


CITY OF JERSEY CITY

Department of Housing, Economic Development & Commerce
Division of City Planning



Interdepartmental Memorandum

DATE: 11/10/2021
TO: Historic Preservation Commission
FROM: Sara Quinlan, Historic Preservation Specialist 
CC: Elizabeth Barna, Esq., HPC Counsel
Debra David Architect, LLC, Applicant
Matt Blaszkowski III and Jena Schaafsma, Owner
/File
RE: Case #H21-317
251 2nd Street
Block: 11402, Lot 2
Zone: H / Harsimus Cove Historic District

I. PLANS AND DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

1. Historic Preservation Application, submitted July 1, 2021
2. Architectural Plans entitled *251 2nd Street, Jersey City, New Jersey, 07302 Two Family Residence Rehabilitation/Alteration* by Debra David Architect, LLC most recently revised October 14, 2021.
3. Rendering of rear façade entitled *South Façade, 251 second street, Jersey City, NJ*

II. PROJECT & PROPOSAL BACKGROUND

The property has been owned by Matt Blaszkowski III and Jena Schaafsma (herein referred to as "The Owner") since April 2021. The property is currently used as a two-unit residence.

Per the submitted application and plans prepared by Debra David Architect, LLC, entitled *251 2nd Street, Jersey City, New Jersey, 07302 Two Family Residence Rehabilitation/Alteration* most recently revised October 14, 2021, the applicant is seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for a full height rear addition (visible from the public right of way) and interior alterations of an altered, contributing, transitional Greek Revival frame townhouse with Italianate and Second Empire influences constructed *circa* 1860 in the Harsimus Cove Historic District. The proposed scope of work includes (but is not limited to):

1. Full interior renovation of two interior units.
2. Construction of a three-story rear addition that is visible from the public right of way through a lot on 2nd Street
3. Replacement of rear windows
4. Landscaping and patio at rear yard

The application and submitted plans were deemed complete by HPC Staff on October 19,

2021.

III. PROPERTY LOCATION & JURISDICTION

251 2nd Street (herein referred to as “The Property”) is located in the Harsimus Cove Historic District. The property is located on a 20 x 66.67 lot fronting 2nd Street between Grove and Erie Streets. As defined in the City of Jersey City Zoning Ordinance, the property is zoned as H.

The property was designated as a contributing building within the Harsimus Cove Historic District on July 20, 1983, as well as on the on the National and State Registers of Historic Places on December 8, 1987 and October 14, 1987, respectively. The HPC’s jurisdiction regarding the property is defined per § 345-30, entitled *Historic Preservation Review Procedures*:

- a. *No permit shall be issued or amended nor shall any construction, alteration, minor alteration, ordinary maintenance and repair or demolition be started on a landmark building nor on any sign, building, structure, object, site or landscape feature within a designated historic district, whether or not a construction permit is required, prior to a filing of an application for review by the Historic Preservation Commission or the issuance of either a Certificate of Appropriateness or a Certificate of No Effect.*

Additionally, per 2(a), *“The Historic Preservation Officer shall refer all applications for **new construction, alterations**, relocation or demolition to the Historic Preservation Commission for review.”*

IV. REQUIREMENTS AND STANDARDS FOR CONSIDERATION

Staff notes regarding the Powers and Duties of the Historic Preservation Commission:

Per § 345-9, entitled Historic Preservation Commission, Section (B) entitled Powers and Duties of the Historic Preservation Commission, the Commission has the following relevant powers and duties:

(4) To advise and assist City officers, employees, boards and other bodies, including those at County, regional, State and Federal levels, on all matters which have potential impact on the landmark buildings, sites, structures, object or landscape features in the City or on the ambience of a historic district.

(17) To issue Certificates of Appropriateness or Certificates of No Effect in accordance with the rules and standards set forth herein.

The property is subject to following standards during the Board’s consideration regarding the application seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness:

1. *Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*
2. *City of Jersey City Zoning Ordinance § 345-58 entitled H - Historic District*
3. *City of Jersey City Zoning Ordinance § 345-71 entitled Historic Design Standards*
4. *City of Jersey City Historic Preservation Commission Rules & Regulations for Alterations & Additions to Buildings & New Construction in Historic Districts*

V. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS

After reviewing the proposed project, Staff finds that the proposal is mostly consistent with the Secretary of Interior Standards for Restoration and New Construction, as well as with the *Historic Design Standards* and *Rule & Regulations*. The proposed addition is consistent with the existing paradigm of the block; while full height, the bulk matches a pattern found on the block, albeit further to the east. In HPC Staff's opinion, the project as proposed will not cause an adverse effect on the character and/or integrity of the Harsimus Cove Historic District. HPC Staff recommends approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness with the following conditions:

1. The architect, Debra David Architect, LLC, shall be retained during construction and shall submit as-built, signed and sealed drawings to staff, or a signed and sealed letter representing and noting that site construction was consistent with work approved under this Certificate of Appropriateness before the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.
2. Any proposed planting or landscaping shall conform with the City of Jersey City Forestry Standards.
3. Details, Specifications, and Material Submissions not currently submitted to and approved by the HPC under this Certificate of Appropriateness, or changed during the course of construction are remanded back to the HPC.
4. All proposed rear lighting is recommended to be downcast in nature and shall not exceed .5 foot candles at the property line, per § 345-69.
5. All material samples and specifications shall be submitted to HPC Staff for review and approval prior to the submission of construction documents for permitting.
6. Any changes or deviations from the approved drawings are to be clearly bubbled on the construction drawings and noted in an accompanying signed and sealed letter from the architect addressed to Staff.
7. Upon final approval of this Certificate by the HPC, any deviations from the granted approval must be approved by the HPC, except in cases of emergency affecting the public safety, health and welfare. Requests for deviations from this Certificate are to be submitted through written request of the architect.