

D/DRC Case

3123 Amherst Avenue

Oakwood Court Architectural Conservation District

TMS: 13804-11-07

DESIGN/DEVELOPMENT REVIEW COMMISSION
DESIGN REVIEW DISTRICT
HISTORIC AGENDA
EVALUATION SHEET
Case #7

ADDRESS: 3123 Amherst Avenue

APPLICANT: W. Mattison Gamble, homeowner

TAX MAP REFERENCE: TMS#13804-11-07

USE OF PROPERTY: Residential

REVIEW DISTRICT: Oakwood Court Architectural Conservation District

NATURE OF REQUEST: Request for a Certificate of Design Approval for a louvered screen door.

FINDINGS/COMMENTS:

The two-story brick Colonial Revival house located at 3123 Amherst Avenue was built in 1940 and is a contributing structure in the Oakwood Court Architectural Conservation District. Significant architectural features on the symmetrical primary façade include pilasters flanking the original 6-panel wood door, original 8/8 historic wood windows, and brick quoins. Overall the exterior of the house has remained relatively unchanged over the years and retains a high degree of architectural integrity.

The applicant's proposal is to install a wood, fixed-louver screen door on the front of the house, which by design will conceal the original 6-panel wood door. Staff always encourages applicants to install screen or storm doors that are as transparent as possible. This allows the new door to function properly while complementing the design of the original door, which is often the primary character defining feature of the building. Therefore, these types of doors can be approved at staff level when the installation does not affect the visibility of the original door from the public right-of-way.

Although the applicant has not expressed any interest in removing the original door, the proposed request must be treated as such since it will no longer be visible. The applicant has stated that the proposed louvered door would provide privacy while allowing ventilation through the house via an attic/whole house fan. Staff presented several options to the applicant that would be compatible with the guidelines and could be approved at staff level; however, the applicant was only interested in the louvered door option.

Staff researched the use of louvered doors on Colonial Revival houses and has come to the conclusion that doors of this type were not typically used. If originally installed, screen doors on Colonial Revival houses historically featured simple wood frames and were meant to be functional, not decorative. Where louvered doors had later been added to Colonial Revival houses, staff found that the houses typically had one of the following present:

sidelights, a fan light or a transom. The applicant submitted an example of a louvered door within the Oakwood Court Architectural Conservation District via Google street view; however, the door was accompanied by sidelights and a transom. Staff conducted a site visit in the Oakwood Court Architectural Conservation District on June 25, 2014 and discovered that the one non-historic louvered door present in the district has since been removed, meaning there are no louvered doors currently present in the Oakwood Court Architectural District.

The applicant has provided evidence that the house once featured a simple framed screen door that was assumed to be original. The door had been removed prior to the neighborhood becoming a district, so staff does not have a photograph of the house with the screen door installed. The door was discarded in January 2013 when the applicant purchased the home. The guidelines state that “replacement doors should either match the original or substitute new materials and designs sympathetic to the original.” Staff would be happy to work with the applicant to select a screen door based on the previous door or a new design that complements the existing historic 6-panel wood entry door.

PERTINENT SECTIONS FROM GUIDELINES

SECTION VIII: Maintenance & Rehabilitation

Significant features such as doors and entrances should be preserved wherever possible. Changes to door size and configuration should be avoided. Replacement doors should either match the original or substitute new materials and designs sympathetic to the original.

Sometimes new entrances are required for practical reasons or to satisfy code requirements. Placement of new entrances on principal facades should be avoided. New entrances can result in loss of historic fabric and detailing and change the rhythm of bays. New entrances should be compatible with the building and be located on side or rear walls that are not readily visible from the public right-of-way. If a historic entrance cannot be incorporated into a contemporary use for the building, the opening and any significant detailing should, nevertheless, be retained.

GUIDELINES

- B. *Retain and repair historic door openings, doors, screen doors, trim, and details such as transoms, sidelights, pediments, and hoods, where they contribute to the architectural character of the building.*

The house once featured a simple framed screen door that was in storage when the applicant purchased the house in January 2013, and was discarded shortly thereafter. Staff was not able to assess the condition or determine the originality of the screen door prior to its disposal, but the applicant has stated that it was in poor condition. Staff would have encouraged retaining the screen door if it was historic and in repairable condition. If not, staff would have recommended installing a new screen door to match the original or one that would complement the historic 6-panel wood entry door.

The proposed louvered screen door, based on staff's research, does not contribute to the architectural character of the building. Placing it in front of the existing historic 6-panel wood entry door, a character defining feature of the Colonial Revival style, would effectively conceal the original door from public view.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

*Staff finds that the proposed installation of a louvered screen door over the historic 6-panel wood entry door does not comply with Section VIII: Maintenance & Rehabilitation. Staff **does not recommend granting a Certificate of Design Approval** for this project as proposed.*

- Staff would be happy to work with the applicant to select a more architecturally compatible screen or storm door that complements the historic 6-panel wood entry door
- All details deferred to staff

3123 Amherst Avenue – Oakwood Court Architectural Conservation District



3123 Amherst Avenue – Oakwood Court Architectural Conservation District



Character defining, historic
6-panel wood door.

3123 Amherst Avenue – Oakwood Court Architectural Conservation District



3212 Amherst Avenue – Shown with louvered exterior door installed.
Google image from August 2011 submitted by applicant



3212 Amherst Avenue – Shown with louvered door removed – June 2014

Description of Proposed Work: 3123 Amherst Ave. (Gamble)

Owner wishes to install a “louvered” screen door on the exterior front entrance of the home. The proposed door is made by Paul Argo Screens, Inc., a South Carolina company, and is model # 300LL (webpage depicting door submitted for review).

Current owner wishes to install said louvered screen door for purposes of privacy while allowing air flow through the front of the home. The home is outfitted with a “whole house” fan (sometimes referred to as an “attic fan”) which can effectively lower the ambient temperature in the home when run with all doors (3) allowing adequate ventilation. Running such a fan is preferable to air conditioning, as referenced in the “Green Tips for Historic Homes” on the City’s website.

Owner notes that a screen door previously existed on the front exterior entrance of the home. Said screen door was disposed of when owner took possession of the home in January, 2013.

Owner will purchase said screen door locally (Shuman Owens Supply) and have it professionally painted to match the existing exterior door and hung with appropriate hardware.



Close-up of front door of 3123 Amherst Ave.



View of front of 3123 Amherst Ave.

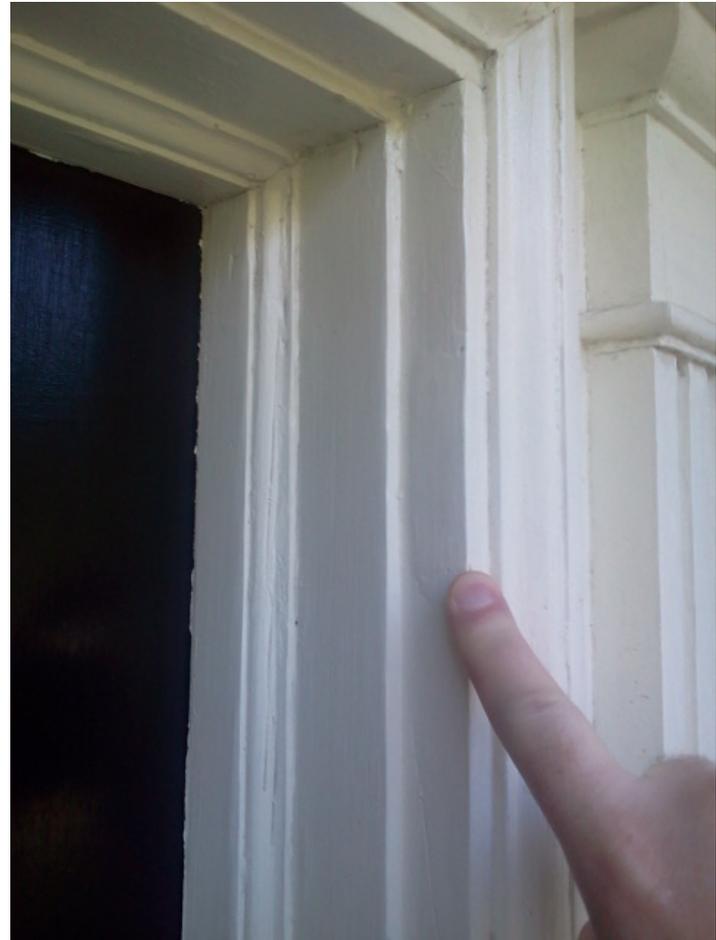
Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Mattison Gamble".

W. Mattison Gamble, Owner



Red arrows showing existing location of old hinges and strike plate from previous screen door.



Detailed photo showing old hinge filled in.



301 Wateree Avenue (Wales Garden Arch. Cons. Dist.)



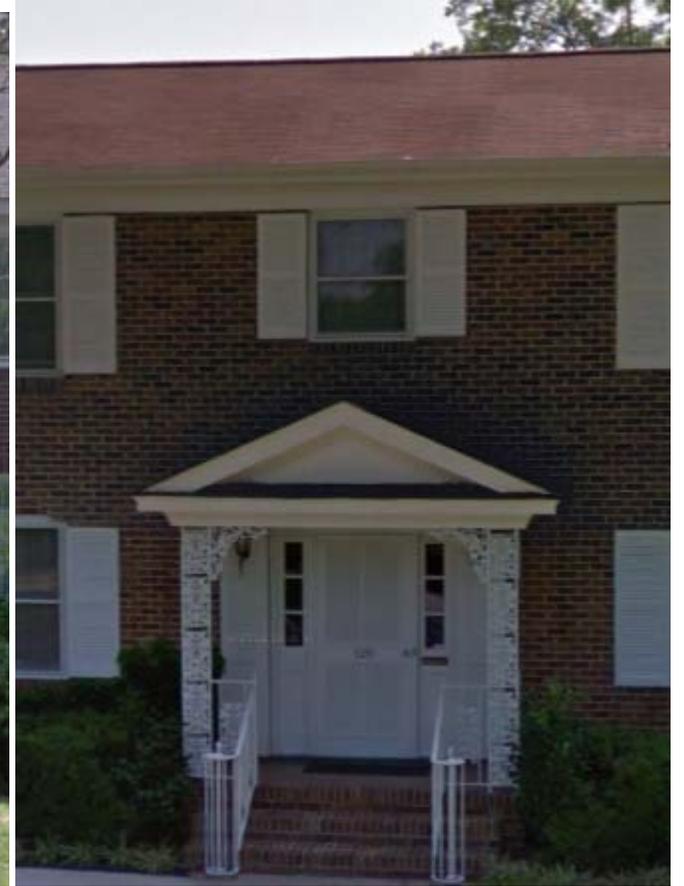
8 Myrtle Court (Wales Garden Arch. Cons. Dist.)



327 Edisto Avenue (Wales Garden)



114 Saluda Avenue (Wales Garden)



126 Saluda Avenue (Wales Garden)

Not pictured: 910 Laurens Street (University Hills)



[Home](#)

[Doors](#) ▼

[Shutters](#) ▼

[Inserts](#)

[Contact](#)

Screen Doors



Submitted by applicant

11

300LL)
300DB

300 LL



stiles	3 5/8"
top rail	3 5/8"
center rails	4 3/4"
bottom rail	7 1/4"
finished thickness	1 1/8"