



DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Planning Division

m e m o r a n d u m

TO: The Urbana Historic Preservation Commission

FROM: Rebecca Bird, Planner I

DATE: August 10, 2011

SUBJECT: HP-2011-COA-04: 701 S Busey Avenue. Request for a Certificate of Appropriateness to create a new doorway where a window now exists at the rear of a house, Paul Young, applicant.

Introduction & Background

On July 11, 2011, Paul Young submitted a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) application to remove a non-historic window from the 1967 addition at the rear of the house and install a doorway in the window opening to provide access to the house at 701 S Busey Avenue. The property is located in the Joseph Royer Historic District and is known as the Ella Danely Cottage.

On November 9, 2001, the Urbana City Council designated 801 W Oregon Street and 701 S Busey Avenue a local historic district (Ordinance No. 2001-11-141). Section XII-6 of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance requires a COA for any alteration that affects the exterior architectural appearance of any locally-designated landmark or building in a locally-designated historic district. Table XII-1 of the Zoning Ordinance specifies that changes to window and door openings require review by the Historic Preservation Commission. The Historic Preservation Commission makes the final decision on the Certificate of Appropriateness.

On July 6, 2011, the Historic Preservation Commission, at a vote of 6-yes and 0-no, approved a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a deck to the rear of this house.

Description of the Proposed Changes

The application requests permission to remove a window and install a doorway on the west elevation of the house in order to provide access to the newly-approved back deck. The subject window is in the 1967 addition at the rear of the house and is not a historic window. The applicant is proposing to create a new sliding glass doorway at this location on the rear of the house. The new doorway will not be visible from any street or alley and will be on a noncontributing, modern building addition. See photos from application below.

Existing Window opening



Proposed Doorway (simulated)



Photos by Paul Young, applicant

History and Architecture

The Joseph Royer Historic District is comprised of two buildings: the Joseph Royer House and the Ella Danely Cottage. The Joseph Royer House was designed and built in 1905 by the noted Urbana architect Joseph William Royer as his personal residence. In 1923, Royer designed and built the smaller cottage at the south end of his property for his mother-in-law, Ella Danely. The large main house is a good example of the Mission Style with Arts and Crafts influence, while the Danely Cottage is a picturesque rendition of the English Revival architectural style. The Danely Cottage was featured in the *Fairy Book* (1925), a children's storybook written by Adelaide Royer and illustrated by Nell Brooker Mayhew.

The Ella Danely Cottage has not been significantly altered and retains a high degree of integrity. The Historic Preservation Commission approved a Certificate of Appropriateness on July 6, 2011 for construction of a deck at the rear of the house, adjacent to the 1967 addition.

Discussion

The first question for discussion is whether removal of the existing window on the rear addition would alter a historic, character-defining feature of the building. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings windows factsheet, recommend identifying, retaining, and preserving historic windows and window openings. The windows in the historic original house are true divided light wood windows which are certainly character-defining features of the building. On the other hand, the window in the 1967 addition is not historic and its slider design is not compatible with the historic windows. Its removal would not be contrary to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

Second, the applicant is proposing to create a new doorway at this location. The door would be a two-paneled sliding door of a similar design to the existing sliding window. The proposed door would provide access to the back yard. Because the proposed work is on the least visible elevation and because the work would be limited to a non-historic addition, creating a doorway and installing a sliding glass door would not negatively impact the historic character of the house. The significant original qualities and

character of the cottage would be maintained. No historic or distinctive architectural features or materials would be removed or altered as part of this project. As sliding glass doors are contemporary features, it would not create a false sense of historical time.

Requirements for a Certificate of Appropriateness

According to Section XII-6.C of the Urbana Zoning Ordinance, the applicable criteria to be used by the Historic Preservation Commission in making its determination for a Certificate of Appropriateness shall include:

1. *Maintain the significant original qualities and character of the buildings, structures, sites or objects including, if significant, its appurtenances. Removing or altering any historic or distinctive architectural features should be avoided whenever possible.*
2. *Retain and preserve the historic character of a property. Avoid removing or substituting distinctive materials or altering features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property.*
3. *Recognize each property as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Do not undertake changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties.*
4. *Retain and preserve changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right.*
5. *Preserve distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property.*
6. *Deteriorated historic features. Repair rather than replace deteriorated historic features. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features must be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.*
7. *Treatment methods. Use the gentlest means possible when using chemical or physical treatments. Do not use treatments that cause damage to historic materials.*
8. *Archaeology. Protect and preserve archeological resources in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures should be undertaken.*
9. *New construction. With new additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction, do not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. Undertake new additions and adjacent or related new construction in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired. Differentiate new work from the old. To protect the integrity of the property and its environment, new additions and new construction shall be compatible with the original architecture of the landmark or styles within the historic district.*

As the proposed work would be limited to the rear elevation, which is part of a 1967 addition, the significant original qualities and character of the Ella Danely Cottage would not be affected, and no historic or distinctive architectural features would be removed. The historic character of the property would be maintained. As the proposed door is of a contemporary style, the proposed change would not create a false sense of history.

The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation recommend identifying, retaining, and preserving historic windows. As this project involves the rear elevation and is limited to a non-historic addition, it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

Options

The Historic Preservation Commission has the following options in this case:

1. Grant the requested Certificate of Appropriateness.
2. Grant the requested Certificate of Appropriateness subject to certain conditions.
3. Deny the requested Certificate of Appropriateness, in which case the Commission should provide the reasons for denial and may recommend ways to comply with the criteria.

Should the Historic Preservation Commission choose to deny this application, under Section XII-6.D and E of the Zoning Ordinance, the petitioner would have one of three options: (1) amend the application to address any recommendations of the Commission, (2) apply for a Certificate of Economic Hardship with evidence that denial is financially infeasible, or (3) appeal to City Council within 15 days notice of denial.

Staff Recommendation

Based on the analysis outlined herein, and without the benefit of considering additional evidence that may be presented at the public hearing, City staff recommends that the Historic Preservation Commission **APPROVE** the application with the following conditions:

1. The work shall be done in general conformance to that described in the attached application.
2. The sliding glass door closely resembles the door in the photo in the attached application.

Attachments:

Exhibit A: Location Map
Exhibit B: Application
Exhibit C: Secretary of the Interior's Standards

cc: Paul Young, paul@electric-pictures.com
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