

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
STAFF REPORT FOR CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD
June 20, 2018

PROJECT TITLE

Grabowski Landmark Alteration (Non-Contributor)

APPLICANT

Mary Patricia O'Day and John Grabowski

ADDRESS/LOCATION

800 McDonald Avenue

PROPERTY OWNER

Mary Patricia O'Day and John George Grabowski

ASSESSOR'S PARCEL NUMBER

180-670-044

FILE NUMBER

LMA18-003

APPLICATION DATE

February 10, 2018

APPLICATION COMPLETION DATE

April 16, 2018

REQUESTED ENTITLEMENTS

Landmark Alteration Permit

FURTHER ACTIONS REQUIRED

Building Permit(s)

PROJECT SITE ZONING

PD 0005-H

GENERAL PLAN DESIGNATION

Low Density Residential

PROJECT PLANNER

Andrew Trippel

RECOMMENDATION

Approval

Agenda Item #6.1
For Cultural Heritage Board Meeting of: June 20, 2018

CITY OF SANTA ROSA
CULTURAL HERITAGE BOARD

TO: CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE BOARD/COMMISSION
FROM: ANDREW TRIPPEL, CITY PLANNER
PLANNING AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

SUBJECT: GRABOWSKI LANDMARK ALTERATION (NON-CONTRIBUTOR)

AGENDA ACTION: ADOPT RESOLUTION

RECOMMENDATION

The Planning and Economic Development Department recommends that the Cultural Heritage Board, by resolution, approve the exterior changes proposed for 800 McDonald Avenue, Santa Rosa, Assessor's Parcel No. 180-670-044.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Landmark Alteration Permit before the Board is for exterior alterations, including fencing and landscaping changes, to an existing single-family residence and property at 800 McDonald Avenue. The residence is a non-contributing structure in the McDonald Avenue Preservation District. Unpermitted alterations include: elimination of front-facing door; elimination, relocation, or replacement of several windows; replacement of sliding doors with French doors; replacement of redwood decking with concrete porch and stairs; redesign and relocation of chimney; and alterations to existing fencing, front yard gate posts and gate, and an accessory structure roof.

BACKGROUND

The "Cottage Modern," wood-shingle-clad, single-family residence, located at 800 McDonald Avenue was designed by local architect Gary Jensen. Construction was completed in 1982, and Mr. Jensen resided in the home until his passing in 2016. The property was then sold to private individuals who proceeded to make unpermitted alterations to the interior and exterior of the residence and to the surrounding landscaping. The property was purchased by the current owners, Mary Patricia O'Day and John Grabowski in July, 2017. In August, 2017, a Code Enforcement case was opened citing unpermitted modifications to the property. Subsequently, the applicants have worked with Code Enforcement and Planning staff to prepare and submit this Landmark Alteration Permit application to legalize alterations to the residence, site features, and landscaping.

1. Project Description

Various unpermitted exterior and interior changes to the residence, site features, and landscaping were made. Alterations include:

1. Replacement of previously existing front-facing door visible from McDonald Avenue with sliding window and elimination of adjacent window on front elevation.
2. Redesign and replacement of existing wood front deck and steps with concrete pad and steps.
3. Removal of chimney feature, once prominent in front elevation, and replacement with stovepipe-type chimney, installed in alternate location visible from 13th Street.
4. Removal of window/closure of window opening and replacement of remaining window on south elevation not viewable from public right-of-way.
5. Replacement of five sets of sliding glass doors with French doors on north elevation.
6. Resurfacing and painting of original brick front gate posts with stucco-like material. Replacement of original slotted natural wood gate with solid, painted wood gate.
7. Replacement of existing shingled wall fencing with wood fence of different design and height.
8. Replacement of side yard accessory structure roof visible from public rights-of-way with corrugated metal roof.
9. Removal of front yard fence to the left of the front walkway and installation of low bench and water feature in approximately the same location.
10. Landscaping alterations to front yard.

2. Surrounding Land Uses

The project site is located in the southern portion of the McDonald Avenue Preservation District; approximately 1.5 blocks from 4th street. It is surrounded on all sides by single-family residential development. Most surrounding homes are identified as Contributors to the McDonald Avenue Preservation District.

3. Existing Land Use – Project Site

The project site is occupied by a one-story, single-family residential structure. The 2,374 square-foot house, located at the northeast corner of McDonald Avenue and 13th Street, fronts McDonald Avenue, behind a landscaped front lawn. An accessory garage structure located behind the house faces 13th Street and is bordered by a public alley. City building permit records indicate that construction of the house was completed in 1982. The property is considered a non-contributor to the McDonald Avenue Preservation District.

4. Project History

A Landmark Alteration application was submitted to the Planning and Economic Development Division on February 10, 2018. Due to the non-contributing status of the property and because exterior alterations had already been completed, a Notice of Application was not distributed.

PRIOR CITY COUNCIL REVIEW

Not applicable to this project.

ANALYSIS

1. General Plan

The General Plan land use designation for the site is Low Density Residential (2-8 units per acre). The site is currently developed at a density of 5 units per acre.

2. Zoning

The project parcel is located in a PD (Planned Development) zoning district with a historic preservation overlay and is zoned PD-0005. Planned Development document PD-0005, entitled McDonald Historic Preservation, establishes the McDonald Avenue Preservation District. The subject site is identified as R-1-PD, Single-Family Residential. The parcel has been developed in a manner consistent with the R-1-PD District as described in the Planned Development document. The historic preservation overlay indicates that the subject parcel is within the McDonald Avenue Preservation District and is therefore subject to the requirements and standards of Zoning Code sections 20-28.040 – Historic Combining Districts and 20-58.060 – Landmark Alteration Permits.

Project Description Item 7 - Replacement of existing shingled wall fencing with wood fence of different design and height, is additionally subject to Zoning Code Section 20-30.060 – Fences, walls, and screening. Pursuant to Subsection C of this section, the maximum permitted fence height in an exterior side setback is 36 inches; however, a fence may be constructed to a height in excess of the limits established by Section 20-36.060 (C) with Minor Conditional Use Permit approval, except within a required vision triangle. And pursuant to Section 20-58.060, Subsection (C)(1)(d), a fence higher than otherwise allowed by Section 20-30.060 shall require Major Landmark Alteration Permit approval in addition to a Minor Use Permit. Replacement fencing located in the 13th Street exterior side yard setback is 7-feet tall but located outside of the required vision triangle. If the fence design is approved by Cultural Heritage Board, a Minor Conditional Use Permit for a fence exceeding 36 inches in the exterior side yard setback will be required.

There is no proposed change to the use or siting of the structure.

3. Design Guidelines

Section 4.7(H) of the Santa Rosa Design Guidelines addresses non-contributing buildings within a preservation district. This section of the guidelines directs design changes to newer buildings to be compatible with the house's architectural style and that of the neighborhood. Changes to an older building should attempt to return the building to its original appearance. Construction of the subject site was completed circa 1982; therefore, alterations should be evaluated for compatibility with the structure's architectural style and that of the neighborhood.

4. Historic Preservation Review Standards (CHB only)

The existing house is a non-contributing structure in the McDonald Avenue Preservation District. The property's single-family residential use is consistent with the historic use of the property and surrounding properties. Records indicate that the single-story residential structure was built in 1982. Its architectural style reflects aspects of the "English Cottage" and "Shingle" architectural styles, which are character defining elements of the McDonald Avenue Preservation District. The structure and site development exhibit most of the District's character defining neighborhood elements; however, elimination of the front-facing door from front elevation is not consistent with the "Entry door faces street" character defining neighborhood element.

As outlined in the Processing Review Standards, non-contributory structures are reviewed on a case-by-case basis. Changes to newer buildings are acceptable and need only be compatible with the house's architectural style and the surrounding neighborhood.

Unpermitted alterations and proposed changes to the existing house at 800 McDonald Avenue maintain the structural form of the original house, and generally maintain the existing roof line, except for the removal of the chimney. While the altered front elevation does not align with the street-facing entry door neighborhood element, the previous street-facing front door was not a prominent feature of the structure or site, and the proposed landscaping and site feature alterations will reestablish the welcoming, open presence that a front door typically offers. Examples of other homes in the preservation district with a non-street-facing entry door can be seen at 1027 Spring Street, as well as 817 and 921 Monroe Street.

The alteration or elimination of fencing located at both the property line and site interior does not detract from the site due to the similarities in design and materials between this site's fencing and privacy fencing on surrounding sites. The existing rhythm, setbacks and general proportion of site development will not be altered. Additionally, the upgraded materials and thoughtful landscaping will improve the aesthetics of the parcel and positively impact the surrounding neighborhood.

5. Neighborhood Comments

No Neighborhood Meeting was held. No comments have been received in response to public noticing.

6. Public Improvements/On-Site Improvements

There are no public or on-site improvements associated with this project.

FISCAL IMPACT

Approval or denial of this Landmark Alteration Permit will not have a direct fiscal impact on the General Fund.

ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

This project has been reviewed for compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and qualifies for a Class 1 categorical exemption, under CEQA Guidelines Section 15301, in that it involves minor alterations to an existing single-family residence.

BOARD/COMMISSION/COMMITTEE REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Not applicable.

NOTIFICATION

The project was noticed as a public hearing per the requirements of Chapter 20-66 of the City Code. Notification of this public hearing was provided by posting an on-site sign, publishing notice in a newspaper of general circulation, mailed notice to surrounding property owners, electronic notice to parties that had expressed interest in projects taking place in this geographic area of Santa Rosa, and bulletin board postings at City Hall and on the City website. Pursuant to Government Code Section 65091, where necessary, the City has incorporated notice procedures to the blind, aged, and disabled communities. These procedures include audio amplifier/assistive listening device support at public meetings, closed captioning, and optical character recognition conversion of electronic notices.

ISSUES

Staff has no outstanding issues with this project.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1 - Disclosure Form
Attachment 2 - Location Map
Attachment 3 - Neighborhood Context Map
Attachment 4 – Project Description
Resolution

CONTACT

Andrew Trippel, City Planner
atrippel@srcity.org
707.543.3223