

Staff Report of Findings

Application for Certificate of Appropriateness - McKinstry School Shell

Property Address: 120 N Magnolia
Applicant: Drew Kleman (architect), Steve DeWalt (agent)
Hearing Date: 4/20/2022
Type of Work: Exterior shell changes

FINDINGS OF FACT:

- 1.) The Landmarks Commission has the authority to review this proposal for Certificate of Appropriateness.
 - Under [SMC 4.35.080Bd](#), the commission has the authority to “Review proposals (as provided in [SMC 17D.100.200](#)) to construct, change, alter, modify, remodel, move, demolish and significantly affect properties or districts on the register.”
 - SMC 17D.100.200 C sets forth in [Table 17D.100-1](#) the types of work to be reviewed by the full commission, which includes exterior changes like the addition of new openings, dormers, replacement windows/doors, etc.
- 2.) The McKinley School was listed on the Spokane Register of Historic Places on 09/18/2017 under both categories A and C.
- 3.) The Management Standards for Spokane Register properties are the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings ([17D.100.210 D2](#) as well as on the signed [Management Agreement](#)). Staff recommendation is based on the Standards and Guidelines as listed below.

PROPOSED WORK:

The applicant is proposing several exterior changes to the building in order to change its use from an elementary school to a mixed-use development including both retail (basement) and residential (main floor, second floor and previously unused attic). Proposed work includes replacement wood windows in the same configuration and openings as historic; the addition of four dormers to the west (rear) of the attic level; a new roof and gutter system; a rear wood deck that spans part of the rear central portion of the building; new entry doors on the rear; excavation to both the rear and the front (east) facades to provide access to the retail level at the basement as well as ADA access (ramp to the rear); some door removal/replacement on the north/south elevations; a new garage door on the east façade; and the addition of mechanical units on the roof behind a metal screen/fence.

RELEVANT STANDARDS:

Standard #1: A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

- Changes proposed to the McKinley School to allow a residential use will consist of several new dormers to the rear/west elevation at the attic level to allow for enough light to adequately accommodate living space. Currently, the attic provides minimal natural daylight and the proposed dormers will allow for additional living space in the currently unused attic level. The dormers (two hipped and two shed style) are to the rear of the main façade and will not be evident from the

primary elevation of the property.

- Because of the change of use to residential, more mechanical equipment will be needed to support that use. The proposal includes the addition of several heat pump units to the roof of the McKinley School. There is currently no mechanical equipment on the roof, but there are two flat areas on the hipped roof that could adequately contain heat pumps for the residential units. The flat areas of the roof with new equipment will be minimally visible from the ground, but will be screened behind a rail/baluster system that will match those features on the rear deck, ADA ramp and patio access, and new basement entries on the east façade. Each heat pump unit will be approximately 48" above the flat roof line – designs call for 29 to 30 units. Some units may be located at grade level per project architect.
- A result of the new use will also require changes to several windows and doors. In some cases, an existing window will be changed to a door (west elevation, deck access); in other cases, existing doors are no longer functional and will be changed to a window with appropriate brick repair and concrete sill reconstruction (also on the west elevation). On both the north and south secondary elevations, doors that are no longer needed will be infilled and transoms windows will remain for daylight. Doors are proposed to be infilled with brick.
- Finally, the applicant is asking for approval of exterior venting from residential units through wall penetrations. Potentially, these penetrations could involve two separate openings for each residential unit (fresh air intake as well as dryer/bathroom/kitchen vents). It was suggested that some venting might be accomplished through the roof and that may be the more cost-effective solution. Applicant has asked for SHLC to weigh in on wall penetration venting which may or may not be needed.

Staff recommendation: The change of use does affect some character-defining features of the McKinley School such as the addition of mechanical units to the roof of the building which will partially obscure the chimneys. Although there may be some visual affects of the mechanicals, staff feels that the addition of the mechanicals to the rooftop are a reasonable allowance to have the building come back into use. Staff recommends that the design of the screening be reviewed administratively before permits are provided to the applicant. Staff would like direction on a preference by the SHLC as to whether they prefer a fencing style or metal screen to conceal the mechanicals.

Staff recommends that the dormers are a needed addition to the rear of the building in order to effectively utilize the space on the attic level. While the new residential use of the upper floors will require changes to the original design of the building, the proposed dormers do not negatively affect the character of the building. The dormers will be further discussed in Standard #9 later in this staff report.

The door and window changes are not on the main façade of the building and need to be changed as a result of the change of interior use. Staff recommends that a total door infill should be done with brick – but could perhaps be a slightly different shade than the historic brick to allow the change to be visible to the future viewer. Changes that involve a door changing to a window should have a concrete sill and brick infill to match the existing brick. Changes involving a window to a door should be finished in a way as to match other doors on the building in both appearance and materials.

The exterior vents may be a necessary issue for which there is not an easy solution. Staff recommends that venting on the exterior walls be kept as minimal as possible and that if necessary, vents be covered with a screen type of vent cover painted Iron Ore to match other finishes on the building or possibly to be a color more closely aligned to the color of the brick. Staff recommends that as much venting as possible be conducted through the roof and the non-primary facades of the McKinley School.

Standard #5: Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.

- The proposal for the McKinley School does include the preservation and rehabilitation of the building – especially in repairs, cleaning, rehab of the main entry doors and repairs to the wood shingled dormers.

Staff recommendation: The project meets Standard #5 by preserving the overall character and craftsmanship of the building. The proposal does identify the repair of concrete sills, the refinishing and rehabbing of the front doors of the building, and overall cleaning of the structure. Additions are located at the rear of the main structure to have less of a visual intrusion on the overall character of the school building.

Standard #6: Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

- The proposal to change the use of the McKinley School from an elementary school (and later storage facility and offices) to residential does propose to replace all of the original windows with Pella Reserve Series wood windows with aluminum clad exterior and brick moulding with same aluminum cladding. Windows are to replicate existing muntins and mullions throughout.
- The proposal also includes the re-roofing of the existing roof with GAF Timberline HDZ in a grey color – either Oyster Grey or Pewter Grey.

Staff recommendation: The existing windows have nearly every pane broken and have been boarded up. The windows are not in a state that they could be easily repaired after many years of neglect and lack of maintenance. The proposed replacement windows in wood with aluminum cladding will match the old in design, color, texture and other visual qualities. The openings will remain the same and the new windows will replicate the existing mullions and muntin patterns.

The proposed new roofing material meets Standard #6 and will maintain a similar color and profile to what is currently on the roof.

Standard #9: New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

- The addition of four dormers to the rear of the property would be considered as exterior alterations to increase the use of the interior.
- The proposal also includes replacing a garage door that was cut into the building at some point when the building was home to a storage and trucking company. The existing door is a solid door that is to be replaced with a glass garage door to allow for a future business to use the space and allow for more daylight to enter as well as to provide a way to open the space to the exterior.
- Proposal calls for the addition of a deck on the rear of the property at the 1st floor level for tenant use.

Staff recommendation: The four dormers located to the rear of the property do not visually intrude on the main façade of the building. They employ common roof types such as a hipped roof and shed roof and are not visible from the main façade. The building does already have dormers on the north and south

rooftops and the additional dormers proposed are compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features of the existing building.

The garage door proposed is constructed of glass and metal and is easily differentiated from the rest of the building as a modern garage door. The garage door being replaced would not be considered as “historic material” and does not characterize the property.

******At this time, the deck as proposed does not have enough information for staff to properly recommend approval or denial – in speaking with code reviewers, there may need to be significant adjustments to the deck before it would meet code (for instance, exterior stairs may need to be added for egress). Staff recommends that the applicant return to the SHLC with more finalized plans before a decision is made.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The applicant is proposing a change of use from school/office to residential and commercial. The proposal does meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards #1, #5, #6 and #9 because the work does not destroy character defining features of the building; the proposed work does preserve and rehabilitate distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques that characterize the building; new features that replace deteriorated materials match the old in design, color, texture and visual qualities; and new features will be differentiated from the old and are compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features of the historic building.

HPO Report – Megan Duvall
Design Review Committee Review:
Landmarks Commission Review: Pending

Date: 4/15/22
Site Visit: 4/7/22
Hearing Date: 4/20/22