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## Historic Landmarks and Preservation Districts Commission

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### Report to the Committee

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To: Cherokee Triangle Architectural Review Committee  
Thru: Cynthia Elmore, Historic Preservation Officer *CE*  
From: Anthony Schneider, Historic Preservation Specialist  
Date: April 16, 2019

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Case No: 19COA1063  
Classification: Committee Review

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Property Address:** 2407 Ransdell Avenue

**Applicant:** Nathalie Andrews  
2407 Ransdell Avenue  
Louisville, KY 40204  
502-459-5715  
502-930-3190  
[dulcie@iglou.com](mailto:dulcie@iglou.com)

**Owner:** Same as Applicant

**Estimated Project Cost:** \$1,500.00

#### Description of proposed exterior alteration:

The applicant is requesting approval for the installation of a brick retaining in the front yard along the side walk. The proposed wall would have a concrete footer and would be approximately five bricks in height.

#### Communications with Applicant, Completion of Application

The application was received on March 8, 2019 and was considered complete and requiring committee review on April 3, 2019. Staff discussed the application with the applicant via email and via phone after the submittal. Staff went on site on March 21, 2019 and took photos for context and relayed staff's recommendations to the applicant after.

#### FINDINGS

##### Guidelines

The following design review guidelines, approved for the Cherokee Triangle Preservation District, are applicable to the proposed exterior alterations: **Site**. The report of the

Commission Staff's findings of fact and conclusions with respect to these guidelines is attached to this report.

The following additional findings are incorporated in this report:

#### **Site Context/ Background**

The R-5 zoned property within a Traditional Neighborhood Form District is located on the north side of Ransdell Avenue and is the third parcel from the intersection of Bassett Avenue. The 2 ½ story frame residence was constructed in the early twentieth century in a tradition style with a eclectic elements. The home features a prominent front porch and two projecting gable dormers on the front slope of the side-gable roof.

#### **Conclusions**

The project does not meet the Cherokee Triangle design guidelines for **Site**. The proposed retaining wall structure would be installed along the front property line adjacent to the public sidewalk. Staff finds that the proposal does not meet guideline **ST1** as a retaining wall does not fit within the overall context of this structure as it relates to the site or to the block face. This side of Ransdell Ave. does not have any immediately adjacent retaining walls other than small landscaping elements that are not the subject of this review process. Additionally, the retaining wall would not meet guidelines **ST8** as the addition of a retaining wall would alter the front yard topography by creating a raised yard or the perception of one at the pedestrian level. However, a single layer of bricks could be deemed as an acceptable form of landscaping and would not be the subject of review. Staff also finds that the proposal would only partially meet guidelines **ST3** and **ST10**. Brick retaining wall structures exist within the Cherokee Triangle and on the immediately adjacent Bassett Avenue; however, the walls either pre-exist the preservation district or occur at steeper changes in grades. The most common earth retaining measures are low, concrete or stone curbs and are more common at more significant changes in grade. Lastly, the proposal would be used to retain earth at a small change in grade; however, this portion of this block face of Ransdell Avenue has less drastic topographical features than the opposite side of Ransdell Avenue. As the road continues to the northeast, the topographical changes are far more significant.

#### **DECISION**

On the basis of the information furnished by the applicant, staff recommends that the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness be **DENIED**.



Anthony Schneider  
Historic Preservation Specialist

4/17/19  
Date

#### **Attached Documents / Information**

1. Staff Guideline Checklist



# SITE

## Design Guideline Checklist

- + Meets Guidelines
- Does Not Meet Guidelines
- +/- Meets Guidelines with Conditions as Noted
- NA Not Applicable
- NSI Not Sufficient Information

	Guideline	Finding	Comment
<b>ST1</b>	Consider the relationships that exist between the site and structure when making exterior alterations. Changes to one will affect the other. A primary goal should be to maintain a complementary relationship.	-	A retaining wall does not fit within the overall context of this structure as it relates to the site or to the block face. This side of Ransdell Ave. does not have any immediately adjacent retaining walls other than small landscaping elements that are not the subject of this review process.
<b>ST2</b>	Retain established property line patterns and street and alley widths. Any replatting should be consistent with original development patterns.	NA	
<b>ST3</b>	Use paving materials that are compatible with adjacent sites and architectural character.	+/-	Brick retaining wall structures exist within the Cherokee Triangle; however, the walls pre-existed the preservation district or occur at steeper changes in grades. The most common earth retaining measures are low, concrete or stone curbs and are more common at more significant changes in grade.
<b>ST4</b>	Restore and reuse historic paving materials for streets and sidewalks such as brick and hexagonal pavers and limestone curbing. Maintain original curbing whenever possible. The historic relationship between the road surface and edging should be preserved. Any replacement should use historic materials. If replacement with original materials is not technically or economically feasible, a substitute material may be used if it duplicates the color, texture, and visual appearance of the original.	NA	
<b>ST5</b>	Maintain brick, stone, or poured concrete steps wherever present. If replacement is required, original materials should be used. New construction should incorporate steps on blocks where they are a character-defining feature.	NA	
<b>ST6</b>	Do not harm historic resources through road widening or underground utility repair.	NA	
<b>ST7</b>	Locate driveways, parking areas, and loading docks to the side and rear of properties. Access from alleys is preferred.	NA	
<b>ST8</b>	Maintain original front yard topography, including grades, slopes, elevations, and earthen berms where present. New construction should match the grade of adjacent properties. Do not recontour front-yard berms into stepped terraces, using railroad ties, landscape timbers, or any other historically-inappropriate material for retaining walls.	-	The addition of a retaining wall would alter the front yard topography by creating a raised yard or the perception of one at the street level.  A single layer of bricks could be deemed as an acceptable form of landscaping and would not be the subject of review.

<b>ST9</b>	Do not carry out excavations or regrading within or adjacent to a historic building, which could cause the foundation to shift or destroy significant archeological resources.	NA	
<b>ST10</b>	Do not install masonry walls in street-visible locations unless they are used to retain earth at changes in grade, screen service areas, or unless a historic precedent exists.	+/-	The proposed wall would be used to retain a small change in grade and could be used to retain earth.  Precedent for a wall along this block face of Ransdell Avenue does not exist in the immediate vicinity.
<b>ST11</b>	Use materials that match existing sections of historic fencing in material, height, and detail when carrying out limited replacement projects. If an exact match cannot be made, a simplified design is appropriate.	NA	
<b>ST12</b>	Use materials that match the existing character of the original when replacing retaining walls or curbing. If an exact match cannot be made, a simplified design is appropriate.	NSI	Based on the information provided to staff, a historic wall does not appear to exist.
<b>ST13</b>	Install only historically-compatible iron fencing under 2'-5" in height where there is demonstrable historic precedent.	NA	
<b>ST14</b>	Do not install front-yard fencing where there is no historic precedent.	NA	
<b>ST15</b>	Install any rear- or side-yard privacy fencing so that it is set back from the side wall at least two feet and presents the finished side out. Any privacy fencing should be less than seven feet in height. Contact the Department of Inspections, Permits, and Licenses regarding additional restrictions on fencing at corner properties.	NA	
<b>ST16</b>	Do not install chain-link, split-rail, or woven-wood fencing, or concrete block walls in areas that are visible from a public way. Opaque fencing, such as painted or stained pressure-treated wood, may be permitted with appropriate design.	NA	
<b>ST17</b>	Use understated fixtures when installing any type of exterior lighting. Fixture attachment should be done so as not to damage historic fabric. Fixtures should not become a visual focal point.	NA	
<b>ST18</b>	Do not light parking areas or architectural features in a harsh manner. Generally, an average illumination level of 1.5 to 2.0 foot-candles will be sufficient. Light should be directed down and away from neighboring properties.	NA	
<b>ST19</b>	Parking lots of a certain size should have a portion of the parking area dedicated to plantings that will soften the expanse of paving. See the Jefferson County Development Code - Requirements for Landscaping and Land Use Buffers for specific requirements.	NA	
<b>ST20</b>	Use high-pressure sodium or metal halide lights to create a soft illumination where site or streetscape lighting is desired.	NA	
<b>ST21</b>	Position fixtures, such as air conditioning units, satellite dishes, greenhouse additions, and overhead wiring, on secondary elevations where they do not detract from the character of the site. Try to minimize noise levels to adjacent properties.	NA	
<b>ST22</b>	Preserve large trees whenever possible and enhance established street tree patterns by planting additional trees along public rights-of-way. Consult the city arborist to determine what tree species are suitable for placement near overhead wires. Select and place street trees so that the plantings will not obscure historic storefronts once mature. Removal of trees within or immediately adjacent to a public right-of-way or within public open spaces requires review unless directed by the city arborist for emergency or public safety reasons.	NA	
<b>ST23</b>	Ensure that all proposed cellular towers and associated fixtures will be properly screened from view.	NA	
<b>ST24</b>	Install utility lines underground whenever possible.	NA	