

HISTORIC LANDMARK COMMISSION
APPLICATION FOR A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS
DECEMBER 17, 2021
C14H-2014-0007; HR-2021-189596
RED RIVER INTERNATIONAL HOUSE
3805 RED RIVER ST.

PROPOSAL

Construct a new accessory dwelling unit with a detached garage behind the Red River International House.

PROJECT SPECIFICATIONS

- 1) Construct a 1 ½-story accessory dwelling unit (ADU) behind the house, facing E. 38 ½ St. Clad in fiber-cement lap siding, the proposed building has a side-gabled composition shingle roof, with a front-facing gable wing next to a partial width porch. The porch has paired square columns supporting a metal shed roof. Windows are paired or single 1:1 sash, with narrow fixed windows higher on the walls.
- 2) Construct a freestanding garage with a second-floor bonus room behind the new ADU. The garage is accessed from the existing driveway off E. 38 ½ St., through the historic breezeway to a new driveway at the interior of the property. The garage building has a cross-gabled composition shingle roof, with a metal-roofed porte cochere in front of the garage door. Windows are single or mulled groupings of 1:1, fixed, and casement windows.

ARCHITECTURE

The Red River International House is a two-story, rectangular-plan, flat-roofed, concrete International-style house with steel casement windows, a metal-coped canopy between the two floors and at the cornice, and stuccoed buttresses with round piercings. Doubled courses of glass bricks serve as sidelights for the principal entry.

The house occupies a double lot on a prominent corner at E. 38 ½ St. and Red River. Behind the house, facing E. 38 ½ St. is a detached two-car garage. The flat roof of the garage is a continuation of the canopy at the first floor of the house, forming a covered breezeway between the buildings. Beyond the garage, the rear portion of the site is open, with trees at the perimeter. No significant site features are noted in the landmark file.

DESIGN STANDARDS

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

Overall, the proposed ADU has a traditional design that relates to the modest Craftsman and Minimal Traditional homes on E. 38 ½ St. and the Hancock neighborhood, rather than the modern architecture of the Red River International House. By blending into its surroundings, the design gives deference to the landmark house, which is significant for its distinctive architecture and prominent location.

1. Location

Standards 1.1 and 1.2 indicate that a new primary building should have a setback in line with neighboring buildings and should maintain the rhythm of other buildings on the street. The ADU is set back 20' from the property line. The Red River International House has a deeper setback. The canopy overhang is approximately 22'-8" and the wall face is approximately 25'-8" from the property line along E. 38 ½ St. Other houses on the block appear to have a similar setback.

The ADU is centered between the historic garage and the property line, 10' from each. This will establish a similar rhythm to the spacing between other houses on the block.

Standard 1.3 indicates that accessory buildings should follow the historic location and setback of similar buildings on the block. Houses within this block generally have detached garages to the side or rear of the house, accessed by driveways off E. 38 ½ St. The proposed garage will not require a new curb cut but rather extends the existing driveway. It is located behind the new ADU in a way that minimizes its prominence and is compatible with patterns in this block.

2. Orientation

Standards 2.1 and 2.2 indicate that a new building should have similar orientation as others in the block and should face the primary street. As the site is a corner lot, the project meets these standards.

3. Scale, massing, and height

4. Proportions

The scale, massing, and proportions of the design relate to other houses within the block. In terms of height, the ridgeline of the 1 ½-story ADU is 20'-11" from the finish floor, and the height of the 2-story garage building is 21'-2" from the finish floor. In both cases the finish floor level is only slightly raised above grade. While the heights of other buildings in the block are not known, the ADU and garage will not overpower the 2-story, flat-roofed Red River International House or the 1-story, pitched roof houses to the east.

5. Design and style

Standard 5.3 indicates that no particular architectural style is required to achieve differentiation but compatibility with historic buildings. As noted above, the traditional design of the house is intended to relate to the surrounding neighborhood, rather than compete with the strikingly modern house.

6. Roofs

The side-gabled roof with front-facing wing and shed-roofed porch is a pattern seen in other houses within the block. The proposed composition shingle roofing on the house and metal roofing on the porch is also compatible.

The garage and bonus room has a more complex roofline. In response to feedback from the Architectural Review Committee, the design was simplified by reducing the height of a rear-facing gable such that main ridgeline is the highest point of the roof.

7. Exterior walls

Walls are clad in tightly spaced fiber-cement siding, which is compatible with the horizontal wood siding common in this block.

8. Windows and doors

The ADU has a Craftsman-style door and single and paired 1:1 windows at the first floor, with fixed horizontal clerestory windows at a high-ceilinged room and attic spaces. The garage building has similar windows. The fenestration is compatible with other houses on this block.

9. Porches

Standards 9.1 and 9.2 indicate that new construction should include a porch that reflects the design characteristics of other buildings in the neighborhood. The ADU's partial width front porch has a shed roof supported by three paired box columns with trim, a similar design to other porches in the block.

Summary

The project adds density to the site of this historic landmark in a compatible way and largely meets the applicable standards.

COMMITTEE FEEDBACK




Simplify the complex roofline of the garage building. The applicant has responded as noted above.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

Approve the application.

LOCATION MAP



-  SUBJECT TRACT
-  PENDING CASE
-  ZONING BOUNDARY

NOTIFICATIONS

CASE#: C14H-2014-0007

LOCATION: 3805 RED RIVER STREET



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.

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PROPERTY INFORMATION

Photos

Front (northwest) and side (southwest) elevations of the Red River International House. View from in front of the house and from a neighboring property on Red River St. Photographs by Historic Preservation Office staff, December 12, 2021.



Northeast side of the Red River International House facing E. 38 ½ St. The proposed ADU will be to the left of the historic garage in the images, in the area currently bordered by tall shrubbery. Photographs by Historic Preservation Office staff, December 12, 2021.



Neighboring properties on E. 38 ½ St. adjacent to (top) and across the street from (bottom) the Red River International House. Photographs by Historic Preservation Office staff, December 12, 2021.