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## Historic Landmarks and Preservation Districts Commission

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### Report to the Committee

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To: Clifton Architectural Review Committee  
Thru: Cynthia Elmore, Historic Preservation Officer *CE*  
From: Anthony Schneider, Historic Preservation Specialist  
Date: July 2, 2019

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**Case No:** 19COA1165  
**Classification:** Committee Review

#### GENERAL INFORMATION

**Property Address:** 2120 Sycamore Avenue

**Applicant:** Cassandra Culin  
185 N. Bellaire Avenue  
Louisville, KY 40206  
502-594-4405  
[Kyspring@bellsouth.net](mailto:Kyspring@bellsouth.net)

**Owner:** Same as Applicant

**Estimated Project Cost:** \$50,000.00

**Description of proposed exterior alteration:**

The applicant is seeking approval to construct a new 850sf addition on the rear and side façade of the home. The new addition will have a more modern design with two projecting gables and will be clad in brick masonry to match that of the existing structure.

**Communications with Applicant, Completion of Application**

The application was received on May 28, 2019 and was considered complete and requiring committee review on June 19, 2019. Staff discussed the application with the applicant via email and phone prior to submittal. Staff also met with the applicant on the date of submission and described the committee process to her.

This case is scheduled to be heard by the Clifton Architectural Review Committee on Wednesday July 10, 2019 at 5:30p.m. in Conference Room 101 of the Metro Development Center, 444 S 5<sup>th</sup> Street.

## FINDINGS

### Guidelines

The following design review guidelines, approved for the Clifton Preservation District, are applicable to the proposed exterior alterations: **Addition** and **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-5B zoned property within the Traditional Neighborhood Form District is located mid-block on the south side of Sycamore Avenue between Vernon Avenue and N Clifton Avenue. This home is a mid-century tradition constructed circa 1955 with a brick veneer and a side gable roof. At the time of district designation, this structure is shown as non-contributing; however, the structure could be considered potentially contributing based on age.

### Conclusions

The project generally meets the Clifton design guidelines for **Addition** and **Site**. The proposed addition of 850sf to the western side and southern rear facades exceeds more than 50% of the original structure's square-footage which would not fully meet Design Guideline **A5** thus requiring a committee review. The addition is in keeping with the period of construction of the home. The design is wholly modern with steep rooves and projecting forms with large amounts of glass and brick veneers. The majority of the design is not visible from Sycamore Avenue with the exception of the addition to the western side that extends and existing architectural projection. The street-facing portions will also feature modern designs with square windows arranged vertically to emphasize the verticality. The applicant has agreed, after staff suggestion, to salvage the existing brick veneer to be removed and reuse it on portions of the new addition. The window openings will be trimmed in a material that mimics that of the existing window trim on the home. Lastly, the applicant is proposing the use of ridge vents on the roof. Staff recommends the use of a "turtle-vent" but given the age of the home and the modern design, the ridge vents could be deemed appropriate.

The setback of the house on the lot, 50+ feet from right-of-way, and the size of the addition will require a discretionary variance from the Board of Zoning Adjustment for Private Yard Area. The addition would effectively remove a large portion of the functional private yard; however, staff finds that the nature of the site and design of the addition compliment the existing landscape and wooded features on the lot.

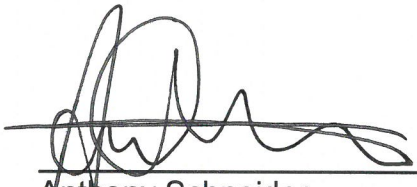
### Recommendation

On the basis of the information furnished by the applicant, staff recommends that the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness be **approved with the following conditions**:

1. The applicant shall obtain all necessary building permits.



2. Should the request for a variance be denied, the applicant shall return to the ARC for review and approval of design changes.
3. Excavations, trenching or re-grading adjacent to a building or site shall be performed cautiously so as not to cause the foundation to shift or destroy significant archeological resources. Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve architectural resources affected by, or adjacent to, any project.
4. Auxiliary fixtures, such as air conditioning units, satellite dishes, rain barrels, greenhouse additions, and overhead wiring, shall be located on secondary elevations (side or rear) so they do not detract from the street-address façade and the character of the site.
5. If the design changes, the applicant shall contact staff for review and approval.



Anthony Schneider  
Historic Preservation Specialist

July 3, 2019  
Date

#### Attached Documents / Information

1. Staff Guideline Checklist

#### Addition

Clifton Design Guideline Checklist

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

	Guideline	Finding	Comment
A1	The design of any new addition or expansion should be compatible and in proportion with the mass and scale of the historic building, adjacent structures, and the district.	+	
A2	New additions should be designed in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new. Do not design additions to appear older than the original building.	+	
A3	Additions should be designed so there are subtle distinguishing characteristics between the historic portion and the new alteration. This may include simplifying details, changing materials, or slightly altering proportion. Do not duplicate the exact form, material, style, and detailing of the historic building in the new addition.	+	
A4	Additions should be attached to side or rear elevations (façades) and should be set back from the street front façade, and should not damage or obscure character-defining features.	+	Addition is on the rear and west, side facades.
A5	The design of the new addition should be subordinate to the original building. Rear and side additions should not exceed half of the original building's total floor area or building footprint.	+/-	The addition is 850sf and the original structure is 1275sf. The Addition exceeds by approximately 213sf.

	Guideline	Finding	Comment
<b>A6</b>	The original street front orientation of a building should not be altered when constructing a new addition. An addition should not turn a secondary façade into primary façade. (The side or the rear of the house should not become the front of the house.)	+	
<b>A7</b>	The new addition should be designed so the first-floor height is equal to or slightly lower than the original building. The floor-to-floor heights should be equal to or up to 10 percent less than the original building. In no case should the floor heights exceed those of the original building.	+	Addition will be at grade.
<b>A8</b>	The new addition should be designed with the intent to maintain the same relationship of solids (wall surfaces) to voids (window and door openings) as the historic portion. The size and placement of doors and windows should be proportional to the number, size, and shape of the new wall elevation as compared to the mass and scale of the historic building. See Door and Entrance and Window guidelines for more details.	+	
<b>A9</b>	Full-floor additions on contributing residential structures (adding an additional full floor on top of a house) are not recommended unless the full-floor addition will be compatible with the existing streetscape and adjacent homes and structures and the impact on the character of the historic home is not totally transformed.	NA	
<b>A10</b>	Materials should be used that are the same as or subordinate to the primary material of the original building. Wood is subordinate to brick, and brick and stucco are subordinate to stone.	+	Applicant is using a mixture of original and new brick to coordinate with the existing portions.
<b>A11</b>	The original roof pitch, style, shape, and volume should be respected when designing an addition. The roof on the addition should complement the existing roof forms, not overwhelm them.	+	The existing ridgeline is not being altered.
<b>A12</b>	On commercial or institutional structures, the construction of new additions or additional stories should be as inconspicuous as possible when viewed from the street and should not damage or destroy character-defining features. New additions or additional stories should be set back from the historic wall plane.	NA	
<b>A13</b>	New additions to structures may incorporate contemporary, energy efficient, and sustainable design and materials. However, do not imitate an historic style or period of architecture in new additions, especially for contemporary uses such as drive-in windows or garages.	+	
<b>A14</b>	Sunrooms or screened porches that are compatible with the home may be constructed as a rear or side addition and built with a similar level of quality construction and design.	NA	
<b>A15</b>	Decks may be constructed on the rear or an inconspicuous side of the building. Do not construct a deck on the front façade. Decks should be of wood construction and be either painted or stained.	NA	
<b>A16</b>	The rear deck design should not extend beyond the side walls of the house and should not be visible from the front façade or street.	NA	
<b>A17</b>	When adding new exterior steps, stairways, fire escapes, or elevator shafts, do not radically change or damage a building's character-defining features. The new addition's construction scale and materials should be compatible with the materials and scale of the historic structure.	NA	
<b>A18</b>	Exterior fire escape steps should be installed only on the side or rear façade of the building. Respect the locations of original doors and windows and do not cause undue damage to historic materials. The fire escape should be as inconspicuous as possible when viewed from the street.	NA	



	Guideline	Finding	Comment
<b>A19</b>	Exterior fire escape steps constructed of wood should be painted or stained, oriented to the yard, and kept to a minimum functional size.	NA	

## Site

### Clifton Design Guideline Checklist

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

	Guideline	Finding	Comment
<b>ST1</b>	Paving materials (concrete, brick, paver stones, cobblestones, asphalt, gravel, stone, permeable or pervious materials) that are compatible with adjacent sites and architectural character should be used for private sidewalks, drives, and roadways.	NA	
<b>ST2</b>	Historic paving materials for streets, alleys, sidewalks, and curbing (brick, hexagonal pavers, cobblestones, limestone, granite, or natural stone) should be protected, maintained, restored, and reused. The historic relationship between the road surface and edging should be preserved. Replacement with historic materials is encouraged. 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. See Masonry M13 guideline for cement mortar mix recipe.	NA	
<b>ST3</b>	Steps on private property made of brick, stone, or poured concrete should be maintained wherever present. If replacement is required, original materials should be used. New construction should incorporate steps where they are a character-defining feature.	NSI	
<b>ST4</b>	Paving companies and utility contractors shall not harm historic resources during road or underground utility repair projects.	NA	
<b>ST5</b>	Driveways, parking areas, and loading docks should be constructed or located to the side and rear of properties. Alley access is preferred.	NA	
<b>ST6</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 re-contour front yard berms into stepped terraces. Do not use railroad ties, landscape timbers, or any other historically inappropriate material for retaining walls.	NA	
<b>ST7</b>	Excavations, trenching or re-grading adjacent to a building or site should be performed cautiously so as not to cause the foundation to shift or destroy significant archeological resources. Every reasonable effort shall be made to protect and preserve architectural resources affected by, or adjacent to, any project.	NSI	See Conditions.
<b>ST8</b>	Masonry walls in street-visible locations should not be installed unless they are used to retain earth at changes in grade, screen service areas, or unless an historic precedent exists.	NA	
<b>ST9</b>	Retaining wall and curbing should match the existing character of the original materials when carrying out limited	NA	

	Guideline	Finding	Comment
	replacement projects. If an exact match cannot be made, a simplified design is appropriate.		
<b>ST10</b>	Fencing should match existing sections of fencing in material, height, design, and detail when carrying out limited replacement projects. If an exact match cannot be made, a simplified design is appropriate.	NA	
<b>ST11</b>	Iron fencing should be installed, historically compatible, and of a similar height where there is a demonstrable historic precedent.	NA	
<b>ST12</b>	Front yard fencing should not be installed where there is no historic precedent.	NA	
<b>ST13</b>	Rear yard or side yard privacy fencing should be installed with the finished side out and a side wall setback from the front of the house of at least two feet. Privacy fencing should be less than seven feet in height. Refer to the Land Development Code or contact the Department of Codes and Regulations regarding additional restrictions on fencing at corner properties.	NA	
<b>ST14</b>	Chain-link fencing painted black or dark color may be installed in residential front yards or along commercial corridors at the street where there is an historic precedent. Split-rail, woven-wood fencing, opaque fencing, painted or stained pressure-treated wood fencing, or recycled or reclaimed materials may be permitted with appropriate design. Synthetic or composite fencing that is durable may be considered.	NA	
<b>ST15</b>	Exterior lighting fixtures should not be falsely historical. The fixture should be attached to the exterior in a way as to not damage historic fabric.	NSI	
<b>ST16</b>	Exterior lighting for parking areas, architectural features, or other site areas should be directed down and away from neighboring properties. Energy-efficient lights should be used to create a soft illumination and to minimize the impact to adjacent properties. Reference the Land Development Code for illumination restrictions.	NA	
<b>ST17</b>	Parking lot design requires a portion of the parking area to be landscaped or buffered from adjoining properties. Reference the Land Development Code for specifics on parking lot design, maneuvering, landscaping, and buffering requirements.	NA	
<b>ST18</b>	Auxiliary fixtures, such as air conditioning units, satellite dishes, rain barrels, greenhouse additions, and overhead wiring, should be located on secondary elevations (side or rear) so they do not detract from the street-address façade and the character of the site.	NSI	See Conditions.
<b>ST19</b>	Trees in front yards should be preserved. Established street tree patterns should be enhanced by planting additional trees along the public rights-of-way in the grass area between the street and sidewalk. Consult the city arborist or Frankfort Avenue Street Tree Master Plan to determine tree species that are suitable for placement near overhead wires. Removal of trees within or immediately adjacent to a public right-of-way or within public open spaces requires review by Landmarks staff unless directed by the city arborist for emergency or public safety concerns.	NSI	
<b>ST20</b>	Cellular towers and associated fixtures should be strategically located to minimize the impact on historic view shed(s), screened from public view, and should not damage historic elements when attached to structures.	NA	
<b>ST21</b>	Utility lines should be installed underground whenever possible.	NA	
<b>ST22</b>	The concrete mixture should match the existing or historic concrete mixture when repairing or replacing sidewalks or installing new sidewalks in the public right-of-way. Contact	NA	

	Guideline	Finding	Comment
	the Landmarks staff for the appropriate mixture and specifications.		