

# CITY OF FLAGSTAFF HERITAGE PRESERVATION COMMISSION

## STAFF REPORT

### CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

PZ-22-00095

Address: 803 W Aspen Ave

DATE: 6/7/2022

MEETING DATE: June 15, 2022

REPORT BY: Mark Reavis, AICP, NCARB

### BACKGROUND

The existing primary home located at 803 W Aspen has been previously evaluated and is not contributing to the Townsite District. The Flagstaff Heritage Preservation Officer previously received a Cultural Resource Study (CRS) prepared by Enviro Systems Management Inc. dated June 1, 2015. An HPC application dated June 11, 2015 was received by the HPO and subsequently the CRS was reviewed and approved by the HPC. The CRS noted that there were significant modifications to the home and that it was not contributing to the Townsite Historic District. With this determination demolition of the property with no further study, mitigation or additional requirements is needed. The current HPO concurs with the conclusion that the property is not contributing to the Townsite District.

The project is located within the Townsite Overlay Zone and subject to its design review requirements. The primary building is not listed as historic but the small home adjacent to the alley is contributing to the Townsite district and is to be preserved and utilized. It is the intent to define the small house as an ADU meeting current requirements and documentation.

A primary concern of neighbors in past reviews has been privacy and overall impacts to the neighborhood. The HPO reviewed that aspect of the project with a particular focus.

### PREVIOUS HP DECISIONS

There was a previous Historic Preservation Commission decision in accepting the determination of the Cultural Resource Study pertaining to the non-contributing status of the primary house and historic aspects of the accessory home on this property.

### REQUEST

The applicant has requested that the current primary home be demolished while keeping the small secondary historic home located adjacent to the alley. The applicant proposes to replace the primary home with a new 2 story home and attached garage that meets the Townsite Design Review Overlay compatibility requirements. The architect in his drawings has indicated the replacement homes height at 27 feet with the 25-foot base requirement and the allowable 2-foot increase for raised wood floor construction.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATION & FINDINGS

Staff finds that the street fronting façade on Aspen Street address architectural aspects of the Townsite neighborhood. The Townsite Standards also note that the structure closest to the street is the "Primary" structure and does not specify age as a criterion for a primary structure or designate historic importance. Staff finds that the design establishes a street facing entry and utilizes the extensive use of gable forms typical of Townsite Craftsman Bungalow architecture. Staff feels that the architect has met the design criteria in the Standards and Guidelines. The project is within the Townsite height limits for a primary residential structure and utilizes 6:12 roof pitches.

Mark Reavis, Heritage Preservation Officer/Neighborhood Planner, Architect State of AZ #75792 has reviewed the architect's submission and found it in compliance with the Townsite Design Review requirements for the Townsite Overlay District with the following adjustments to the submitted plans. Design Criteria/Guidelines VI. notes to preserve neighbor "views" and privacy and minimize impact to neighbors. Sub-section a. calls out window orientation. HPO recommends that the NW bedroom's west facades window be eliminated or be of frosted glass. In addition, the tall west facing stair well window be frosted or of a decorative glass that obscures views toward the neighbor at mid landing. Indicated on the plan's second floor west facing open porch is a glass railing. HPO recommends a solid increased height partition on the porch to provide privacy for both the home's master bedroom and the neighboring property. The partition may step down to railing height toward the south and terminate with a glass railing at its south face. The new west property fence provides privacy of the neighbor at first floor windows. HPO recommends a preference for the base paint color to be dark green as one of the presented options.

### **RECOMMENDED MOTION**

**Approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of the primary home located at 803 W Aspen and the approval with conditions of the design of a new 2 story home. Conditions of approval include:**

- **Mitigation of the design to ensure privacy of the neighboring property at 805 W Aspen Ave, and**
- **Compliance with the underlying zoning requirements for the primary residence and the accessory dwelling unit (historic secondary structure).**

### **INTENT**

The purpose of the Townsite Overlay is to address "many concerns of property owners with regard to construction of homes that are significantly larger than surrounding historic homes, designs not in keeping with the neighborhood, and siting that intrudes upon privacy or blocks the light and views of existing homes." The Townsite Overlay is a hybrid of a historic and character overlay that "allows preservation, restoration, new construction, remodeling and demolition. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards are incorporated into this document by reference."

10-30.30.060 Development of a Landmark Property and Property within a Historic Overlay Zone, Process "C": "Prior to the granting of any required approvals or permits and prior to the commencement of any work on a landmark property or within a historic overlay zone, the Heritage Preservation Commission or the Historic Preservation Officer shall review all work proposed and approve or conditionally approve the work in the form of a certificate of no effect, certificate of appropriateness, or certificate of economic hardship".

### **Scope of Work**

The Certificate of Appropriateness is applicable (Flagstaff Zoning Code 10-30.30.060E.) in the case of 803 W Aspen Ave. is in the design review within the Townsite Overlay zone. The impact to the significance and integrity of surrounding historic properties and the compatibility with the approved design guidelines for the zone and the Townsite district are the primary considerations for this level of review.

**Required Findings for:**

E. Certification of Appropriateness.

1. Applicability. This approval is appropriate if the proposed work alters a cultural resource, but does so in such a way that is compatible with the historic or archaeological character of the resource and all major impacts are mitigated such that the work does not diminish, eliminate, or adversely affect the significance or integrity of the resource.

2. Criteria for Approval. When approving a certification of appropriateness, the Heritage Preservation Commission shall find that:

a. The proposed work is consistent with the purpose and intent of this division;

b. The proposed work is compatible with its context:

(1) The appropriate context for a landmark or a historic property is the property itself and, to a much lesser extent, the surrounding properties and neighborhood;

2) The appropriate context of work in a historic overlay zone is the significant portions of the property itself, the surrounding properties, and the neighborhood;

c. The cultural resources associated with the proposed work have been sufficiently sought, identified, and evaluated;

d. Major impacts on cultural resources are sufficiently mitigated; and

e. The proposed work is consistent with applicable development standards and design guidelines. See also subsection (G) of this section, Development Standards and Guidelines.

**Townsite Historic Overlay Design Guidelines**

“The Townsite Overlay (TO) zone applies to areas of the City subject to the Townsite Historic Design Review Overlay District Design Standards and Guidelines and design review by the Heritage Preservation Commission for the development of properties located within the boundaries of the zone.” (Flagstaff Zoning Code 10-40.50.030 Overlay Zones).

The Townsite Historic Design Review Overlay District Design Standards and Guidelines and Historic Preservation Resources states “New construction, additions, or alterations shall follow the design of the district's certain recognizable qualities.”

The following design guidelines apply to this case:

Architecture, Materials, Details, and Colors

*Standards*

B. Site

3. Garages shall not be at the house frontage. The intent is to follow the historic pattern where garages were a secondary structure and set back from the house frontage. The front door is the primary entrance.

#### D. Development Massing, Height, and Proportions

1. Structures that exist at the time of the district designation (Date, 2006) are the primary structure. In case of multiple existent structures at that time, the structure closest to the street is the primary structure. New primary structures shall be placed forward on the site relative to all other structures.

2. Each property shall have only one primary structure and no point on the primary structure shall exceed 25 feet in height and allowable 2-foot increase for raised wood floor construction, measured from existing or natural grade, excluding chimneys, towers, and similar non-habitable architectural projections

#### E. Roof Pitch

1. Pitches for main roofs in new construction shall be over 6:12. Porches, dormers, and similar lesser roofed areas may have shallower pitches.

F. Architectural styles and building materials are not limited to the existing neighborhood examples, but new work shall be compatible with the neighborhood and maintain high quality of design.

1. Materials, details, and colors shall be compatible with historic structures on an individual property and compatible with the surrounding neighborhood.

#### H. Demolition

1. If a building is over fifty years old and is to be demolished, it is required that an archival record be created with photographs taken, building construction materials and techniques documented, historical knowledge or value recorded, and a file created and deposited in a designated location (public library archive, Pioneer Historical Museum or NAU Special Collections). Follow the Arizona State Historic Preservation Office Guidelines for documentation of resources being destroyed. Documentation must be approved by the Historic Preservation Commission prior to obtaining a permit for demolition.

#### *Guidelines*

2. Front porches/stoops face the street or are in close proximity to the street providing for neighbor contact.

3. Architectural details that are typical can be seen on existing historic homes and these homes can be used as models for future designs.

6. Preserve neighbor "viewsapes" and privacy and minimize impact to neighbors. Respectful orientation to neighbors' views and privacy should be an ongoing concern throughout the design process. Look at your design from the neighbors' lots.

a. Orient windows to protect neighbors' privacy. You may not want to see them anymore than they want to see you. Placing windows higher or using translucent glass respects privacy.

b. Buildings on the lot could be sited to not block views. There is no City mandate on views – this is strictly between you and the neighbor. Visit neighbors' houses to see the impact your new building may have on views.

c. Windows at streetside are to scale with neighborhood character in order to maintain visual continuity with respect to size, style and height.

#### Exceptions

The Historic Preservation Commission may, at its sole discretion, modify the requirements of these standards and guidelines when in the opinion of the Commission, an exception is warranted based for design consistency such as in the case of alterations to existing non-conforming structures, cases where an exception is necessary to accommodate an appropriate architectural style, cases where an exception is warranted based on the development of immediately adjacent properties, and other similar circumstances determined by the Commission.

### **DISCUSSION**

#### **PROPOSED CHANGES**

The project proposes to demolish a noncontributing primary building. The materials selected is a select variety of siding materials that are noted as used within the Townsite and applied in a historically sympathetic manner. The placement of the new home at grade is limited to meet maximum site coverage requirements and will need to include a site plan improvement of a fence at the west of the parcel necessary at the property line.

#### **DESIGN CRITERA**

According to the Townsite Overlay Standards the project design shows architectural forms, massing and scale that is compatible with the neighborhood. The new home is a 2-story structure that introduces a dormer appearance of forms in its architectural expression that matches various existing Townsite homes in the area with similar architectural forms as is called out in the design review document. The overlay zone design criteria look toward impacts of new construction imposing itself on adjacent neighbors. The level of refined details of new construction is a balance between the era of the existing building and looking at older historic homes within the neighborhood. Materials used should be consistent with that of the neighborhood where newly introduced materials should be limited in use. Materials and basic forms proposed are in keeping with the overlay's architectural forms with a current architectural interpretation. The garage door locations is on a secondary façade and set back from the street and the width of the home. A gable roof caps the one-story garage and steps up to a 2-story gable roof. The brick chimney extends beyond the 27-foot height as allowed. The project is located within the Townsite Overlay Zone as noted, with the review focused on meeting the design criteria of the established Townsite Overlay Zone.

#### **Basis of Report:**

The information in this summary discussion was derived from the application to the Heritage Preservation Commission, the Flagstaff Zoning Code, and the Townsite Historic Design Review Overlay District Design Standards and Guidelines and Historic Preservation Resources.

#### **Evaluation of Effects**

Staff (Mark Reavis, Heritage Preservation Officer, AICP, NCARB) finds that the front façade (north), east, west and south of the residential composition displays compatibility within the architectural context of the neighborhood. The overall composition of the new home adds to the compatibility of the building's

elevations with its new compatible context within the neighborhood, meeting the design standards of the Townsite Overlay Zone. Other architectural enhancements such as the bracket supported gables are compatible improvements. The garage has a residential character set back from the street on a secondary facade. The 2-story form with roofs of varied gable faces is adding interest. The ridge height complies with the 27 feet maximum. The size and scale of the home does not appear to have adverse impacts to the adjacent properties.

The context of the neighborhood is in the heart of the historic district. New architectural design should not be completed to fully simulate earlier architecture of the area but be recognized as a product of its own time. Materials proposed should be evaluated and confirmed as compatible with the neighborhood and modified if required under overlay review criteria. When viewed in its entirety the project does improve architectural compatibility within the context of the neighborhood when reviewed under the guidelines of the Townsite Overlay Zone.

### **Consideration of past approvals in the Townsite Overlay**

Staff has reviewed past approvals (consent and commission) in the Townsite Overlay. Reviews of non-historic property improvements have been generally based upon enhancements that improve compatibility within the neighborhood and the overlay zone. Privacy impacts have been considered in past reviews.

### **Posting Notices**

Hearing Notices have been posted on site 15 days prior to the public hearing, while meeting information for review are posted electronically. Photo documentation of posting was received more than 15 days prior to the required posting date.

### **OPTIONS FOR COMMISSION DECISION-MAKING:**

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) may:

- (1) Approve per the staff recommended motion – or –
- (2) The Commission could request modifications to the proposal and include them as conditions of approval, – or –
- (3) Continue the HPC review to a date certain and ask the applicant to come back with a modified proposal that meets those conditions – or -
- (4) Deny Certificate of Appropriateness and require Certificate of Economic Hardship or submittal of an alternative design that meets Townsite Overlay Requirements.