



## Planning & Development Services

Boise City Hall, 2nd Floor  
150 N. Capitol Boulevard  
P. O. Box 500  
Boise, Idaho 83701-0500

Phone: 208/384-3830  
Fax: 208/384-3753  
TDD/TTY: 800/377-3529  
Website: [www.cityofboise.org/pds](http://www.cityofboise.org/pds)

# Historic Preservation Commission

## Hearing Minutes of May 12, 2008

Commission Members Present Jennifer Stevens, Chair, Scott Chandler, Cathy Sewell, Barbara Dawson, Betsy McFadden, Bonnie Burry, Stephen Smith, Katherine Forsythe

Members Present Sarah Schafer, Julie Archambeault, Teresa Sobotka, Nicki Heckenlively

---

### **DRH08-00053 / Duncan and Kari Filson / 1502 N. 27th Street**

Request Historic Preservation approval to construct a second story addition on property located in an R-1CH (Single Family Residential with Historic Overlay) zone. (*This item was deferred at the March 24, 2008 hearing.*)

JULIE ARCHAMBEAULT: Presented staff report with a recommendation of denial.

CHAIRMAN STEVENS: Julie, this is the original front elevation before they changed it and before what we saw last time so what they've submitted is going back to this and now this is what they...for clarity?

JULIE ARCHAMBEAULT: Yes.

COMMISSIONER CHANDLER: Help me understand something. Maybe it's the elevation but if you look at the south elevation...note I think you referred to it as a floating gable...the small one that's up there. Can you go to the south elevation...is that missing on the south elevation?

JULIE ARCHAMBEAULT: Yes. I guess so.

COMMISSIONER CHANDLER: I wanted to make sure I was reading this correctly.

CHAIRMAN STEVENS: If we could limit our comments to any changes since our last site visits that would be great. Just respond with no change or if there is a change go ahead and say that.

## SITE RE-VISITS

COMMISSIONER FORSYTHE: I have visited the site again and I took notice of the surrounding houses and took notice it was on the corner and houses on both streets. I've had no contact with the applicant or representative.

COMMISSIONER SMITH: I did visit the site. I didn't have any specific observations. I primarily drove around the neighborhood and looked at the house and nearby houses. I've had no contact with the applicant or representative.

COMMISSIONER BURRY: I did visit the site. I took note of the variety of the homes on the street and looked at what has already been done to this home and tried to envision the addition. I've had no contact with the applicant or representative.

COMMISSIONER McFADDEN: I did revisit the site and have no new observations and have the same thoughts that I had visiting the site the first time which is the mix of different styles of homes and architecture on that particular block. I've had no contact with the applicant or representative.

CHAIRMAN STEVENS: I did revisit the site. Noting in particular the different additions that had occurred to the house. The change to its integrity. I also noted the size of the lot. I've had no contact with the applicant or representative.

COMMISSIONER CHANDLER: I did revisit the site and have no additional observations beyond what I observed the first time. I've had no contact with the applicant or representative.

COMMISSIONER SEWELL: I did not go back to the site. I've had no contact with the applicant or representative.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON: I did visit the site and took note of the mixture of traditional and modern homes in the neighborhood. I've had no contact with the applicant or representative.

EVELYN GRIME (PLACE Design Planning / Applicant's Representative): What we've done to this point is initially study the neighborhood, the lot, the existing home and its context. What I find in Staff's report and this is going from our last hearing as well where again I understand where Staff is coming from given the parameters and the directions she has to review from. My disagreement there is that this home is noncontributing and that's been established. If we look at the block, the lawn, and the home I think what is contributing and what does anchor this block is the lot and the trees and where it sits here. Also how do we take what was...we have a home that's no longer contributing and here a home that's been completely redirected. The front door has been relocated. We did do studies to relocate that door to the front even if it wasn't to the center window. We did go through a series of exercises. We have a series of

neighborhood pictures here. Again, all of the present site and the noted are very modern, eclectic, and untraditional homes. This is directly south of the site looking across at some small one-bedroom cottages. This is directly across the street 1960-1970's. This is to the right as we go down the opposite street. Again we're seeing a lot of 50's and 60's mixed in here with some older sections. I think what we have is a modest form of a modest neighborhood. Now we're coming up very close to the site. This is our block. Again, I look at this as the house is noncontributing. What I do not want to do and what I think is inappropriate to do is to take this home and create a style that it never was. If I try to take it back to what it was that doesn't work very either. Unless I completely remodel the interior of the home again and (*inaudible*) the front and move back to the center. I look at the strength and the strength of this in relationship to the block and it's a corner lot, the way it faces the street with various sites around it and its old tree growth that is very evident. I think that this photograph shows it well when you can look at it closely. Here it's a little bit dark. In blue we have the home. We have a garage and an alley shop here. This is the backyard. We have a very large tree here. We have one here, we have one here. We have a row of them here and these are conifers. Directly back here we have a tulip magnolia that is about 6 ft. from the foundation and then we have some smaller trees in here. Duncan and Kari have also taken the pains to landscape along the edge of their property and their street trees as well, but they are younger. This is a sketch done over the aerial where I've identified those tree locations and then sketches of the expansion. We would add the porch here. This is showing that 2 ft. cantilever that we're proposing in the back. If I may show you these trees. This is the front of the house. This is an addition that goes back behind the house. This was done...correct me if I'm wrong. This was done in the 70's - 80's. This has got a very flat roof and very thin insulation. There is a minimal crawl space and there is enough foundation underneath this addition to create a second story and to carry that load. These are the main trees in the front and you can see the tree canopy in the back. I would like to point out this Magnolia tree. This is the one that's existing about 6 ft. off the back wall. This tree is large enough and old enough where right now it clears this home. Looking at this from the corner. This is the back looking towards the front. This street is on my left. This is the original back porch of the home. Our proposing model would leave this intact. We are not changing any of the existing original windows and materials. With this part of the roof and this portion of the structure as it currently sits is not capable of carrying a second story. We did explore going over the entire portion of the house. This is the back addition and it is capable of carrying that structure and this is where our new structure would spring from. This is the existing tree line of the conifer trees. Why I'm excited about this addition and remodel is we don't lose any of these trees. We limb these trees up just enough for construction and everything else remains in place. This is looking at the home as you go to the right where again, that addition is and our proposal will spring up from there. This is our existing home; this is that Magnolia tree coming out here. This is the site of the home where we've got the wide yard with the gardens. Our goal with this addition is to create two more bedrooms and a bathroom. We are going upstairs for a modest addition. Stairway space a loft nook, a laundry closet, two bedrooms and a bathroom. Downstairs we have one bedroom and one bathroom remaining. The goal here is if you were to take that same additional square footage and put it on the ground I think you would have to lose your Magnolia tree in the back. You couldn't build towards the street. That would impact the

conifer tree line and this tree line. With our addition this corner lot remains an anchor to its block because it doesn't take away the existing context. What we have done and again Julie and I have worked on this together to some degree and I've tried to take into consideration her concerns, but this is showing the proposed front elevation where we brought our front porch cover down where this new height is about 14 ft. and this is about 17 ft. We have kept the original gable that was the original stoop. I would like to put knee braces back in and anchor it back to the house. Right now it's floating. You wonder why it's there. I'll show you the street and I would point out that this is where the tree canopy is and this is where the existing fence line is for the cedar fence. We're adding 2 ft. here to create bedroom space on each end a bathroom in the middle and we're extending the original roofline up to cover that. What I'm showing here with this dash line is if this back addition which this is part of that original addition had been roofed correctly in the beginning this is where that roofline would go. I would point out the difference between this point and that point is about 4 vertical ft. The difference between this point and this point is about 8 vertical ft. We're pulling it back and what you see back here is this is the gable that covers the porch on the other side and this is the existing front gable. We did look at going up the front with a new porch but this was already at the 16 ft. setback line and we have no room here to add a porch. On the north side this is the rear and that's probably the easiest to look at and digest. This has all become living space so the door remains original it's just over 1 ft. This window and this window are replaced to give larger windows that will engage the backyard. On the side we've added some windows for light. These are bedrooms upstairs. This is the roofline coming down to create this more contemporary porch but at the same time we're on a block that has modern elements and traditional elements and (*inaudible*) so I feel like the house (*inaudible*) putting the emphasis on the site and its characteristics. I did a study of the original home and this is the roofline of the existing addition. This is what it could have been and probably should have been given that it's very cold, it's very hot and it leaks. This is the proposed massing set from the back within the trees and that same study for that opposite side. This is a sketch study of the photograph that I took and I went into Photoshop and I did a hard edge filter and then I sketched over this to say here's your existing massing, here would be the gable beyond, here's the second floor beyond but it steps back in a way. All of this in the filtered photograph...this is that tree canopy that would actually be in front of this when viewed from the street. This is those conifer trees. This is the tree at the very edge. This again was another photo study just trying to show the existing tree and here and we actually want to have one here that canopies over. In the neighborhood a large part of the report is based on the home and it's incongruous with the neighborhood. John and (*inaudible*) spent three hours driving through the neighborhood and we have photos upon photos of many eclectic different styles of things all built prior to Historic District approval and after historic approval. We can all agree that life is very eclectic in the North End and this is a situation where they did do a small cantilever to achieve that upstairs square footage and these are three different jobs at two different structures. Again it is something that you see as a way for space savings when the site is more important than the structure and this is in the rear and is minimally noticeable. I would also say we have examples of odd rooflines from a modern style that have been added to and changed and are eclectic. Our focus here to meet Design Review Standards is to focus on the site and then focus on what is

appropriate for the growth of this house and this family. To take this house back to a modernist style of a one-story with a small stoop is not in our future. To look at this and to grow it gently back to meet the needs and to preserve the site conditions and context that's a good solution that meets the Secretary of the Interior Standards when you're starting with a non-contributing structure but you've got a site that anchors the block.

COMMISSIONER McFADDEN: On the front elevation in a lot of your sketches...I have two questions on this. First of all, our package shows a dormer. Has that dormer been eliminated?

EVELYN GRIME: It has.

COMMISSIONER McFADDEN: So you're proposing to eliminate that dormer. Staff did think that was incongruous and added to the complexity of the roofline. If you could add ways to...

EVELYN GRIME: We reworked the interior structure and the interior head clearance heights and removed that dormer in an effort to simplify it and still meet the interior plan needs.

COMMISSIONER McFADDEN: This isn't a follow-up on the dormer. It's more a question on the entry. When you were doing your drive-about and comparing other houses I wonder if you saw any other homes in the neighborhood that had that two-story entry like that.

EVELYN GRIME: There were a lot of eclectic entries and we do have a folder here on entries so there are pictures. We do have pictures of items that would be considered modern and we are taking the house and saying that in order for it to be congruous with the District it needs to look like a historic home that it never was. We have a modern home that's introduced. Yes, it is still a Cottage style and it's a soft blending and on a block with enough modern elements to support it.

CHAIRMAN STEVENS: When that dormer was taken out you also changed the window configuration on the north side of that elevation that we're looking at. Is what is up on the screen what we're talking about? We're sort of dealing with changes on the fly which is not something that this Commission is very comfortable with doing.

EVELYN GRIME: I apologize for that Madame Chair. The rearrangement of the windows is in response to working with Staff and perhaps Murphy is just hanging out with us a little bit too much on this project, but I did drop a packet off to Staff on the 22<sup>nd</sup>. I made several deliveries that day. She didn't get it, we didn't communicate and here we are tonight. I did make that effort. What I did not do was follow up to make sure Julie got in her hands. She went with the information she had and I made a good faith effort to submit the additional information. Again, this came to light recently and here we are this evening.

COMMISSIONER McFADDEN: This is following up on that again. Evelyn, to the best of your knowledge are the other elevations correct that we are holding in our packet? That's kind of a big problem if we're...

EVELYN GRIME: What I'd like to do is point out the differences. The differences are that this part has not changed.

CHAIRMAN STEVENS: That's the right elevation in our packet on Page 14.

EVELYN GRIME: The street side elevation has not changed. On the front elevation we've simplified these windows. We have lowered the porch gable and we have simplified this roofline by removing the floating dormer. The ridgeline, the overhang, and the overall profile have not changed.

CHAIRMAN STEVENS: The door however has changed as well as the vertical siding that was in there?

EVELYN GRIME: I've simplified the materials to streamline this. The door is the original door that was here and moved here and we will use it again.

CHAIRMAN STEVENS: The vertical siding has been removed correct?

EVELYN GRIME: That is correct.

TERESA SOBOTKA: I don't see these as minor changes and I don't feel this is either best practice or due process to at this late date be what everyone is seeing for the first time. Staff hasn't had a chance to analyze them. The public who if they were interested haven't had a chance to analyze anything.

EVELYN GRIME: This dormer is simply lowered. This remains in the open framework. These windows have not changed and the (inaudible) has not changed. The development of what we originally submitted to what you saw at our first hearing this is a simplification of that and this is what you would have seen at the last hearing if Murphy hadn't been prevalent there as well. I would again ask you to consider...we've simplified this roof, taken away this dormer and lowered this portion of it and this is a modern eclectic element on a noncontributing home and trying to maintain the integrity of the existing home, etc. Originally I had thought perhaps we would be able to sell this best in worksession meeting because that's the only certain view of what it meant to be incongruous with the District with a noncontributing home. I don't know where we stand with that tonight.

COMMISSIONER BURRY: I'm looking at my Page 12 and looking at your front elevation this seems so much wider. That seems much taller and it just seems different to me. Like the space on each side of the large picture window. It just seems like it's a lot bigger on my Page 12 than it is up there. Do you have a dimension?

EVELYN GRIME: Actually, what could be lending that appearance could be the floating dormer above and then the heavy line weight on the horizontal siding. None of those elements have changed. If you look at where the notch in the roofline comes down particularly to the right of dormer that still...I don't put it as actually the same drawing but I look at the proportions and...I think taking out the floating dormer which was originally a fun part of being eclectic and taking this more toward the contemporary Cottage look. Removing that dormer simply brings down the scale of the front elevation.

COMMISSIONER BURRY: Clearly there's more room above here too...again that's just because this isn't the right picture now.

DUNCAN FILSON (Applicant): I will not testify.

JOHN FRASIER (PLACE, Inc.): I'm a design contractor and Evelyn and I have been working on this design for months. Having read Staff's report the one item that I would take issue with is the congruence and is the reason that I spent that time Friday afternoon. We have a series of pictures...numerous pictures of houses that are within six blocks of this one all within a Historic District and another set of pictures outside that six block area that are still in the District that are congruent with the application you have. It's congruent with what you have. All the items that are in the original drawing and the application you have are in fact congruent with the District. That's the reason those pictures are here.

JULIE ARCHAMBEAULT: I'm sure if you look through the District you could find at least one example of anything you wanted to. Whether that one thing was congruent with the Historic Districts, the historic characteristics of the District and compatible with the Secretary of the Interior Standards is something else entirely. The design that we have in front of us...that two-story porch is a very Alpine and modern...we do have a noncontributing structure but we still need to honor the District and be compatible with the main characteristics of the District not just with one example here, and an example and another example here. We need to be conscience of the Secretary of Interior Standards when we're thinking about how this going to affect the District at large. Because of the roof shapes and the two-story porch and the modern windows and the many other things that don't meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards or the Design Guidelines. This is just not a congruent design. I've never seen a two-story porch. I didn't hear whether they found a two-story porch. It was stated that they found many eclectic entrances which I'm sure is true. Also, basing a new design on an old 1970's addition that we would never have allowed now days is also not an idea that you guys would usually recommend. Staff still recommends denial of this application.

COMMISSIONER SEWELL: Julie, do you have issue with the two-story addition and the cantilever in the back?

JULIE ARCHAMBEAULT: I don't have an issue with a second story addition. Staff is not opposed to a second story addition on this house. The cantilever itself is not a huge

obstacle, but the cantilever with the two-story porch with all of the modern windows and with all of the other things. Packaged together is something that Staff cannot support.

#### APPLICANT REBUTTAL

EVELYN GRIME: For record I would like to submit two items that were from 2004 when we talk about introducing modern elements into the District. These are photographs of two projects that are very modern or contemporary in that sense and they are provided by Mr. Filson.

CHAIRMAN STEVEN: Hand them here and we can mark them as Exhibits.

EVELYN GRIME: Our initial point of contention is what's right to support the Historic District. I think the approach is from the site, trees and from lending what is there and existing open to something else. We tried to work through this roofline and porch situation and in bringing out the porch...the roofline all the way down and in providing different items none of that has met with Staff's support. Again, I understand where she's coming from, but I disagree with it. I don't think it's appropriate to build over the existing home. The original part which sits to the front and to the street...we've explored other opportunities to expand but again which has more strength. The site or the home? If we say that the site has more strength for historic purposes and then we go forward and we look at proposing the eclectic more modern solution which there is evidence in the District. Having the photographs and...Staff and I cannot come to an agreement about his roof and this porch and that's what the whole report is about. I would either ask for a deferral and if it were working I would ask for a decision that says this is a soft answer and something you could support or I would ask for a worksession to say then define for me what is congruous within the District when we have a noncontributing structure because I'm at a loss.

CHAIRMAN STEVENS: We received two photographs. One that's marked by the applicant, DRH04-00220 which is going to be marked as Exhibit 1 and then number 2 is a photograph of a home on 23<sup>rd</sup> Street which for the record was not actually approved by this Commission. Those plans were put in before the District was in place.

COMMISSIONER CHANDLER: There is something I need to disclosure for the record. Last week I ran into Mr. Frasier at an event. We had various conversations. He did mention that he would be at this meeting tonight. We discussed in no way this application and I do not believe that any of our conversations would have any barring on how I would evaluate this application.

COMMISSIONER BURRY: I have a hard time saying that I approve of something that is so different from what I'm seeing here and what I'm seeing up there with no dimensions and no increments. I don't think that you're that far off. I think there are some things that could be done with this plan to make it better. But right now what I see is a lot different from what I'm seeing up there.



COMMISSIONER FORSYTHE: If we were to approve it would be difficult to say if we were to approve the design in front of us or that because they're so different we don't really have it up close. They're so different that there is confusion around this issue. Also, whenever I visited the home I noticed there are many smaller houses in the area. This design that I have in my packet looks very different from the other houses that were in the surrounding area.

COMMISSIONER SMITH: Did I understand your testimony as being...

CHAIRMAN STEVENS: We've actually closed the public portion of the testimony.

COMMISSIONER SMITH: Let me ask someone on the Commission.

CHAIRMAN STEVENS: We can reopen if you feel like you want to.

#### PUBLIC PORTION REOPENED

COMMISSIONER SMITH: I'd like to reopen for a minute. Did I understand you to testify that the addition had to be built over the 1970's portion that I'm looking at right here? If you did say that would you explain to me again why it has to be built over that portion?

EVELYN GRIME: In the photograph that you're looking shows just the side portion sort of peeking out. The addition from the 1970's wraps the back of the house and that portion of the addition has sufficient footing and foundation and can carry the load of the second floor. Part of the study that was done and discussion with Staff was to build over the back porch area on the opposite side of the house and bring the whole roof mass...the center over the structure. The back porch addition is slab-on-gray. There's no foundation that would carry a second floor so you would have to essentially demolish and rebuild versus building over the 1970's portion of the home. The original portion of the home also...there isn't any remodel work happening in that core part of the home and the ceiling. The arches and all over that framework...my premise is to touch it as gently as possible. Weighing that combination of things that's why I'm saying it's the best solution to build over the 1970's portion of the home.

#### RECLOSE PUBLIC PORTION

CHAIRMAN STEVEN: We unfortunately don't have in front of us the minutes from our last hearing on this item, but my recollection is that we were pretty clear with the applicant that we needed a final set of plans and that we needed dimensions. That's certainly my recollection and I feel as though that didn't come before us. What we got instead was yet another set of plans that Staff didn't really have time to comment on. I also feel like the Commission was very clear about the direction we wanted it to go and I don't feel like those changes were done. I feel like we basically got a real similar version to what we saw last time. The thing the Commission needs to do is deny this application and let the applicant start over with some recommendations. I feel the same way that

Staff does which is that I don't have a problem with the second story on this home generally speaking if it were done correctly. It needs to be probably more over the core area of the home rather than that stepped over to the side. I do tend to agree with Staff's report that what we're seeing here...the problem isn't that it's modern and the problem to me isn't that it's a second story it's that it's just too cut up. It's not the kind of stuff you see in the District. I also have issues with the flat grids in the windows. We're taking a house that currently has wood windows and your application says that these are going to be vinyl windows with flat grids. I'm not comfortable with that either. It's a minor point but my point is that it's not just that it's a modern structure and it's not that it's got a second story it's that there are some design issues here that just aren't congruous with the District. The pictures that were brought in were of stuff that would never be approved today that were designs that were done prior to the time the District when in. I agree with Staff that you can go around the District and find anything, but when we're looking for congruousness with what's representative of the District this is not the sort of thing that we see. I'm personally opposed to a worksession. I think we need to go to a denial and start fresh with a brand new application with a brand new design so that we're communicated clearly to the applicant what needs to happen. That's my take on things.

COMMISSIONER DAWSON: I agree with Commissioner Forsythe that if we don't know what we've got in front of us...we've got this in front of us and we have that in front of us and to approve either one would be absurd because we don't know what we're really approving. I have to agree with the Chair that this right for denial.

COMMISSIONER CHANDLER: I don't disagree with many of the comments that have been made. I think one thing is that this site adds a little more of a challenge. Whether this is contributing or noncontributing structure the fact that it is so visible on the south side because it's a corner lot and is placed very far forward on the lot relative to the lot depth and also there is quite a distance between the north lot line and the structures so consequently the north face is quite visible from the street. Consequently this structure is much more visible on the sides than if it were a lot in the middle of the block that was possibly set back a little more. That I think adds to the challenge for the design and I'm comfortable with what has been put forward as far as what the north and south massing would be. I too have no problem with a second story here but I'm not comfortable with how the second story has been executed at this point.

COMMISSIONER McFADDEN: I tend to agree with my fellow Commissioners and I would like to state as well that putting a second story on this home is not the issue. The issue is the massing of this particular design. I am uncomfortable with that two-story entryway. While I can't find anything in our guidebook about it...we don't address every little issue. It just, for a lack of a better way of putting it, doesn't feel right. That is another way of saying it just doesn't seem congruous with what's surrounding.

COMMISSIONER McFADDEN MOVED TO DENY DRH08-00053.

COMMISSIONER BURRY SECONDED THE MOTION.

COMMISSIONER SEWELL: In regard to some of the comments I agree with my fellow Commissioners and Staff. The primary issue is with the roof forms that the applicant is presenting. Although the applicant indicated the block that surrounds this house is eclectic and one thing that might be consistent within that is that the roof forms that are displayed with the existing houses that surround this house are fairly consistent and commonly seen within the District. If the applicant can go back in and read through 5.8 in our guidelines there is some clear language there as far as what's appropriate and not appropriate. One thing this application does do under our 5.8.9 Use of exotic building and roof forms that detract from the visual continuity of the streetscape although it's maybe not an exotic roof form it does detract from the visual continuity given that this block face is comprised of forms, materials and shapes that are consistently found within the District.

ROLL CALL VOTE 8:0. MOTION TO DENY CARRIES.