



**Historic District Commission**  
**Regular Agenda – Certificate of Appropriateness**  
**517 E. Franklin Street (Project #20-059)**

**Summary Report**

TOWN OF CHAPEL HILL PLANNING DEPARTMENT  
 Anya Grahn, Senior Planner  
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<b>Applicant</b> Chester and Courtney Yarbrough, Property Owners	<b>Filing Date</b> 7/13/2020	<b>Meeting Date(s)</b> 8/11/2020	<b>Historic District</b> Franklin-Rosemary
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**Project Description**

The applicant proposes to rehab the existing garage, build an accessory structure in the backyard, install a new railing on the second floor balcony, and add stone walls to the front yard.

**Proposed Findings of Fact**

1. The one-car garage was built in c.1920 and is listed as contributing on the National Register of Historic Places. The applicant proposes to install a new carriage-style wood garage door. A new paneled door will replace the existing side door. The applicant also proposes to repair the (3) existing wood windows on the garage.
2. The existing garage requires structural stabilization, and it will be reinforced from the interior, as necessary. A new asphalt shingle roof will be installed, and the applicant will repair existing shingles as needed. No changes to the dimensions of the garage structure are proposed.
3. New exterior light fixtures, matching those on the house, will also be installed on the garage.
4. The applicant proposes to construct a 548 sq. ft. accessory building. The applicant intends to use materials like those found on the house, including Hardi Lap siding and divided light fiberglass windows and doors. The building will be visually minimized from Franklin Street by a 147-foot setback, the main house and a garage, as well as landscaping. From Boundary Street, the view of the accessory structure will be diminished by an existing fence.
5. The applicant has provided historic photographs showing that the house had a railing on the second-floor balcony at one time. This railing was removed as part of the 2016 renovation. The applicant proposes to install a new 36-inch tall wood railing that will meet safety standards and reflect the design of the porch railing below. The decking on the balcony will be composite wood.
6. The applicant also intends to construct a new 24-inch tall fieldstone wall, like those found on neighboring properties. The wall will run the length of the property, and the applicant proposes new plantings between the wall and the sidewalk.

**Applicable Design Guidelines**

*Walls & Fences (page 17):*

7. Introduce compatible new walls and fences, as needed, in ways that do not compromise the historic character of the site or district. Site new fences and walls in configurations and locations that are compatible with the character of the building, site, and district.
8. Construct new walls and fences in traditional materials and designs that are compatible in configuration, height, material, scale, and details with the character of the building, site, and district.

*Garages & Accessory Structures (page 21):*

1. Retain and preserve garages and accessory structures that are important in defining the overall historic character of sites within the historic districts.
2. Retain and preserve the features, overall form, materials, windows, doors, details, and finishes of historic garages and accessory structures.
3. Protect and maintain the details, features, and materials of historic garages and accessory structures through appropriate methods.

4. Repair deteriorated or damaged historic garages and accessory structures through recognized preservation methods.
5. Replace in kind all or parts of historic garages and accessory structures that are too deteriorated to repair, matching the original in material, design, dimension, detail, texture, and finish.
7. Introduce compatible new garages and accessory structures, as needed, in ways that do not compromise the historic character of the site or district. Site new garages or accessory structures in traditional locations that are compatible with the character of the building and site. Design them to be compatible with the main house in material, form, scale, and detail. Maintain the traditional height, proportion, and orientation of garages and accessory structures in the district.
8. Locate new utilitarian storage buildings in rear or side yard locations that are visually screened from the street.
9. It is not appropriate to introduce features or details to a garage or accessory structure in an attempt to create a false historical appearance.

*Exterior Lighting (page 23):*

5. Introduce new exterior lighting fixtures with care so that the overall historic character of the building, site, and district is not compromised or diminished. Select and site new lighting fixtures so their location, orientation, height, brightness, scale, and design are compatible with the historic district and its historic scale.
8. It is not appropriate to introduce period lighting fixtures in an attempt to create a false historical appearance.

*Roofs (page 37):*

5. Replace in kind roof features and surfaces that are too deteriorated to repair, matching the original in material, design, dimension, pattern, detail, texture, and color. Consider a compatible substitute material only if replacement in kind is not technically feasible.
7. Introduce new gutters and downspouts, as needed, with care so that no architectural features are damaged or lost. Select gutters and downspouts that are painted or coated with a factory finish in a color that is appropriate to the building (unless they are copper). Replace half-round gutters and cylindrical downspouts in kind.

*Windows & Doors (page 41):*

4. Repair deteriorated or damaged exterior windows and doors through recognized preservation methods.
5. Replace in kind exterior windows and doors that are too deteriorated to repair, matching the original in material, design, dimension, configuration, detail, and texture. Consider a compatible substitute material only if replacement in kind is not technically feasible.

*Porches, Entrances, & Balconies (page 43):*

6. If a porch, entrance, or balcony is missing either replace it to match the original feature, based on physical and documentary evidence, or replace it with a new feature that is compatible in material, design, size, and scale with the building.
7. It is not appropriate to eliminate or introduce porches, entrances, and balconies on character-defining exterior walls.
10. It is not appropriate to introduce exterior porch, entrance, or balcony features or details, to a historic property in an attempt to create a false historical appearance.

**Congruity Findings**

Based on the Findings of Facts and the relevant Design Guidelines referenced above, the HDC proposes congruity findings for the following Criteria as specified per LUMO Section 3.6.2(e):

Criterion A: The height of the building in relation to the average height of the nearest adjacent and opposite buildings is ***congruous/incongruous*** with those found on the existing house as well as historic houses within the historic district.

Criterion B: The setback and placement on the lot of the accessory building in relation to the average setback and placement of the nearest adjacent and opposite buildings is ***congruous/incongruous*** with the existing house as well as historic houses within the historic district.

Criterion C: Exterior construction materials, including texture and pattern, are ***congruous/incongruous*** with those found on the existing house as well as historic houses within the historic district.

Criterion D: Architectural detailing, such as lintels, cornices, brick bond, and foundation materials are ***congruous/incongruous*** with those found on the existing house as well as those found on historic houses within the historic district.

Criterion E: Roof shapes, forms, and materials are ***congruous/incongruous*** with those found on the existing house as well as those found on historic houses within the historic district.

Criterion F: Proportion, shape, positioning and location, pattern, and size of any elements of fenestration are ***congruous/incongruous*** with those found on the existing house as well as those found on historic houses within the historic district.

Criterion G: General form and proportions of buildings and structures are ***congruous/incongruous*** with those found on the existing house as well as those found on historic houses within the historic district.

Criterion H: Appurtenant fixtures and other features such as lighting are ***congruous/incongruous*** with those found on the existing house as well as those found on historic houses within the historic district.

Criterion I: Methods used to ensure structural conditions and soundness of the garage are ***congruous/incongruous*** with those found on the existing house as well as those found on historic houses within the historic district.

Criterion J: Architectural scale of proposed new features are ***congruous/incongruous*** with those found on the existing house as well as those found on historic houses within the historic district.

#### **Condition of Approval**

1. The certificate of appropriateness shall be valid for three hundred sixty-five (365) calendar days from date of issuance. If the authorized work has not commenced within that period, has not been extended by the commission, or has been discontinued for more than three hundred sixty-five (365) calendar days from the date of issuance, such certificate of appropriateness shall expire and the applicant shall be required to reapply and obtain a new certificate of appropriateness before commencing further work.

#### **Decision**

Based on the foregoing findings of fact and conclusions of law, the Historic District Commission ***approves/denies*** the Certificate of Appropriateness as referenced above on the basis that it ***would/would not be incongruous*** with the special character of the district.