



D/DRC Case

1530 Harden Street

Individual Landmark

TMS: 11407-09-02

DESIGN/DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMISSION
DESIGN REVIEW DISTRICT
HISTORIC AGENDA
EVALUATION SHEET
Case # 6

ADDRESS: 1530 Harden Street, Chappelle Auditorium, Allen University

APPLICANT: Jerome Simons, agent

TAX MAP REFERENCE: TMS#11407-09-02

USE OF PROPERTY: Education

REVIEW DISTRICT: Individual Landmark, Group III

NATURE OF REQUEST: Request Certificate of Design Approval for addition of dormer-shaped vents on roof

FINDINGS/COMMENTS:

The Chappelle Auditorium is attached to Chappelle Hall, which is a cornerstone building for the Allen University Campus. Appearing to date from the same era as the main hall, completed in the 1920s, the auditorium has similar exterior details with a brick exterior, a heavy cornice and multi-paned windows. Both buildings have a hip roof, although the main hall features dormers on all of its roof planes and the auditorium has no dormers. Renovations of the auditorium during the last few years have restored the exterior, and the current project is for upgrading the mechanical heating and ventilation systems in the building. The interior of the building is a large open space, accommodating a stage, audience seating and a mezzanine. According to the applicant, the only way to comply with the current mechanical codes is to construct two dormers on the west plane of the hip roof, the area closest to the main building, and to place mechanical equipment in a “well” on the ground along the north side of the building. A second option was to depress two large openings into the roof on the west side but the applicant and staff agreed that while that option may be less obvious to the right of way, it generates a host of water infiltration issues that could be more damaging to the building.

Applicant’s description of the project:

“There are two fairly significant modifications to the building exterior. Both of which are responses to the same requirement by the International Mechanical Code. The building will be used as an auditorium and banquet facility. Based on the occupant load the introduction of 6000 CFM is required to meet the outside air requirements of the International Mechanical Code. This huge volume of outside air has to be introduced to the building, treated/ conditioned by the HVAC system and eventually exhausted from the building. These three tasks have required that we create two new openings in the building exterior and set a new mechanical unit on site next to the existing chiller. It is our intent to minimize the impact of the historic site and building envelope by locating these items in as inconspicuous of locations as possible.

Outside air Intake and Exhaust Louvers

24 sq. ft. of louver free area is required to provide 6000 CFM of outside air and exhaust. We have created two new dormers in the roof on the west side of the building. This location was selected because the view is blocked to some degree by the administration/ classroom portion of Chappelle Hall as well as the large chimney visible along the north elevation of the building between the two portions of the building. The dormers will be roofed with the same simulated shingles installed on the rest of the building. The metal louver will be painted charcoal gray or black to further blend the dormer and louver into the existing roof construction.

HVAC Condensing Unit

To treat the outside air an air handler will be installed on the second floor balcony in a mechanical room. The condensing unit for this HVAC unit will be installed on site beside the existing chiller on the north side of the building along Taylor Street. The unit will be installed in a pit approximately 4'-0" deep. By lowering the unit 4'-0" below grade the view of the building will be impacted in a much less dramatic fashion compared to the large screen wall currently installed around the existing chiller. In fact the goal will be for the top of the unit to be lower than the existing retaining wall along Taylor St. allowing the existing retaining wall to screen the view of the unit and not change the view from Taylor Street at all. There will be a guardrail around the pit to protect building occupants. The new guardrail will match the existing cast iron pipe rails of the existing building.

Summary

Although we realize that these are very significant changes to both the site and the building, we have attempted to make modifications carefully and thoughtfully. The installation of code compliant modern mechanical systems in historic buildings is very difficult. The complexity of installing this particular system in a building that has very limited access to the attic, no existing openings to use for the introduction of outside air and with so many occupants has added to that level of difficulty. We hope that this proposal is viewed favorably and we look forward to moving forward with the project with input from the DDRRC board and staff."

PERTINENT SECTIONS FROM CITY ORDINANCE

Criteria for review of design of structures and sites. Issuance of a certificate of design approval shall be based upon the requirements set forth in the standards or design guidelines adopted by the city council for each historic district. For individual landmarks, the Governor's Mansion Protection Area, Elmwood Park Architectural Conservation District, and the Landmark District, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Preservation as amended and listed below shall serve as guidelines until such time as design guidelines may be written and adopted by city council for each local historic district. The Standards are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects, taking into account the designation level of each district.

(1)a. For landmark districts, the historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

The roof will be minimally altered with the installation of dormers. The west side of the roof was chosen for the dormers for the most minimal visual impact on the building.

b. In architectural conservation districts and protection areas, the historic character of a district shall be retained and preserved through the preservation of historic materials and features which characterize the historic district.

Not applicable.

c. For individual landmarks and the landmark district, each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

Several options were considered for the location of the intakes and exhaust units and the dormers were selected as the least visually intrusive. They are placed so as to minimize their impact on the building and their function should preclude any idea that they are original features.

(4) Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.

Not applicable.

(5) Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

Not applicable.

(6) Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

Not applicable.

(7) Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

Not applicable.

(8) New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

The dormers will not destroy historic material and are compatible to the building's architecture.

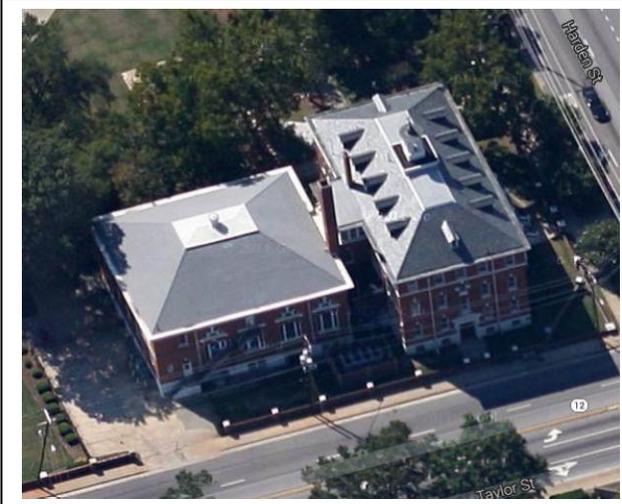
The condensing unit will be screened behind a low brick wall which is immediately adjacent to a larger brick wall which one assumes screens other mechanicals. Staff feels comfortable working out details with the applicants.

(9) New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken 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.

The dormers could be removed and the roof repaired to go back to its original form, should the exhaust units ever become unnecessary.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

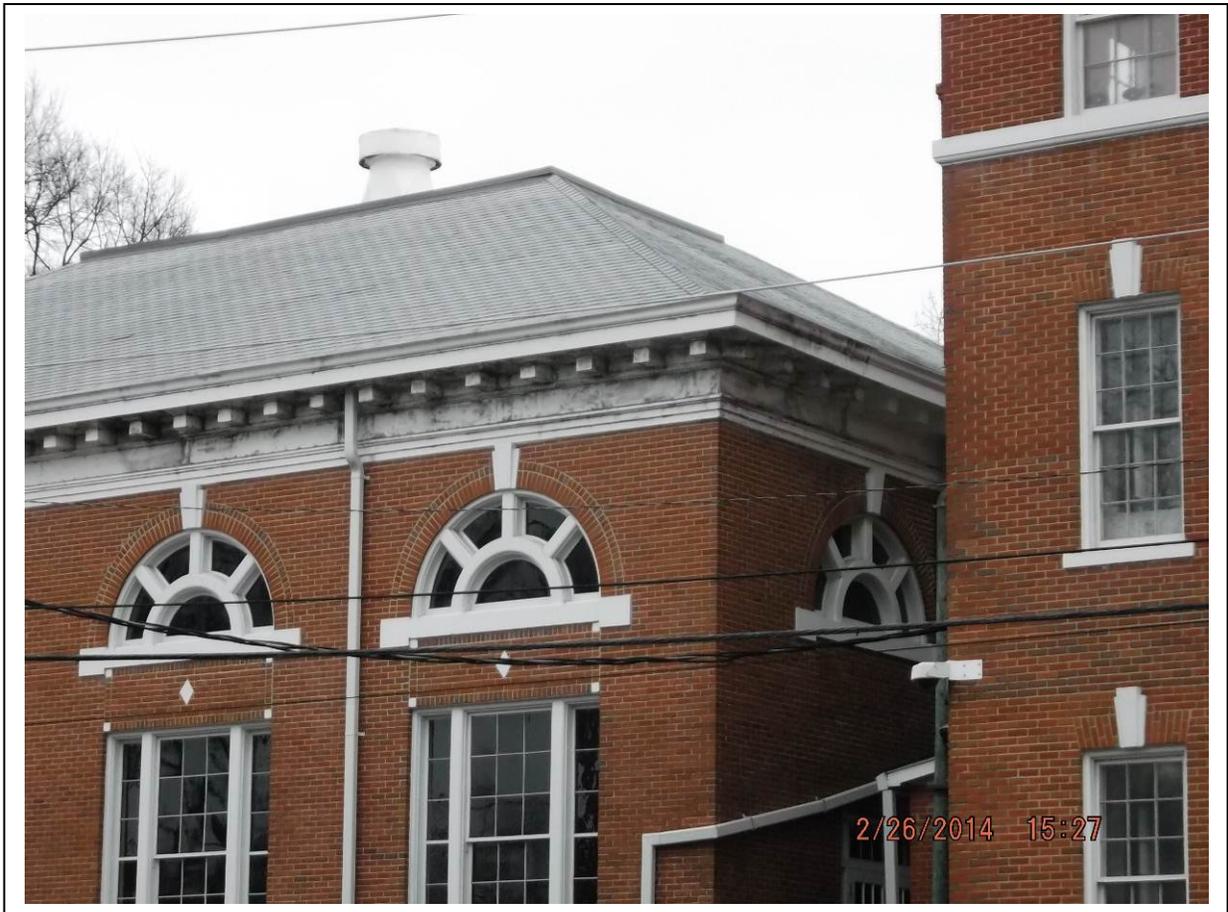
Although the dormers could be regarded as a conjectural feature, staff finds that since they are required, they are placed in the location most likely to minimize their presence and therefore recommends approval, based upon the other criteria in Section 17-674(d) of the Zoning Ordinance. Staff also recommends approval of the new condensing unit and screen wall with all details deferred to staff.



Left: Google image of roofs of the auditorium (left) and the main Chappelle Hall (right)

Other current images by staff





Original dormer at Chappelle Hall
on Taylor Street side

