

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION**  
**PERMITS IN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICTS**  
**JUNE 28, 2021**  
**PR-2021-082701**  
**OLD WEST AUSTIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT**  
**2518 HARRIS BOULEVARD**

## **PROPOSAL**

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Construct a new primary building and accessory building.

## **PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS**

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- 1) Construct a new house. The proposed design is two stories in height. It features a cross-gabled roof with three shed-roofed dormers and regularly spaced 4- and 6-pane divided-light windows at the main façade. The building's primary mass is clad in limestone veneer with a slurry wash. A partial-width, flat-roofed porch is supported by wood columns. The proposed chimney is stuccoed, and the roof is clad in dimensional shingles. Secondary elevations feature combinations of stucco and stone cladding and built-in wood planters.
- 2) Construct an accessory building. The proposed building is one-story, with a gabled roof and limestone cladding. It features sliding glazed doors, a stucco chimney, and exposed rafter tails at secondary elevations.

## **STANDARDS FOR REVIEW**

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The City of Austin's Historic Design Standards (March 2021) are based on the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and are used to evaluate projects in National Register Historic Districts. The following standards apply to the proposed project:

*1.1 Set back a new primary building from the street in line with nearby historic buildings.*

*1.2 Locate a new building to maintain the rhythm of contributing buildings on the street.*

*1.3 Locate accessory buildings in a way that follows the historic location and setback patterns of similar buildings on the block or in the district.*

The proposed primary building is set back around 45' from the street. It appears to be sited in roughly the same position as the contributing building approved for demolition in May 2021. The proposed accessory building is located to the rear of the property and will be minimally visible from the street.

*2.1 Orient a new building to be consistent with the predominant orientation of contributing buildings on the same block.*

*2.2 Orient a new building towards the primary street.*

The proposed buildings' orientations are consistent with contributing buildings' orientations and face the primary street.

*3.1 Design the height of new buildings to respond to nearby contributing buildings and the dimensions of the lot.*

*3.2 Design the massing of new buildings to reflect the character of nearby contributing buildings. Simple massing is typically appropriate.*

*3.3 Use step-downs in building height, wall-plane offsets, and other variations in building massing to provide a visual transition when the height of new construction exceeds that of adjacent contributing buildings by more than one-half story.*

*3.4 Align foundation and floor-to-floor heights with adjacent contributing buildings.*

*3.6 Design accessory buildings to be visually subordinate to the primary building in height, massing, and form, as viewed from the street.*

The proposed buildings display similar massing and form to the previous contributing buildings, with the exception of the primary building's two-story height. The accessory building is appropriately subordinate to the primary building and does not appear visible from the street.

*4.1 Design the proportions of new buildings to be compatible with those of contributing buildings on the same block.*

The proposed building's proportions are mostly compatible with nearby contributing buildings. The streetscape comprises mostly two-story houses.

*5.1 Design new buildings to be compatible with the character of the primary building, historic district, and/or historic landmark in terms of scale, massing, proportions, patterns, materials, and architectural features.*

*5.2 Design new buildings to be differentiated from historic buildings. Do not use a replica style to create a false sense of history.*

*5.4 If designing a building in a modern style, use corresponding modern architectural details.*

*5.5 Do not combine character-defining features from different architectural styles unless similar eclectic buildings were historically present in the historic district or on the historic landmark property.*

While the proposed new building takes design cues from the previous contributing building on the lot, its use of modern cladding materials and fenestration adequately differentiate it from the neighborhood's historic fabric. Both the primary building and the accessory building are compatible with the neighborhood in terms of scale, massing, proportions, patterns, and materials. The built-in planters at secondary façades are a less compatible detail.

*6.1 Design simple roof forms that reflect the character of the roofs on contributing buildings.*

*6.2 Any roof details such as dormers, eave detailing, and bargeboards must correspond to the form and architectural style of the new building.*

*6.3 Select roof materials that match or are compatible with the roofs on contributing buildings, particularly buildings with a similar form and architectural style to the new building*

The proposed roof forms are simple and echo the design of the previous contributing buildings on the lot. Their materials are compatible, and the dormers' proportions appear appropriate and compatible with the house's Colonial Revival details. However, gabled dormers would appear more compatible.

*7.1 Use exterior wall materials that are compatible with the character of the historic district in scale, type, material, size, finish, and texture.*

*7.2 For rear buildings, use siding that is compatible with the primary building.*

*7.4 Make the use, pattern, and arrangement of secondary materials compatible with the character of the district.*

The proposed exterior materials are largely compatible with the contributing buildings in the district, and the secondary building's limestone veneer matches the limestone on the main house. The proposed mortar wash over the masonry is less compatible than a simpler mortar treatment, however, and appears inappropriately anachronistic when compared with nearby contributing buildings. Apart from the built-in wood planters, other secondary materials are compatible.

*8.1 Design street-facing facades to have similar window and door opening patterns as nearby contributing buildings.*

*8.2 Select windows that are compatible with nearby contributing buildings in terms of size, configuration, and profile.*

*8.3 For rear buildings, match the style, proportions, and materials of the windows to the primary building's style and design.*

*8.4 Locate front doors of new primary buildings so that they are visible from the street, unless another entrance location is a character-defining feature of the historic district.*

*8.5 Match the style, proportions, and materials of the front door to the building's style and design.*

The building's regular fenestration pattern at the street-oriented façade is compatible with the district's character, and the multilight windows complement the house's style.

*9.1 Include a porch in the design of new primary buildings if the majority of contributing buildings on the same block have porches.*

*9.2 Design new porches that reflect and continue the size, proportions, placement, depth, and rhythm of porches on contributing buildings within the district.*

The proposed partial-width, flat-roofed porch is consistent with the porch design of the previous contributing building on the lot.

*10.1 Do not construct a box chimney.*

The proposed chimney is clad in masonry.

The project meets most of the applicable standards.

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## **STAFF COMMENTS**

The Historic Landmark Commission approved the existing contributing building's demolition on May 24, 2021.

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## **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Encourage the applicant to omit the mortar wash and construct gabled dormers rather than shed-roofed dormers, then release the plans.

## LOCATION MAP



SUBJECT TRACT



PENDING CASE



ZONING BOUNDARY

1" = 208'

## NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: HR 21-083771

LOCATION: 2518 HARRIS BLVD.

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