

D/DRC Case

3220 Murray Street

Melrose Heights/Oak Lawn Conservation District

TMS: 13901-04-04

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

ADDRESS: 3220 Murray Street

APPLICANT: Alan Henderson, homeowner

TAX MAP REFERENCE: TMS#13901-04-04

USE OF PROPERTY: Residential

REVIEW DISTRICT: Melrose Heights/Oak Lawn Architectural Conservation District

NATURE OF REQUEST: Request Certificate of Design Approval for addition

FINDINGS/COMMENTS:

This is a c. 1935 single-family Bungalow style home that is contributing to the historic district. It has both a front porch and a side porch, although the side porch was enclosed some years ago. The owner is proposing to build a small (11.5'x8') addition behind the enclosed porch on the west (right) side of the house. The design he is proposing mimics the enclosed porch, with a column replicating the original columns added to the new corner. The walls will be stucco, and the windows will be re-used from the house.

The addition is partially visible from the public right of way but it is somewhat unusual in design in that it is attempting to replicate an original feature (porch) that was then altered by being enclosed. An existing 6 ft. privacy fence will hide the lower portion of the addition.

PERTINENT SECTIONS FROM GUIDELINES

Section 6: ADDITIONS

PRINCIPLES

It is often necessary to increase the space of a building in order for it to continue to adapt to the owner's needs. Over time, a family's space needs change and, in order to accommodate these needs, a building may need to be enlarged. While these additions are permitted, they should serve to reinforce and not detract from the existing architectural form and design of the building.

Additions should not significantly alter original distinguishing qualities of buildings such as the basic form, materials, fenestration, and stylistic elements. They should be clearly distinguished from original portions of building and should result in minimal damage to it. Character defining features of the historic building should not be radically changed, obscured, damaged, or destroyed in the process of adding new construction. The size and scale of the new addition should be in proportion to the historic portion of the building and clearly subordinate to it. Additions should be attached to the rear or least conspicuous side of the building. They should be constructed so that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the building will be unimpaired.

GUIDELINES

1. *Site additions so that they do not detract from or obstruct important architectural features of the existing building or others around it, especially the principle façade.*

The addition is sited on the right elevation of the house, behind an existing enclosed porch. This location will not obstruct important architectural features of the house, although it will eliminate the rear eave line of the original side porch, which is only minimally visible on the corner.

2. *Design additions to be compatible with the original structure in materials, style and detailing.*

The new addition will be compatible with the original structures in materials at it is using brick at the base (not visible due to fence) and stucco for the walls, which is a material found originally in the gables and used in the enclosure of the adjacent porch. The style is simple, like the existing enclosed porch, and the detailing will be similar, with a column on the corner, and wide boxed eaves like what is currently found on the house. Further details are discussed below in the “new construction” guidelines.

3. *Limit the size and scale of additions so that the integrity of the original structure is not compromised.*

The size and scale is limited to a modest footprint and a one-story height that will not compromise the integrity of the original structure.

4. *Additions are also subject to the guidelines for new construction*

See below.

SECTION 5: NEW CONSTRUCTION PRINCIPLES

Within the Melrose Heights/Oak Lawn district, there are numerous vacant lots and non-contributing structures. The construction of new or replacement structures on these lots will greatly affect the district by either reinforcing or undermining existing historic patterns. New construction should be consistent with existing buildings along a street in terms of height, scale, proportion and rhythm of openings, setbacks, orientation and spacing. However, new buildings need not imitate past architectural styles to be successful infill; they may reflect the era of their own construction while using significant themes, such as height, materials, roof form, massing, set-back, and the rhythm of openings to insure that a new building blends with its context. It is hoped that the new construction of today will be contemporary and contextual so that it will be worthy of the affection and designation of future residents.

GUIDELINES

1. *Height: The characteristic height in Melrose Heights/Oak Lawn is 1 to 2 stories. Construct new buildings to a height that is compatible with the height of surrounding historic buildings. New construction shall not vary greatly in height from older buildings in the vicinity.*

The one-story addition is consistent with the existing building and nearby historic buildings.

2. *Size & Scale: The size and scale of a new building shall be visually compatible with surrounding buildings. Although much larger than its neighbors in terms of square footage, the building shown maintains the same scale and rhythm as the existing buildings. Do not construct buildings that disrupt the existing scale of the area.*

The size and scale of the addition is visually compatible with the house and is not disruptive to the building's scale.

3. *Massing: Arrange the mass of a new building (the relationship of solid components (ex. walls, columns, etc.) to open spaces (ex. windows, doors, arches)) so that it is compatible with existing historic buildings on the block or street.*

Breaking up uninteresting boxlike forms into smaller, varied masses is essential to maintaining the character of the streetscape. Do not construct single, monolithic forms that are not relieved by variations in massing.

The massing on the west elevation of the addition does not appear compatible to the rest of the house because it features a doubled set of windows directly adjacent to a single window. The double window is in a hallway and the single window in the adjacent bathroom. This creates an awkward triple set that is not a true tripled set due to the interior wall layout. In other words, there will be wider space between the second and third windows than in between the first and second. There are a large number of doubled windows on the house but no tripled windows, making this a larger massing of windows than is typical for the building. Staff recommends reducing this to a doubled window and removing the proposed single window in the bathroom in order to maintain a more consistent massing in this new wall. Or, the applicant could have one window in the hall and one in the bathroom on the west elevation, making two single windows that are several feet apart.

4. Setback: *Locate the new building on the site so that the distance of the structure from the right of way is similar to adjacent structures. In Melrose Heights/Oak Lawn, the characteristic setback is between 10 – 20'. Do not violate the existing setback pattern by placing buildings in front of or behind existing façade lines.*

Not applicable.

5. Sense of Entry: *Place the main entrance and the associated architectural elements (porches, steps, etc.) so that they are compatible to surrounding structures. The main entrance shall be constructed with covered porches, porticos or other architectural forms that are found on historic structures on the block or street. Do not construct facades without a strong sense of entry.*

Not applicable.

6. Rhythm of Openings: *Construct new buildings so that the relationship of width to height of windows and doors, and the rhythm of solids (walls) to voids (door & window openings) is visually compatible with historic buildings on the block or street. Maintain a similar ratio of height to width in the bays of the façade. Do not introduce incompatible façade patterns that upset the rhythm of openings established in surrounding structures.*

The original exterior wall being covered up by the addition has already established a rhythm of openings that this addition generally adheres to.

7. Roof Shape: *Use roof shapes, pitches, and materials that are visually compatible with those of surrounding buildings. Nearly all of the buildings in Melrose Heights/Oak Lawn have pitched roofs, with gable, hip or a combination thereof as the predominant style. Do not introduce roof shapes or pitches that are not found in the area.*

The applicant proposed a hip roof for the addition. The main roof of the house is a hip roof, while the porches have gable roofs, so the hip roof meets this guideline.

8. Outbuildings: *Construct garage and storage buildings so that they reflect the character of the existing house and are compatible in terms of height, scale, and roof shape. Place such buildings away from the primary façade of the building. Do not allow outbuildings to obscure character-defining features of a building.*

Not applicable.

9. Materials, Texture, Details: *Use materials, textures, and architectural features that are visually compatible with those of historic buildings on the block or street. When selecting architectural details, consider the scale, placement, profile, and relief of details on surrounding structures for the basis of design decisions. If horizontal siding is to be used, consider the board size, width of exposure, length, and trim detail such as corner boards on adjacent historic structure for specifications of the new material.*

Siding: The exterior wall material will be stucco to match the house's original gables and the walls of the adjacent porch enclosure. This is consistent with the character of the house.

Windows: The two original 3/1 wood windows in the original wall will be reused for the addition; as these are original they are consistent with the historic building.

Columns: The original porch columns are to remain and the new wall will be similar to the porch wall in that it is recessed slightly behind the face of the column. A new column is proposed for the corner of the new addition. While the proposal is for the column to match exactly with the original porch columns, this may give a false representation of the original porch's configuration. Staff would recommend a simpler column, perhaps one that is square instead of tapered, with a brick pedestal and plinth under the wood column, rather than a concrete plinth, in order to make the new column different than the originals.

Trim: The renderings show trim around the windows in the new addition as well as in the existing enclosed porch, but there actually is not any trim around these windows. To help guide water away from the bottom of the wood windows, Staff recommends at least a sloping sill away from the window be incorporated into the new addition, which can be clad in stucco like the walls. Likewise, the brickmold framing the original windows, and the wide trim between the windows, could be re-used in the new addition.

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:

Staff finds that the proposal general meets Sections 5 and 6 of the guidelines and recommends approval with the following conditions:

1. That the original two windows from the house be used in the west elevation of the addition and that the third window be eliminated from the west elevation of the addition, and that the applicant may either keep the windows together as a pair or separate them by several feet and use one in the hallway and one in the bathroom as delineated on the attached plan;
2. That the new column on the addition's southwest corner be differentiated from the original columns by the use of a square column and/or other detailing as approved by staff;
3. All details deferred to staff.



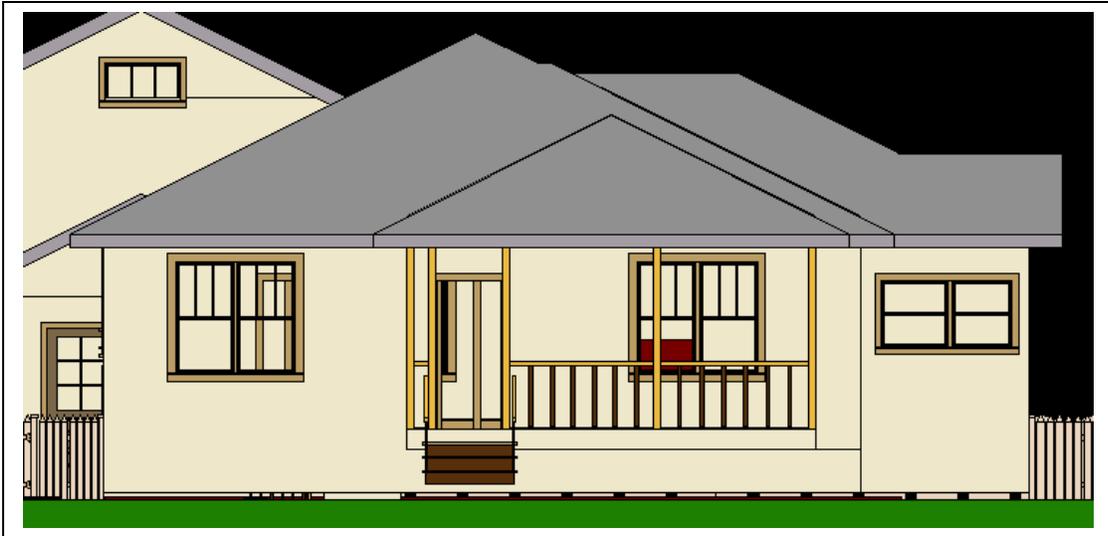
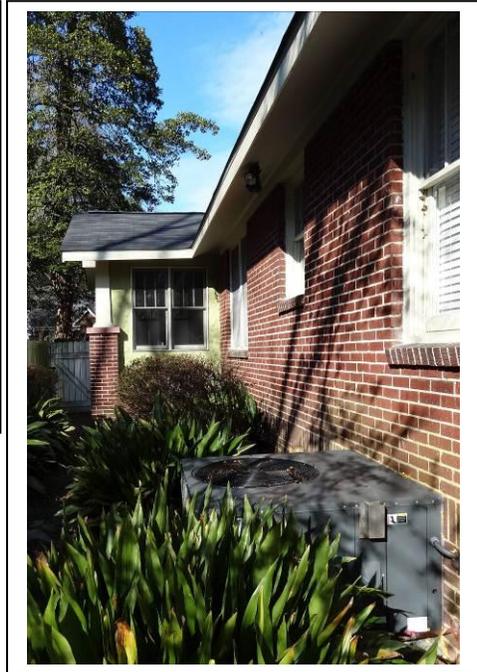
Location of proposed addition

Photos by Staff of house as visible from the public right of way



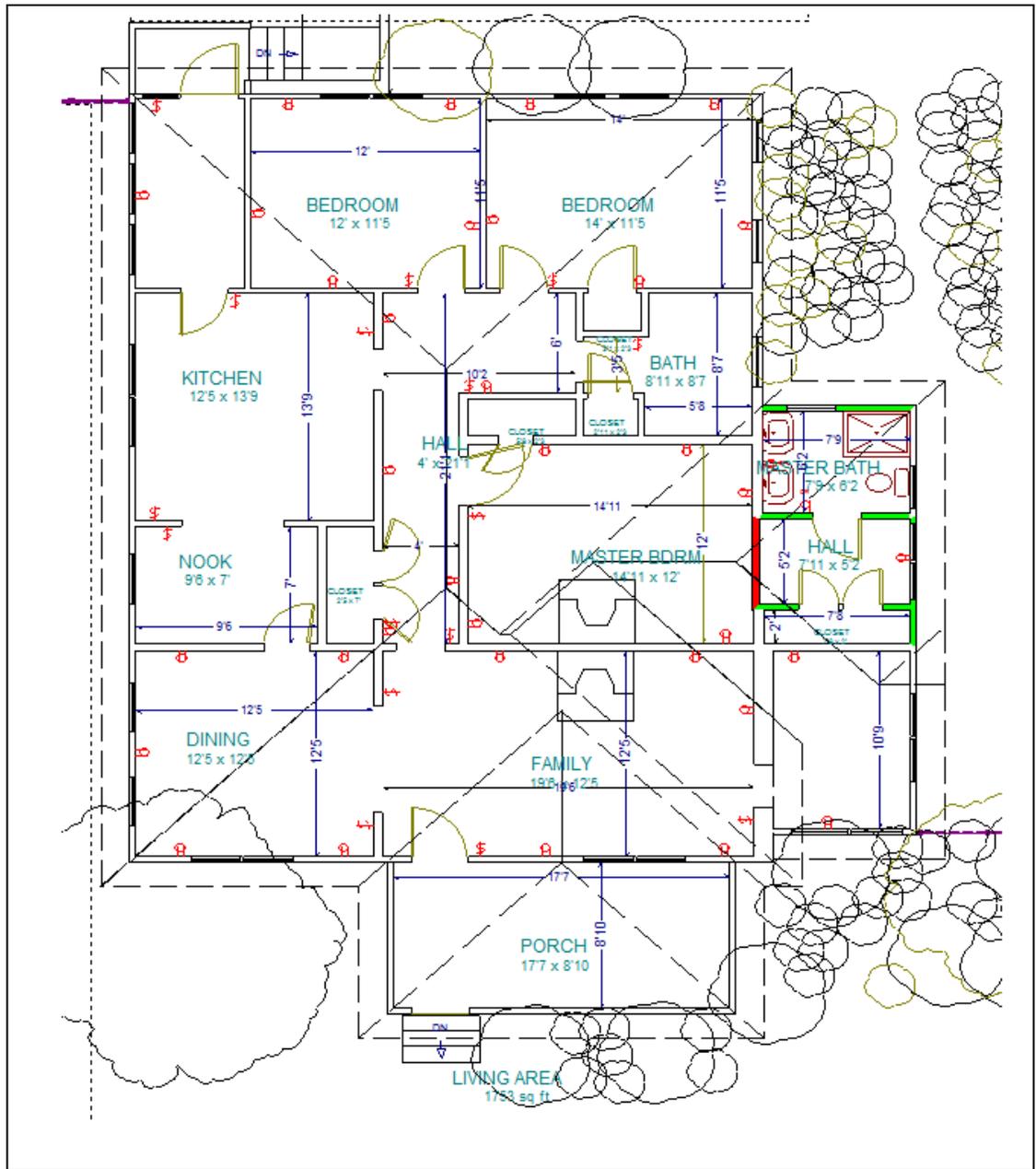


Left and Right:
Close-up views of the site of the proposed addition, provided by applicant



Left and Below:
Elevations drawn by applicant of new roof line as seen from front and new addition on the side





Floorplan of house with new addition shown in green, submitted by applicant