

HPC Review
for 313 Brown Street

HPC2009-09-15-01

Property-owners Tom Land and Christine Dibble had previously come to the regular monthly meeting of the HPC on May 19, 2009, and requested a courtesy review/early consultation of the proposed plans for an expansion of their home at 313 Brown Street.

Christine Dibble returned to the regular monthly meeting of the HPC on September 15 for a formal review of their refined plans, prepared by architect Ralph Hurst.

General Description: A two-story addition to the existing structure is proposed.

Adequacy of the Documents Submitted: The documents submitted were adequate for the HPC's review, except that the building permit application was not included. The Chair advised that prior to the September 15 meeting, Christine reviewed the drawings with him and asked whether they were sufficient for a review. The chair apologized that although he told her they were adequate to conduct a review, he failed to realize that the permit application had been omitted. Christine was told that the building permit application, which can be downloaded from the Town website, would need to be completed.

The eight (8) drawings submitted include the site plan / plan of the existing first floor, existing second-floor plan, drawings of proposed demolition on first and second floors, proposed first floor plan, proposed second floor plan, and three exterior elevations - east, west and north views. The south elevation, facing Brown Street, was not included, as no changes are proposed to it.

General Scope of Project: A bedroom and bathroom are to be added on the first floor; a bedroom would be added on the second floor and the size of the existing second-floor bathroom would be increased, and it would have direct access to both upstairs bedrooms. The addition is proposed for the rear of the house, and would affect only the 2-story addition that the homeowner stated was built sometime in the 1980s.

The plan calls for the removal of an upper deck off the existing second-floor master bedroom.

To bring more light into the 80s addition, a new bow window in the living room is contemplated for the west elevation, and a series of French doors will replace the slider that opens to the existing deck on the east elevation.

The new cross gable is shown as being only slightly higher than the existing roof, and the gable beyond the new cross gable (facing north) is shown as being lower than the existing roof of the 80s addition.

To break up the long plane on the west elevation, it is proposed that the new addition be stepped back from the 80s addition by 6".

It is planned to use the same cedar siding and asphalt roofing materials for the new addition as have been used on the existing home.

The plans as presented do not include a basement under the new addition, although the homeowner stated they are considering that option. It was agreed that if a basement is added to the plan, the design does not need to come back to HPC for further review, as long as the height and general elevations are unchanged.

Visibility from public ways: The new addition will be visible Brown Street and Pine Avenue

Contributing structure: The house is a contributing resource, and dates from ca. 1905-1917.

Nearby Contributing structures: A number of nearby structures on Brown Street are contributing resources. These include 315, 317, 401, 405, 409, 410 and 414 Brown Street.

Compatibility with the existing structure: The proposed plan is compatible with the existing structure.

Compatibility with the historic district: No negative compatibility issues have been identified.

HPC Recommendations:

It was suggested that the homeowner consider a shed roof for the north side elevation (rather than a gable roof). A shed roof would allow the roof line to be broken up, reduce the apparent height on the north facade and the lower eave line will anchor the house to its natural environment. This would reduce the apparent scale of the addition.

It was also suggested that the homeowner consider two 6" step backs on the north elevation (pencil sketched on drawing). This would help to further break up the scale of the addition.

The homeowner, as another technique for reducing the scale, could also consider using a different but compatible material for the new addition (or just the part beyond the new cross gable; same color as the existing horizontal siding).

The homeowner might also consider slightly increasing the pitch/height of the new cross gable if it does not exceed the maximum height.

The homeowner asked about using a copper roofing material on the new bow window on the west-side elevation, and it was agreed that a copper standing-seam roof would be both practical and attractive.

Windows types, sizes and locations were discussed with the homeowner during the review. HPC strongly encourages the use of natural materials.

Emilia A. Styles
for the Historic Preservation Commission

Date

Please note that the Historic Preservation Commission acts only in an advisory capacity to both applicants and the Planning Commission. The reviews undertaken are designed to assist homeowners in their projects, to provide input to deliberations of the Planning Commission and, more generally, to contribute to historic preservation in Washington Grove.

Further information regarding the scope, powers, duties, and structure of the Historic Preservation Commission may be found in Article XV of the Code of Ordinances of the Town of Washington Grove. Section 5 (a) of Article XV describes the powers and duties of the Historic Preservation Commission in the building permit process. This section reads as follows:

The Commission shall review all applications for building permits filed with the Town Planning Commission which would involve any change to a structure or site visible from any public way for historical accuracy, integrity, or compatibility with the neighborhood and improvements therein. The Commission may recommend to an applicant alternative historical designs, materials and sources for the same which may be more historically compatible. The Commission shall forward its recommendations regarding the same, if any, in an advisory capacity, to the Planning Commission for consideration by the Planning Commission within thirty (30) days from the Commission's receipt of the application from the Planning Commission.

cc: Applicant
 HPC members
 HPC Binder
 Web site, Bill Saar
 Planning Commission, John McClelland
 Mayor Darrell Anderson
 Town Clerk, Kathy Lehman