

# HISTORIC AND DESIGN REVIEW COMMISSION

November 18, 2020

**HDRC CASE NO:** 2020-506  
**ADDRESS:** 311 BARRERA  
**LEGAL DESCRIPTION:** NCB 714 BLK 11 LOT S 77.05 FT OF 3  
**ZONING:** RM-4,H  
**CITY COUNCIL DIST.:** 1  
**DISTRICT:** Lavaca Historic District  
**APPLICANT:** Tracey Kop/KOP TRACEY DAWN  
**OWNER:** Tracey Kop/KOP TRACEY DAWN  
**TYPE OF WORK:** Final approval of landscaping plan  
**APPLICATION RECEIVED:** November 01, 2020  
**60-DAY REVIEW:** Not applicable due to City Council Emergency Orders  
**CASE MANAGER:** Stephanie Phillips

## REQUEST:

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for a final landscaping plan associated with the new construction of a 2-story, single family residential structure at 311 Barrera.

## 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 lot located at 311 Barrera features a new 2-story, single family residential structure that is still under construction. The applicant received final approval from the Historic and Design Review Commission (HDRC) on January 15, 2020, to construct the building. The approval carried the stipulation that the applicant return to the HDRC for final approval of a landscaping and hardscaping plan. The property is located within the Lavaca Historic District.
- b. LANDSCAPING – The applicant has proposed a comprehensive landscaping plan, to include several drought-tolerant and native species ranging from groundcover to shrubbery to trees. The applicant has revised their plan since the January 2020 HDRC review and approval to eliminate non-native cover and incorporates more native landscaping with plants and trees that have been selected from the City’s Appendix E of recommended plantings. Staff finds the proposal generally consistent with the Guidelines and appropriate for the site and site context.
- c. HARDSCAPING – The applicant has proposed hardscaping as part of their overall site proposal, including a formed concrete walkway five feet in width. The walkway reads continuous with narrow seams of chipped granite and eventual ground cover between each paver. Based on the proposed walkway design and the diverse range of walkways on the block, as well as the newer hardscaping context immediately across the street, staff finds the proposal appropriate for the new construction and finds that it will not detract from the surrounding historic context. Per the applicant, the small lot size makes it difficult to reduce the plan’s pervious cover from 57%. To offset and mitigate water run-off, the applicant has included a 2,000-gallon water collection system, improved sub-soil collection and drainage on the east side; a pervious, chipped granite driveway in lieu of poured concrete; and increased plantings at the property’s front and rear compared to the January 2020 proposal. Staff finds the proposal appropriate based on the site-specific considerations.

### RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends approval based on findings a through c.



# City of San Antonio One Stop



November 13, 2020

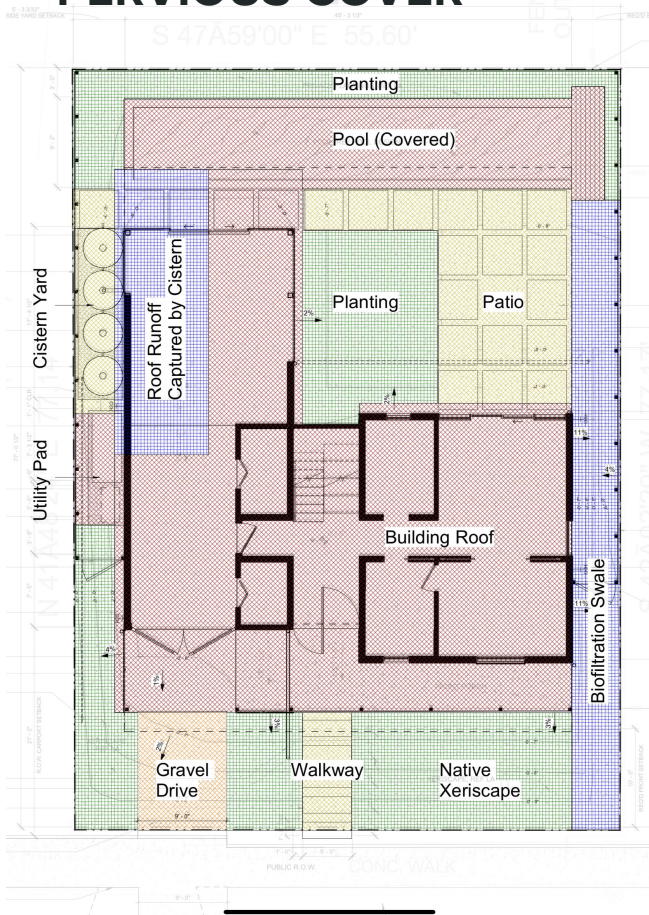








# PERVIOUS COVER



To mitigate water run-off our plan includes:

- 2,000 gallon water collection system on the west side for slow-drip landscape irrigation
- improved sub-soil run-off collection and drainage on the east side to reduce flow rate to street

KOP HOUSE   IMPERVIOUS COVER RATIO				
SURFACE	RUNOFF COEFFICIENT	AREA	NOTES	IMPERVIOUS COVER SF
Roof	1.00	1,610	275 sq.ft. from total roof area has been subtracted and will be 95% captured by 2,000 gal. storage system	1,610
Concrete	1.00	45		45
Pool	1.00	415		415
1/4" Gravel on Compacted Class 2 Base	0.40	185		74
Precast 12"x12" Paver w/ 4" Gaps on Sand	0.35	425		149
1/4" Gravel on Permeable Class 2 Drain Rock	0.10	400		40
Mulch/ Decorative Planting	0.10	580		58
Roof 95% Captured by Rain Collection Cisterns	0.05	275		14
6" Planting Soil/Gravel on 18" Deep Engineered Soil on 6" Gravel Filtration Layer	0.00	315	Engineered soils provide retention and gravel increases percolation rate to existing clay substratum	0
TOTAL AREA		4,250		
PERVIOUS COVER		2,405		
IMPERVIOUS COVER		1,846		
IMPERVIOUS COVER RATIO		57%		

- increased native & xeriscaped plantings at the property's front, rear and bioswale area on the east side
- chipped granite driveway vs impervious concrete
- discontinuous walkway and backyard patio pavers to increase perviousness
- gutters oversized for 100-year storm and grading to direct flow toward retention areas before street



# WALKWAY

- Proposing same concrete material & 5-foot width as existing sidewalk
- Breaks in concrete increase pervious cover and allow ground cover growth
- Recent Lavaca examples include cast in place/precast pavers,, cobble & flagstone

