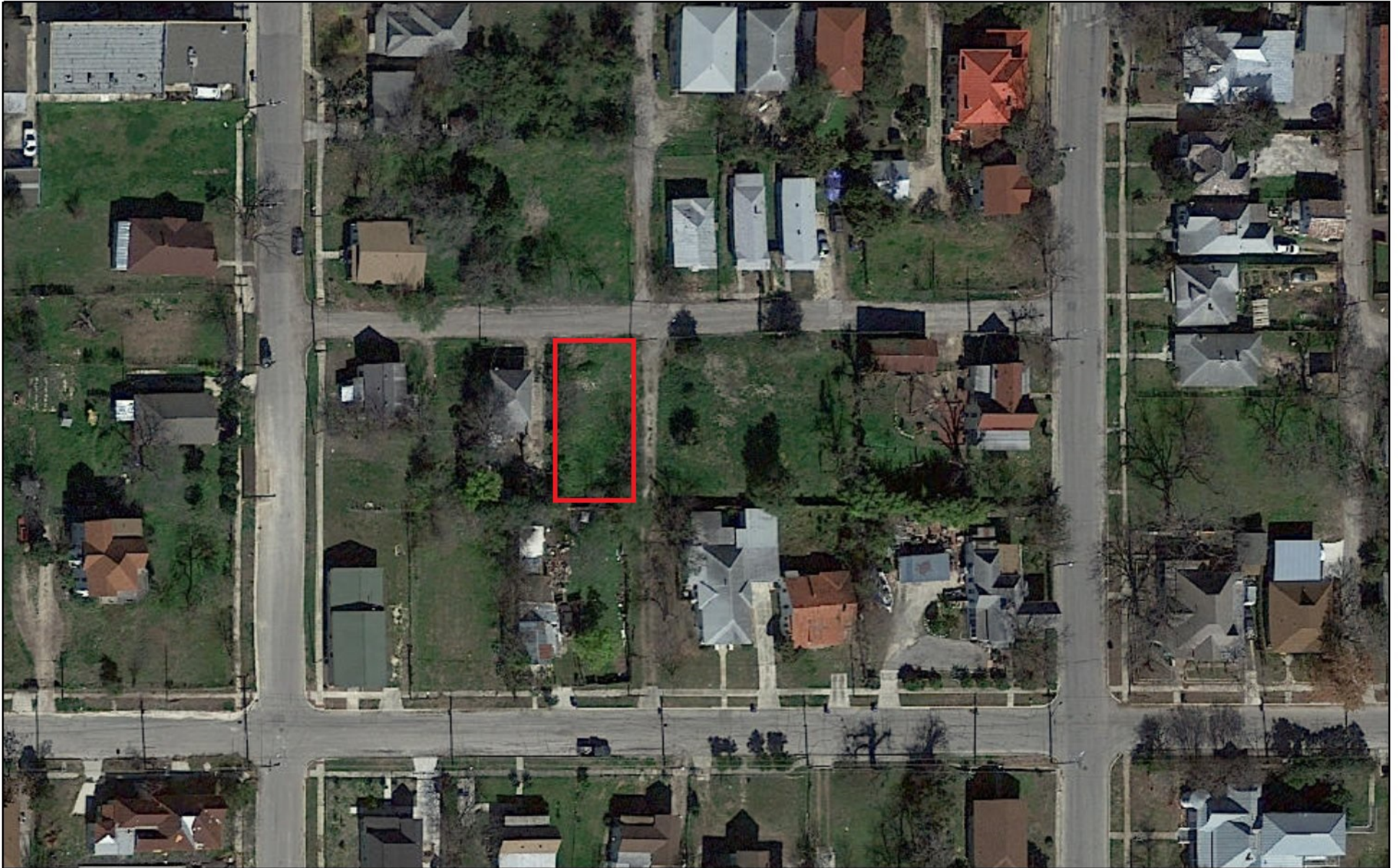
- o. **FRONT WALKWAY** – The Guidelines for Site Elements note that front yard sidewalks should appear similar to those found historically within the district in regards to their materials, width, alignment and configuration. Staff finds that the proposed paver front walkway is inconsistent with the Guidelines, and that a simply, concrete walkway that matches those found historically within the district be installed. The side walkways, noted as "optional" on the site plan may feature a paver profile as this walkway is installed in a secondary location, that is not fronting the primary street, in a traditional location.
- p. **MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT** – Per the Guidelines for New Construction 6, all mechanical equipment should be screened from view at the public right of way. The applicant is responsible for screening all mechanical equipment where it cannot be viewed from the public right of way.
- q. **LANDSCAPING** – The applicant has noted on the site plan that landscaping will include planting beds, new trees and grass. Staff finds this to be appropriate and consistent with the Guidelines.

RECOMMENDATION:

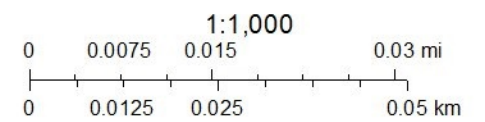
Staff recommends conceptual approval based on findings a through q with the following stipulations:

- i. That the applicant study increasing the proposed setback to result in a setback that is greater than that of the neighboring historic structure, as noted in finding d.
- ii. That the applicant modify the proposed ridge heights to result in both gabled forms featuring a matching ridge height, or incorporate a hipped element to tie into the rear of the side gabled roof to reduce the taller ridge line's visibility as noted in findings h and m.
- iii. That the applicant comply with the Guidelines regarding lot coverage as noted in finding i.
- iv. That the applicant install wood or aluminum clad wood windows. The proposed windows should feature meeting rails that are no taller than 1.25" and stiles no wider than 2.25". White manufacturer's color is not allowed, and color selection must be presented to staff. There should be a minimum of two inches in depth between the front face of the window trim and the front face of the top window sash. This must be accomplished by recessing the window sufficiently within the opening or with the installation of additional window trim to add thickness. Window trim must feature traditional dimensions and architecturally appropriate sill detail. Window track components must be painted to match the window trim or concealed by a wood window screen set within the opening.
- v. That the proposed driveway feature no more than ten (10) feet in width, as noted in finding n.
- vi. That the walkway proposed to connect to the sidewalk at Boston Street feature a profile that matches those found historically within the district, solid concrete, as noted in finding o.
- vii. That all mechanical equipment be screened from view from the public right of way as noted in finding p.
- viii. That the applicant explore incorporating fenestration into the rear façade.

City of San Antonio One Stop

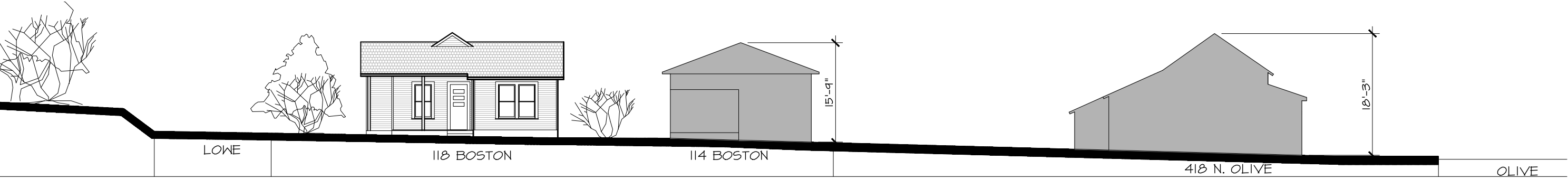


February 7, 2020





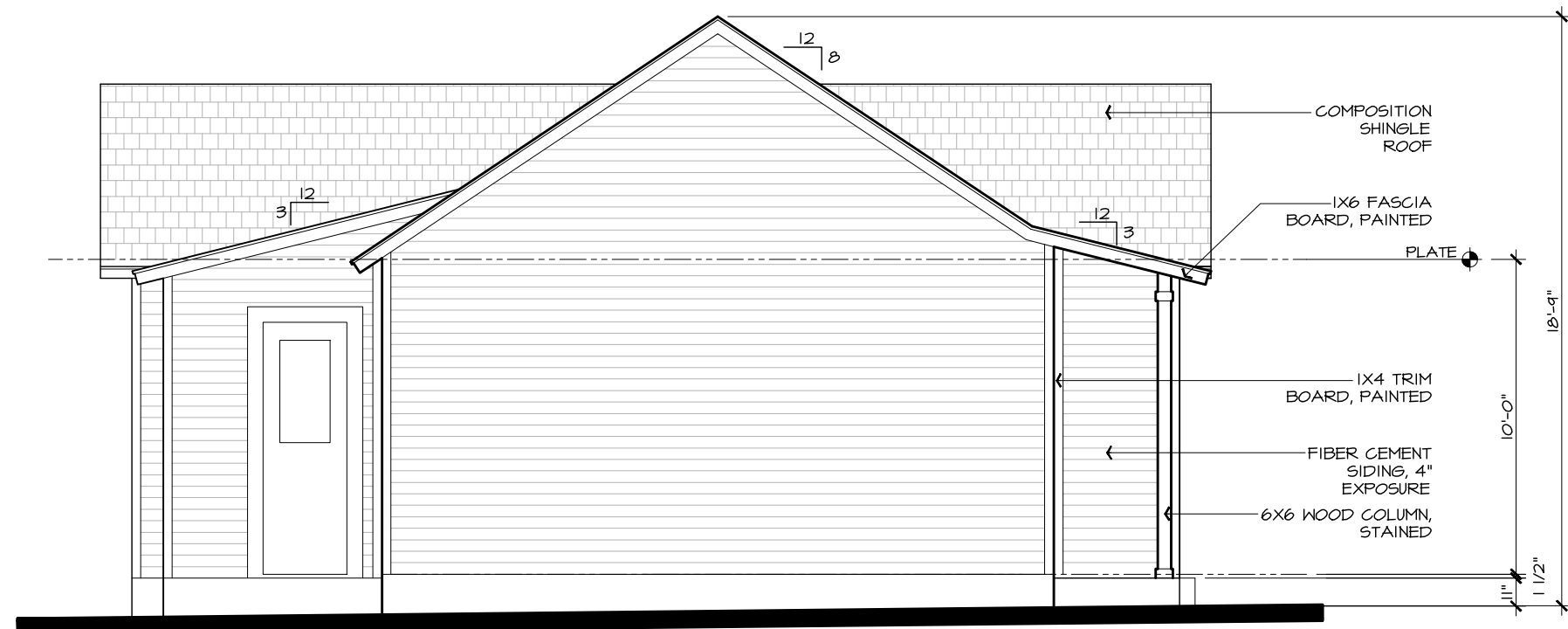
118 Boston St



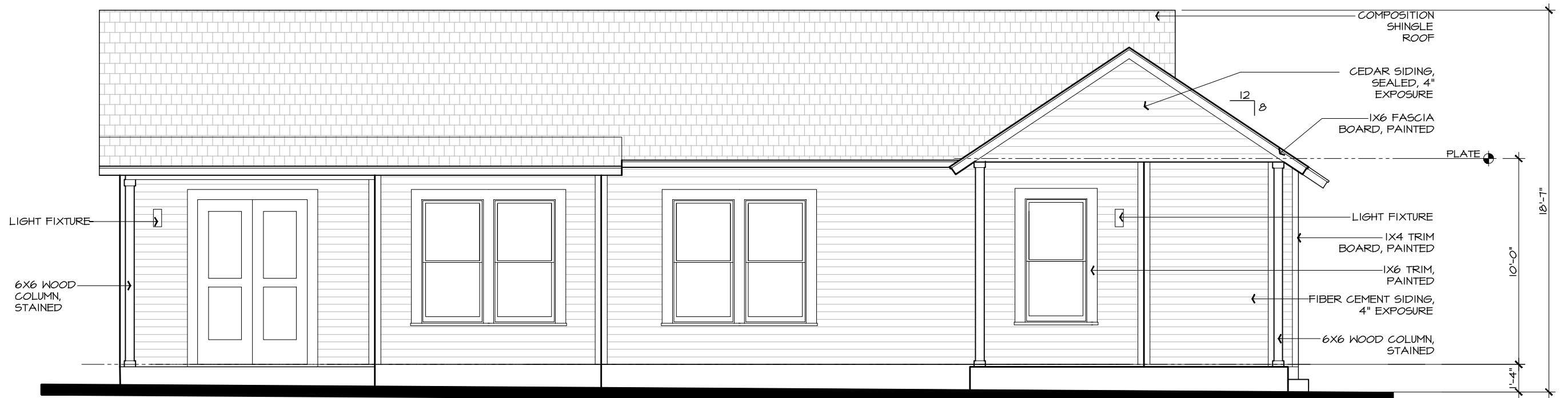
1 CONTEXT-118 BOSTON
SCALE : N.S.



1 NORTH/BOSTON ELEVATION
 SCALE : 3/16" = 1'-0"



2 SOUTH/REAR ELEVATION
 SCALE : 3/16" = 1'-0"



1 EAST/LOWE ELEVATION
SCALE : 3/16" = 1'-0"



2 WEST/ ELEVATION
SCALE : 3/16" = 1'-0"

	LindLee, LLC	118 Boston	22 - November - 2019	
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