

**HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION**  
**APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**  
**AUGUST 23, 2021**  
**HR-2021-115716**  
**KOHN HOUSE**  
**5312 SHOAL CREEK BLVD.**

## **PROPOSAL**

---

Construct a low fence at the front property line and a detached 2-car garage behind the house at a pending landmark.

## **PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS**

---

- 1) Construct a 36" tall weathering steel mesh fencing at the street. Supports along the length of the fence are metal posts. Limestone piers flank mesh gates at the sidewalk and driveway; the stone will have a sawn surface with parged joints.
- 2) Construct a detached 2-car garage behind the house. The proposed location, recessed to the northwest of the house and north of the historic guest house, was shown on the site plan reviewed by the Commission on April 26, 2021 in conjunction with other site modifications, though the garage design was not presented at that time. The garage has an asymmetrical, broken-pitch gable roof over the main volume, with a symmetrical gable over a rear portion. Roofing is standing-seam metal, and wall cladding is board-and-batten siding. Openings include paired overhead doors facing the driveway, solid doors at multiple locations, a sliding barn door on the side facing the guest house, steel and glass doors on the opposite side, and large multi-light steel windows wrapping the rear.

## **ARCHITECTURE**

---

The Kohn House occupies a premier site in the Shoalmont Addition. Two lots wide, the expansive parcel extends from Shoal Creek Boulevard on the east to Shoal Creek on the west and is studded with mature oaks. The one-story house, eclectic in its design, is T-shaped, with a long side-gabled volume facing the street and a rear hipped-roof wing. A two-story square tower with a pyramidal roof is asymmetrically placed near the north end of the house. The house is predominantly clad in random ashlar limestone with quoins at the corners and a stone chimney; a portion of the rear elevation is clad in horizontal wood siding. Wrapping the southeast end of the house is a porch with square wood posts and curved brackets; its gable end has waney-edge siding. Varied fenestration includes multi-light casements, a bay window with a metal roof, round portholes, and 1:1 double-hung wood windows. To the rear of the house, the site also includes a side-gabled accessory building, clad in board-and-batten on the front under the full-width porch and horizontal wood siding on the other sides.

## **STANDARDS FOR REVIEW**

---

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 at historic landmarks. The following standards apply to the proposed project:

### *Residential new construction*

*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. Garage apartments, detached garages, and other accessory buildings are typically located at the rear of the lot, behind and to the side of the front building.*

*2.3 For detached garages, match the predominant garage orientation found on the block's contributing properties. Do not use front-loaded garages on blocks where rear or alley-loaded garages historically were present.*

The proposed garage is recessed well beyond the back wall of the house, adjacent to a historic accessory building/guest house. The property extends to Shoal Creek, so garage access is necessarily from the street.

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

The one-story garage is subordinate to the two-story house and is not highly visible from the street. Although larger than the adjacent guest house, its similar form and articulated volume is compatible in character.

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

*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 roof form, pitch, and detailing draw from the historic guest house. While the house and guest house have composition shingle roofs, standing-seam metal is a compatible roofing material for a secondary building.

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

The siding is board-and-batten, which matches the front wall of the guest house. This is a typical cladding material for secondary buildings.

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

The garage has multi-light steel windows similar to those of the historic house.

The proposed garage meets the applicable standards.

#### Sites and streetscapes

*2.4 If constructing a new street-side fence or site wall, design it so that the materials, style, and scale are compatible with and differentiated from the architectural style and period of the building and are in keeping with historic fence styles and heights in the historic district. a. New front fences must be no more than 4' high and have a high degree of transparency.*

*Recommendations: If a street-side fence or site wall was not historically present and is not part of the historic development pattern of the district, do not construct one.*

During the prior review of site modifications in April 2021, staff found the proposal for a front-yard fence out of character with the open lawns of the Shoalmont Addition and did not recommend approval. The applicant has since provided additional information in support of a fence at this location. Mature oak trees are a character-defining feature of the site and partially screen the house from view, but some major trees have been removed. Although replanting is planned, it will take time to recover the full canopy. Plantings along the open mesh fence will provide similar vegetative screening in the meantime. At 36", the fence will be 1' lower than the height recommended in the Historic Design Standards and will not block the view of the house. In terms of compatibility of design, the fence will have a rustic feel appropriate to this large estate. Limestone piers will have a random ashlar pattern reminiscent of the stone on the house, differentiated by the planar surface of the sawn face and parged joints in contrast with the rough face and recessed joints of the house.

Staff revises the prior recommendation to find that the proposed fence meets the applicable standards.

#### **COMMITTEE FEEDBACK**

---

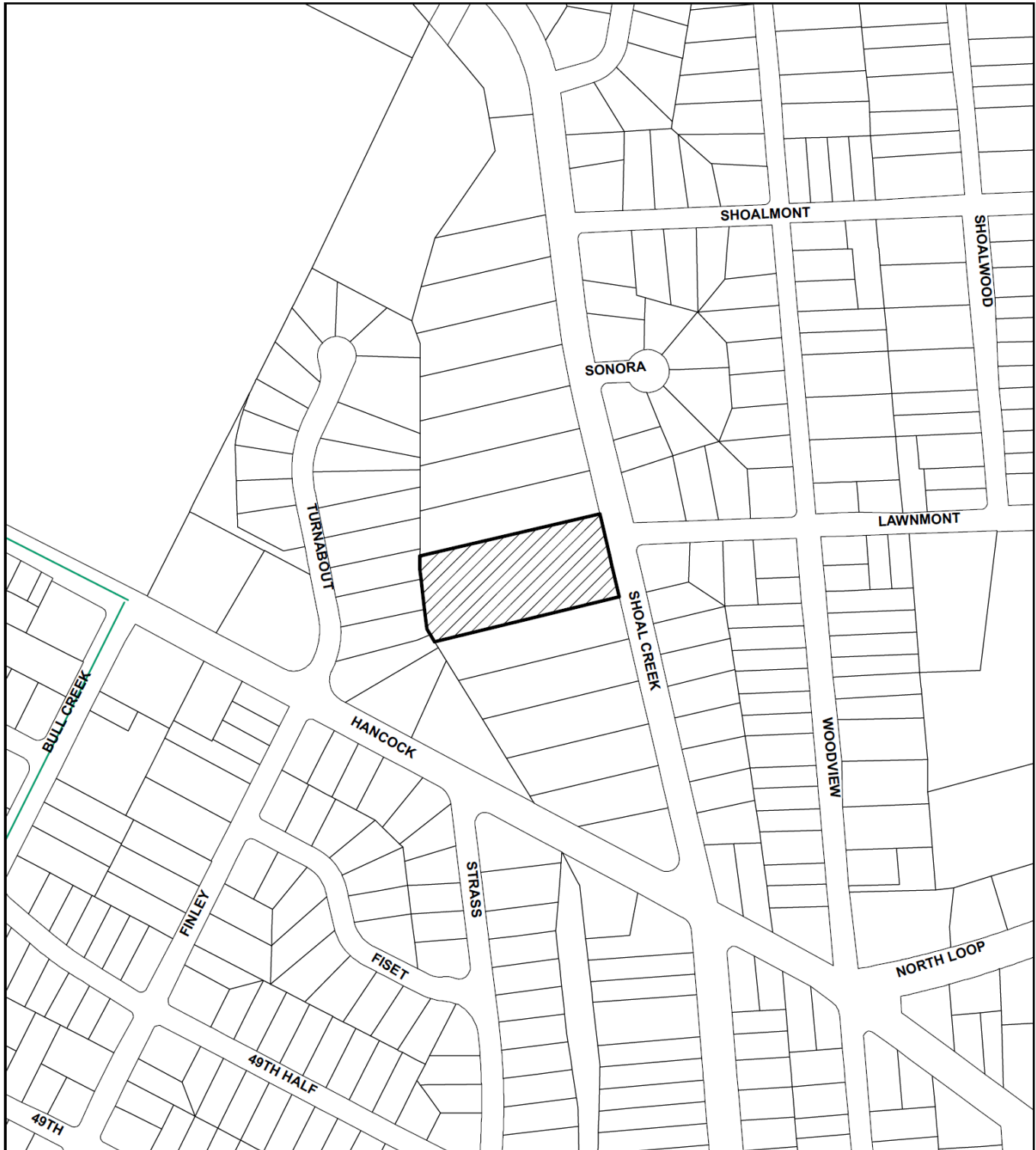
At the April 26, 2021 Historic Landmark Commission meeting, the Commission voted to recommend historic zoning for the Kohn House and approve a certificate of appropriateness for changes to the house and site, with the exception of the proposed front-yard fence. Subsequently, the applicant returned to the Architectural Review Committee on July 12, 2021 with additional information regarding the fence design. Committee members indicated that the fence will not disrupt the context and feeling of the site due to its low height and plantings along its length. They found the wire mesh and limestone piers complementary to the ranch-like feel of the property.

#### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

---

Approve the application.

## LOCATION MAP



SUBJECT TRACT



PENDING CASE



ZONING BOUNDARY

## NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: C14H-2021-0057

LOCATION: 5312 SHOAL CREEK BLVD.

1" = 292'

This product is for informational purposes and may not have been prepared for or be suitable for legal, engineering, or surveying purposes. It does not represent an on-the-ground survey and represents only the approximate relative location of property boundaries.

This product has been produced by CTM for the sole purpose of geographic reference. No warranty is made by the City of Austin regarding specific accuracy or completeness.





## PROPERTY INFORMATION

---

### *Photos*



*Comparison of 2014 and present views of the Kohn House from Shoal Creek Blvd., showing removal of some oak trees.  
Photographs from Google Street View, provided by applicant.*





*North and east elevations of the Kohn House. Photograph provided by applicant.*



*Guest house to the rear of the Kohn House. Photograph provided by applicant.*