



402 LEE STREET  
DECATUR, ALABAMA 35601  
July 13, 2023

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Council Chambers

Architectural Review Board

4:00 PM

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**I CALL MEETING TO ORDER 4:00 pm**

**Roll Call:**

Present: Ellis Chennault, Lynn Schuppert, Bill Stone, Jacob Woods

**II APPROVAL OF MINUTES: June 8, 2023**

**Approval of June 8, 2023 Minutes:** Motion made by Bill Stone, seconded by Lynn Schuppert. Unanimous approval, motion carried.

**III EXPEDITED CoAs SINCE THE APRIL MEETING:**

849 Johnston (Cobl) new roof (#47 for the CoA)  
618 Line (Schuppert) repair in kind soffit area (#9 for the CoA)  
630 Grant (Cross) repair in kind roof and siding damage for garage (#4 for the CoA)  
608 Ferry (Lange) new front porch railings (#53 for the CoA)

**IV NEW CoA REVIEWS:**

**CoA #1: 810 Jackson (Gibson)**

**Background:** Turn of the century cottage is a contributing building in the Albany District. Staff received notification about unauthorized construction on the site and placed a stop work order. A large pergola has been constructed in the side yard.

**Action Requested:** Approval of the pergola. Drawing shows a fence along with the trees, but no fencing request has been submitted.

Decatur's Design Review Standards: 11. Landscaping 7. Garden Structures. Garden structures such as gazebos .... Should be located so as to not be readily visible from public vantages unless documentation is provided indicating that such elements are historic conditions of the property.

**Staff Findings:** As currently sited the gazebo is highly visible. If the submitted landscaping plan is followed, it appears that the pergola would meet the standards. Staff suggests that the landscaping plan be part of the required project and that it be completed in a timely manner rather than completed at a later date.

**Discussion:** Commissioner Schuppert asked if the fence went around the side too, applicant said yes. Commissioner Chennault felt the planting plan was appropriate.

**Vote:** Motion by Lynn Schuppert, seconded by Bill Stone to approve the CoA as presented with the applicant meeting with staff to provide more details on the fence. Applicant has 6 months from July 13<sup>th</sup> (until January 13<sup>th</sup> 2024) to complete the fence and landscaping. Unanimous approval, motion carried.

## **CoA #2: 626 Grant (Pritzel)**

**Background:** This Free Classic Victorian is a contributing building in the Albany District. Staff issued a CoA for repair in kind rotting boards in preparation for painting. By end of May the entire front porch railing had been removed, and almost all the siding on the west side of the house. A new front railing, taller than the historic one was added. Some front porch supports were removed, and fiberglass replacements were installed. Porch supports for the second floor balcony on the west side were also removed. A stop work order was issued. Staff met with owner and reiterated that only the select rotting boards were to be removed. Full siding removal was also done to accommodate adding house wrap under the new siding. Since the historic siding was no longer on site, staff reiterated to homeowner the proper protocol for targeted siding replacement. Property owner confirmed contractor had been reminded of proper district protocol. Property owner (on his own accord) reached back out to staff on June 22<sup>nd</sup> notifying the city that his contractor fully removed most of the front façade second floor siding. At this time staff issued a stop work order for the entire project until the board could review.

**Action Requested:** Approval for siding replacement, new east side porch supports, front porch columns, and for the new front railing.

**Decatur's Design Review Standards:**

1. Exterior Siding 1. Retain Original Materials. Original exterior siding, shingles, banding, and/or cornerboards should not be removed unless it is demonstrated that replacement is necessary. 2. Repairs. All repairs should match the original work in material, color, texture, workmanship and character. 4. Replacement materials. When the replacement of exterior siding, shingles, banding, and/or cornerboards is necessary, the replacements should match the historic conditions in design, material and workmanship.

3. Porches 2. Retain Historic Components. Historic porch columns, railings or other details should be retained and repaired as needed. 3. Replace Missing or Deteriorated Components in Kind. Where porch columns, railings or other details are deteriorated or missing, new components should duplicate the historic components in design and workmanship.

**Staff Findings:** Mr. Pritzel had new siding ordered to match the exact siding that was on the house. The commission has required that siding replacement be on an as needed basis with the district, not wholesale elevation replacement. (Most recently as-needed siding replacements have occurred at 101 Walnut and 1038 Jackson).

Some of the porch columns at the residence at the time work started were fiberglass, so the porch had a mixture of both historic wood and synthetic. The commission has approved synthetic columns to replace severely damaged wood columns in the past, most recently at 714 Line). Columns where just the bases were damaged have traditionally had new bases built and inserted.

Staff has no data on the proposed new east side second floor porch supports, or the proposed railing.

The front porch historic railing was at the standard 28" height. The new railing is 34.5". Owner has stated he wants a taller railing since the historic railing didn't meet code. The commission has approved a railing with extenders on it (see photo below) as an acceptable alternative for new standard height railings if Mr. Pritzel would like a railing at that height. Mr. Pritzel proposes adding an additional horizontal strip to simulate the full height railing, since he has already constructed a new guard railing.

Staff reached out to the building department for clarification of guard railing heights. A railing at the original 28" height is allowed because that height was grandfathered in. Any new guard railing to meet code must be at 36" high (new stair railing heights can be between 34" and 38"). Current new guard railing height as constructed is 34.5"



#### **Siding:**

**Vote:** Motion by Ellis Chennault, seconded by Jacob Woods to approve the siding removal. All future siding removal will be on a piece by piece basis as needed instead of removing entire elevations. Unanimous approval, motion carried.

#### **Porch Columns:**

**Vote:** Motion by Lynn Schuppert, seconded by Bill Stone to allow for fiberglass column replacement on the front porch as needed and wood turned posts for the west elevation, top floor, as needed. Unanimous approval, motion carried.

#### **Porch Hand Railing:**

**Discussion:** Because code requires the railing be even higher, Mr. Prizel proposes moving the railing up 1 ½" and adding an additional piece on the bottom of the railing. Concern by Ms. Schuppert that adding full height railing to the top makes the finished product very top heavy. Mr. Woods asked how much rot there was on the prior railing. Property owner stated there was quite a bit. Mr. Woods concerned that the proposed design doesn't separate the new railing from the historic height railing since all of the balusters run the new height, unlike the design that had been approved by the HPC in the past. Both Mr. Woods and Ms. Schuppert feel the previously approved design by the HPC several years ago, which has fewer balusters in the upper portion than the

current proposed design, is more appropriate because the historic railing height and railing is clearly separated from the addition unlike the submitted design.

**Vote:** Motion by Ellis Chennault, seconded by Bill Stone to approve the new porch railing, with the understanding that the railing as built would be moved up 1 ½ “ and the bottom will have an additional bar to meet current 36” code. Mr. Chennault and Mr. Stone voted in favor of the motion. Ms. Schuppert and Mr. Woods voted against. The motion failed to pass.

### **CoA #3: 808 Gordon (McCutcheon)**

**Background:** Property is located on the north side of Gordon. The house is a contributing building in the Albany district.

**Action Requested:** Approval of a greenhouse placed on the adjacent vacant lot.

#### **Decatur’s Design Review Standards:**

Decatur’s Design Review Standards: 11. Landscaping 7. Garden Structures. Garden structures such as gazebos .... Should be located so as to not be readily visible from public vantages unless documentation is provided indicating that such elements are historic conditions of the property.

**Staff Findings:** Although proposed greenhouse is placed near the rear of the adjacent lot, the vacant lot means the greenhouse is highly visible. Staff would suggest screening to ensure greenhouse isn’t visible from the street, in keeping with other hidden greenhouses in the district, like the one at 425 Sherman.

**Vote:** Motion by Jacob Woods, seconded by Lynn Schuppert to approve the CoA as submitted. Unanimous approval, motion carried.

## **V COURTESY REVIEW:**

### **Jackson Street – no address yet, southeast corner at 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue (Carney)**

**Background:** Property sits at the intersection of Jackson and 4<sup>th</sup> Avenue, in the Albany neighborhood. This is a vacant lot the owner is requesting a new house on the site.

**Action Requested:** Courtesy review of the design with guidance on what would be required for a submission that meets the standards for approval.

## **Decatur's Design Review Standards:**

19. New Construction (a copy of the guidelines for this are in your packet)

### **Staff Findings:**

**Height:** Does not appear to meet the standards. Houses adjacent and nearest the site are two stories.

**Proportion:** Does not appear to meet the standards for most of the house. Houses adjacent and neighboring are two story, either L-shaped cross gable or rectangular with side gable, or hipped with front gable.

**Rhythm:** Does not appear to meet the standards. Multi-light picture windows are not historically found on adjacent/neighboring houses.

**Setbacks:** Data not submitted.

**Design:** Design does not appear to be consistent with the adjacent/neighboring houses. Craftsman houses are not found near this empty lot. Neighboring designs are late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The solid paneled front door and under scaled transom are not design details found in the district. The front door should have the upper 40% or so glazed, in keeping with neighboring houses.

**Materials:** See material list below. The commission has authorized use of HardiePlank or similar materials in prior new builds, as long as smooth (not textured) materials are used. Clear direction on overlap and siding relevel should be given to the designer so they can submit appropriate documentation. Staff does not have detailed information for the windows or columns. The commission has required double-hung windows before, if muntins are used, simulated divided lites have been required.

**Cladding:** Brick and smooth James Hardi Plank

**Roofing:** GAF Timberline HD shingles

**Windows:** Sierra Pacific Aluminum clad

**Columns:** Fiberglass with brick base

More detailed information should be submitted with a full CoA, taking into account prior approvals for windows and the relevel and depth requirement for the siding.

**Roofs:** Pitch does not appear to be consistent with the adjacent/neighboring houses. It is a much wider pitch than found nearby.

**Porches:** Size and roof appears to meet the standards, but details do not. The tapered wood piers are Craftsman in design, a style that is not near this lot. The use of stone is not common in the district, and is not used in adjacent/neighboring houses.

**Discussion:** Ms. Schuppert concerned that the stylistic details aren't appropriate. Mr. Woods discussed that a one-story house with massive dormers is not appropriate at this location. He also mentioned concern with the use of stone and that windows should be 1/1, double-hung. Double ganged windows are appropriate but not large picture windows. Mr. Stone and Mr. Ellis concurred. Discussion that a site plan showing set back and a landscaping plan would be needed with a formal CoA submittal.

## **VI DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES:**

Thomason & Associates

**Discussion:** Ms. Schuppert and Mr. Woods highly concerned with the lack of editing that has occurred in the document. Ms. Schuppert requested that the document be thoroughly reviewed and edited before being returned to the ARB. They will send staff a list of any areas they would like clarified in the final document.

## **VII STAFF UPDATES:**

### **CoA/Compliance Updates**

411 Walnut: (Kennedy): Compliance by August 31, 2023

504 Walnut (Hereford): Settlement docket date was June 20<sup>th</sup>. Mr. Hereford opted to move forward with a trial. Court date has not been set yet.

Motion to adjourn meeting at 5:49 by Lynn Schuppert, seconded by Bill Stone. Unanimous approval, motion carried. Meeting adjourned.