To: Kansas City, Kansas Landmarks Commission

From: City Staff

Date: August 7, 2017

Re: Certificate of Appropriateness—Addition & Alteration #CA-2017-12

GENERAL INFORMATION

Applicant:
Dawn Grubb

Status of Applicant:
Property owner
4176 Eaton Street
Kansas City, KS 66103

Requested Action:
Approval of Certificate of Appropriateness—Addition and Alteration

Date of Application:
June 30, 2017

Purpose:
To obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness for Addition and Alteration

Property Location:
4176 Eaton Street
Historic Status: The property is within Hanover Heights Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Public Hearing: August 7, 2017

Public Opposition: Staff has received a letter of opposition from Mr. Gil Pintar, President of the Hanover Heights Neighborhood.

PROPOSAL

Detailed Outline of Requested Action: The applicants are seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for the addition and alteration of a house within the Hanover Heights Historic District, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The applicant wants to add dormers to the roofline of the home in order to add additional living space.

City Ordinance Requirements: Chapter 27, Article IV, Sections 27-76 – 27-499

Historic District Review

Per Sec 27-452 the following shall be considered while making a determination concerning the environs of a historically listed property:

1. The character of a historic property and district should be retained and preserved. The removal or alteration of distinctive architecture, landscape features, spatial relationships, etc. that characterize the property or district should be avoided.

   This house, built in 1918, is located in the Hanover Heights neighborhood, which is listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Hanover Heights is made up of primarily one and one-half story single family homes. While the home would be retaining many of the character defining elements of the area, including the stone porch, this addition to the contributing structure will create a significantly larger massing compared to other homes in the neighborhood.

2. The district should be used as it has been historically or allow the inclusion of new uses that require minimal change to the district’s distinctive materials, features, and spatial relationships.

   Not applicable.

3. Demolition of character-defining buildings, structures, landscape features, etc. in a historic district should be avoided. When the severity of deterioration requires removal within the environs, compatible reconstruction shall occur. (All demolitions require Landmark Commission approval.)

   No demolition is planned.
4. Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

This is not applicable in this case.

5. New additions, exterior alterations, infill construction, or related new construction should not destroy character-defining features or spatial relationships that characterize the historic district. The new work shall be compatible with the historic materials, character-defining features, size, scale and proportion, and massing of the environs.

While the style and materials, as well as existing character-defining elements will be preserved, the concern with this addition is the scale, proportion, and massing of the home in relation to the others in the neighborhood. The addition, while quite large, would not exceed one and one-half stories, which is consistent with other homes on the block.

6. Moved historic properties that have not retained or acquired historic significance in their new environs shall be considered as artifacts without environs.

This is not applicable in this case.

**STAFF COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS**

The applicant, Ms. Grubb, is seeking approval to convert the attic of her home into a 374 square foot master suite by adding dormers to expand the upper level. This addition does add additional massing to the home, though not beyond what is already seen in the neighborhood. Staff understands the concerns that have been raised by the Hanover Heights Neighborhood Association; setting precedent for additions and alterations that are incongruous to the historical nature of the neighborhood can be concerning. However, staff feels that this addition is not considerably different from the architectural style, massing, scale, or general aesthetic of the historic district. The addition will not destroy character-defining elements of the home nor detract from other homes in the adjacent area.

Staff recommends that the applicant work with the hired design professionals in order to incorporate any architectural details that would help the addition blend in with the original structure as much as possible, including window grouping and framing and eave details. However, staff does not feel that the requirement to move the dormer walls in several feet as suggested by the Neighborhood Association is reasonable.

The neighborhood has repeatedly expressed concern over this area becoming primarily renter-occupied, which can lead to the neglect and deterioration of historic properties. This case brings forward a homeowner who would like to remain in her home by making alterations in order to allow her to do so. If we discourage homeowners from making further investments in their properties, especially investments that may facilitate greater owner-occupancy, we are only exacerbating the problem.
STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Kansas City, Kansas Landmarks Commission make the findings contained within the staff report, and recommends APPROVAL of #CA-2017-12 subject to all comments and suggestions outlined in this staff report.

ATTACHMENTS

Historic properties map
Images of the home via Google Street View
Images submitted by applicant
Plans submitted by applicant
Response from applicant
Revised Plans (7/25/17)
Letter of opposition from Hannover Heights Neighborhood Association (including photograph attachments)

REVIEW OF INFORMATION AND SCHEDULE

Action Landmarks Commission
Public Hearing August 7, 2017

STAFF CONTACT: Jamie Hickey
jhickey@wycokck.org

MOTIONS

I move the Kansas City, Kansas Landmarks Commission APPROVE Petition #CA-2017-12 as meeting all the requirements of the City code and being in the interest of the public health, safety and welfare subject to such modifications as are necessary to resolve to the satisfaction of City Staff all comments contained in the Staff Report; and the following additional requirements of the Kansas City, Kansas City Landmarks Commission:

1. __________________________________________________________;
2. __________________________________________________________; And
3. __________________________________________________________.

OR

I move the Kansas City, Kansas City Landmarks Commission DENY Petition #CA-2017-12, as it is not in compliance with the City Ordinances and as it will not promote the health, safety and welfare of the City of Kansas City, Kansas; and other such reasons that have been mentioned.
4176 Eaton Street denoted by blue highlight
Image via Google Street View (2015)
Images submitted by applicant
July 26, 2017

Janet Parker & Jamie Hickey
Dept. of Urban Planning & Land Use
701 N. 7th St., Room 423
Kansas City, KS 66101

Dear Janet and Jamie:

Thank you for sharing the comments of the Certificate of Appropriateness—Addition & Alteration CA 2017-12 for the proposed renovations to my residence at 4176 Eaton St., in the historic Hanover Heights neighborhood. Please accept these comments as part of the official application to be shared with the Landmarks Commission.

Renovation Goal
I was fortunate that when I purchased this property in 2007, numerous improvements and updates had been made by the previous owner. I want to continue the improvements by turning the unfinished attic space into a master suite, master bath, seating area, and additional closet space (as illustrated in the submitted plans, p. 10 of the application).

This will provide additional living space for my family so that this house can remain as an owner-occupied residence in a neighborhood that is witnessing more investors purchasing properties for rental purposes. It will also bring the historic home up to current energy efficiency standards with new insulation, windows, and heating/cooling system.

Maintaining Historical Integrity
It was critical to me to maintain the historical integrity of the Craftsman style bungalow, and we worked diligently with our architect/contractor to design plans that would naturally blend with the neighborhood and still provide additional space to maximize our living area.

Minimizing Massing
We chose shed dormers versus gable dormers to accommodate our plans and the load-bearing constraints identified by the structural engineer, as well as to avoid increasing height to the structure. The addition of two dormers will provide an additional 374 square feet; other additional square footage will be realized under the existing roof/existing attic space.

Despite additional square footage from the dormers, this modification will not create “a significantly larger massing” as referenced in the Historic District Review section of the application. In fact, the adjacent houses to the immediate south and north of my
property are taller, and other houses on my block are much larger (as illustrated in the aerial neighborhood view, p. 5 of the application).

**Retaining Architectural Elements/Design**
All renovations will retain the current historic look and feel of the house, including lap siding, soffits, paint colors, and accents on the eaves and trim. In addition, the layout of the dormer windows match the existing first- and second-floor windows (as illustrated in the bottom photos, p. 7 of the application).

**Addressing Neighborhood Association Feedback**
We met with the Hanover Heights Homes Association president who voiced concern about the design of dormers and the layout of the dormer windows.

We consulted our structural engineer and architect to explore modifying the design so that the dormer walls would be set back versus aligning with the existing wall. The structural engineer has advised that the load-bearing constraints of this house limit any modifications to 8 inches. As such, we do not feel that making this minor 8-Inch modification will have a significant impact and address the concern raised. In addition, the dormers will be set back 20 feet from the front of the house, minimizing visibility from the street and reducing the impact on the original historical façade (as illustrated in the street view, p. 6 of the application).

We chose to align the new windows with the existing window design versus ganging the dormer windows. This maintains the historical design of the windows, which were spaced to allow for pocket weights.

It was also suggested that revising the dormer design, or choosing a gable style dormer, would ensure the appearance of a separate roof line. This would require completely new plans that feature a beam and column system to accommodate the load. Not only would this result in us incurring significant additional expenses — expenses that go beyond what’s financially reasonable for this house/neighborhood, it would dramatically decrease the living space and make these proposed plans impractical. Our proposed design will not alter the existing roof height, reducing the impact on the original historic design of this narrow bungalow (as illustrated in the front view, p. 6 of the application).

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and for considering these proposed improvements to the property.

Sincerely,

Dawn J. Grubb
816-916-3903
July 28, 2017

Landmarks Commission
do UG Planning Department
701 North 7th Street
Kansas City, KS 66101

Re: Certificate of Appropriateness #CA-2017-12
4176 Eaton St – Dawn Grubb

Dear Commission Members:

The above matter will be heard by the UG Landmarks Commission on August 7, 2017. We wish to express our opposition to the proposal as submitted to you for your approval, specifically in that the proposal turns a one story steep roof home into a very different two story house and will greatly change its appearance from the street.

This Certificate of Appropriateness request is of considerable concern to the neighborhood, as this is the first proposed second-story home addition in Hanover Heights that we are aware of, making this a potentially precedent-setting building permit. This is particularly the case given the pressures already present in the neighborhood for the conversion of single-family, owner-occupied homes into rental properties.

As the applicant has mentioned, the extensive work done on the home by the previous owner, it should probably be noted that this involved the removal of artificial siding and the full restoration of the exterior of the home to its original historic appearance.

When viewed from the street, the scale of the proposed addition does not replicate others along the Eaton street front. With existing bungalows (other than airplane bungalows) that have a second floor living space, such as those at 4164 and 4167 Eaton, the walls of the second floor are set in at least two feet from the main walls on the first floor. Despite the 25ft front relief proposed for this shed dormer, this results in a surprisingly large second floor living space. In the proposed addition, the extension of the dormers upward from the existing exterior wall makes this look virtually like a full two-story home and not at all secondary in overall appearance from the street.

We advised the home owner that we could only support shed dormers that would replicate others in the immediate area. At this point, however, the only changes made to the submitted plans involve correcting the grouped placement of the first floor bay windows and duplicating the placement with the three dormer windows. (It should be noted that in the examples we have cited, there are actually four windows grouped together on the second floor level, giving the upper floor a more airy, less massive appearance.) Finally, having a financial hardship should not be a determinate in the proposal as cited by the Applicant.

We could support reducing the size of the shed dormers by setting their exterior walls back from the existing building line at least two feet, and more closely replicating the architectural design of the existing homes in the area with a grouped row of four windows rather than three. This would be a compromise position as we are not insisting on the full secondary roof that is present.
on the examples cited, as that would be a further departure from the original appearance of the home in question. We would hope that this compromise would be acceptable to all concerned.

Sincerely,

Gilbert A Pintar, President Hanover Heights Association

Hanover Heights Development Committee Members:

James Traylor
Stephanie Reynolds
Carol Marinovich
Carol Kane
Larry Hancks
4176 Eaton - streetview

4176 Eaton – rearview

NOTE: width of existing original airplane addition at rear – clearly secondary to the first floor width