

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chapel Hill Historic District Commission

FROM: Colleen Willger, Planning Director
Anya Grahn, Principal Planner
Charnika Harrell, Planner I

SUBJECT: 304 S. Columbia Street: Certificate of Appropriateness (COA)
(PIN 9788-45-1314, HDC-22-21)

FILING DATE: June 13, 2022

DATE: July 12, 2022

COA SUMMARY

The applicant, Sam Reynolds, on behalf of the Phi Delta Theta Fraternity, requests a COA for:

- Removing the existing plastic storage shed and replacing it with a new metal storage shed measuring 9 feet by 8 feet and 5 feet 6 inches in height. The new shed will be located on the northwest corner of the house, adjacent to the parking lot.
- Installing a memorial stone adjacent to the basketball court.
- Replacing the existing gravel area on the southwest corner of the parking lot with asphalt and striping it for two new parking spaces.
- Replacing the gravel picnic area on the southeast corner of the parking lot with red brick, matching the adjacent walkway.
- Adding white basketball dimension markings to the asphalt beneath the basketball hoop and installing a solar LED light pole near the hoop.
- Replacing the dirt walkway on the north side of the building with concrete, adding steps at grade to improve safety and accessibility.
- Extending the lower brick tread on the front porch and adding an additional red brick tread for safety and accessibility.
- Repairing a small section of brick wall at the walkway entrance on South Columbia Street.
- Removing a canvas canopy on the west side of the building.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The subject lot is zoned Office/Institutional-3 (OI-3) and is located in the Cameron-McCauley Historic District.

BACKGROUND

June 13, 2022	The applicant submits a request COA for the scope of work outlined above.
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DISCUSSION

The applicant is requesting a COA to **allow**:

- Removing the existing plastic storage shed and replacing it with a new metal storage shed measuring 9 feet by 8 feet and 5 feet 6 inches in height. The new shed will be located on the northwest corner of the house, adjacent to the parking lot.
- Installing a memorial stone adjacent to the basketball court.
- Replacing the existing gravel area on the southwest corner of the parking lot with asphalt and striping it for two new parking spaces.
- Replacing the gravel picnic area on the southeast corner of the parking lot with red brick, matching the adjacent walkway.
- Adding white basketball dimension markings to the asphalt beneath the basketball hoop and installing a solar LED light pole near the hoop.
- Replacing the dirt walkway on the north side of the building with concrete, adding steps at grade to improve safety and accessibility.
- Extending the lower brick tread on the front porch and adding an additional red brick tread for safety and accessibility.
- Repairing a small section of brick wall at the walkway entrance on South Columbia Street.
- Removing a canvas canopy on the west side of the building.

The site design is shown in the application materials (Attachment 4).

If the COA is granted for the exterior changes, the applicants would then be required to obtain any necessary zoning compliance and building permits from the Town.

NOTE

The [*Chapel Hill Historic Districts Design Principles and Standards*](#)¹ are incorporated into the record by reference.

ATTACHMENTS

1. Attachment 1 – Written Decision (approving the COA)
2. History
3. [*Special Character Essay – Cameron-McCauley Historic District \(pages 31-35\)*](#)²
4. Application Materials

¹https://townhall.townofchapelhill.org/large_docs/historic_district/CH%20HD%20Design%20Principles%20and%20Standards.pdf

²https://townhall.townofchapelhill.org/large_docs/historic_district/CH%20HD%20Design%20Principles%20and%20Standards.pdf

ATTACHMENT 1

WRITTEN DECISION - APPROVING CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

WRITTEN DECISION APPROVING AN APPLICATION FOR CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS FOR THE PROPERTY LOCATED AT 304 SOUTH COLUMBIA STREET (PIN 9788-45-1314, PROJECT # HDC-22-21)

WHEREAS, having reviewed the applicant's argument and various documents and other evidence submitted at the hearing on this matter, and having heard public comment on the application, the Historic District Commission (HDC) finds as facts those facts summarized by the Chair at the conclusion of the Commission's hearing of this matter and hereby incorporates them by reference as Commission Findings of Fact; and finds that such facts are supported by competent, material, and substantial evidence presented to the Commission; and

BE IT RESOLVED by the Historic District Commission of the Town of Chapel Hill that, having considered the requested Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) at 304 South Columbia Street, requested by Sam Reynolds, on behalf of Phi Delta Theta Fraternity, to allow:

- Removing the existing plastic storage shed and replacing it with a new metal storage shed measuring 9 feet by 8 feet and 5 feet 6 inches in height. The new shed will be located on the northwest corner of the house, adjacent to the parking lot.
- Installing a memorial stone adjacent to the basketball court.
- Replacing the existing gravel area on the southwest corner of the parking lot with asphalt and striping it for two new parking spaces.
- Replacing the gravel picnic area on the southeast corner of the parking lot with red brick, matching the adjacent walkway.
- Adding white basketball dimension markings to the asphalt beneath the basketball hoop and installing a solar LED light pole near the hoop.
- Replacing the dirt walkway on the north side of the building with concrete, adding steps at grade to improve safety and accessibility.
- Extending the lower brick tread on the front porch and adding an additional red brick tread for safety and accessibility.
- Repairing a small section of brick wall at the walkway entrance on South Columbia Street.
- Removing a canvas canopy on the west side of the building.

In accord with the improvements on the attached site plan, and identified as Orange County Property Identifier Number 9788-45-1314, the Board makes the following finding:

1. The requested Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) is not incongruous with the special character of the Franklin-Rosemary Historic District.

The following Design Standards apply to the Application:

1.1 Site Features: Standards (page 42):

- 1.1.1. Retain and preserve site features that are important in defining the overall historic character of sites and streetscapes within each historic district. These include, but are not limited to terraces, trellises, and gazebos.
- 1.1.2. Retain and preserve historic relationships between district buildings, structures, or streetscapes and their site features, including site structures, retaining walls, fences, foundations, driveways, and walkways.
- 1.1.3. Protect and maintain constructed site features through a program of regular maintenance and repair using accepted preservation methods.
- 1.1.4. Repair deteriorated or damaged constructed site features, such as terraces, gazebos, trellises, fences, and walls through appropriate methods outlined in the Standards for Masonry, Wood, Architectural Metals, and Fences & Walls.
- 1.1.5. Replace deteriorated or missing constructed site features with new features that match the original in material, design, dimension, pattern, detail, texture, and color.
- 1.1.6. Maintain and protect site features from damage during or as a consequence of site work or new construction.
- 1.1.7. Introduce new site features to be compatible in scale, design, and materials with the overall historic character of the site and district. Utilize traditional materials in the construction of benches, terraces, gazebos, trellises, fences, and walls.

1.3 Walls & Fences: Standards (pages 48-49):

- 1.3.3. Repair deteriorated or damaged walls and fences through recognized preservation methods of patching, splicing, consolidating, and reinforcing. When possible, salvage original materials from a less prominent location to patch more prominent parts of the wall or fence.
- 1.3.4. Replace in kind any part of a wall or fence that is too deteriorated to repair, taking care to replace only the deteriorated portion rather than the entire feature. Replacement features should match the original in material, design, dimension, configuration, detail, texture, and pattern.
- 1.3.6. Site new walls and fences in configurations and locations that are compatible with the character of the building, site, and district and consistent with the location and height of other walls and fences in the district.
- 1.3.7. Construct new walls using traditional materials and designs that are compatible in configuration, height, material, scale, and detail with the character of the building, site, and district.
 - a. Walls in front and side yards should generally not exceed 30" and should be constructed of red brick or fieldstone.
 - b. Walls constructed of cut stone, bare concrete block, or with thin stone veneers applied to concrete or other structural block are not appropriate in locations visible from the street.

1.4 Walkways, Driveways, & Off-street Parking: Standards (Pages 52-53):

- 1.4.1. Retain and preserve the features, materials, patterns, dimensions, details, and configurations of walkways, driveways, and off-street parking areas that are important in defining the overall historic character of sites within the historic districts.

1.4.2. Protect and maintain the details, features, materials, and surfaces of character-defining walkways, driveways, and off-street parking areas through a program of regular maintenance and repair using accepted preservation methods.

1.4.3. Repair deteriorated or damaged historic walkways, driveways, and off-street parking areas through recognized preservation methods. Repairs may include selective in-kind replacement of missing or deteriorated portions of a feature, matching the original in material, design, dimension, configuration, detail, texture, and pattern.

1.4.5. Design new walkways, driveways, and off-street parking to conform with the spacing, width, configuration, and materials of character-defining walkways, driveways, and off-street parking areas in the district.

1.4.6. Site new walkways, driveways, and off-street parking areas in locations that are compatible with the character of the building, site, and district—typically to the side and rear of existing buildings—and locate them so the topography of the site and mature trees and other significant site features are not significantly altered, damaged, or lost.

- a. In residential areas, do not locate off-street parking areas in front yards. Whenever possible, driveways should lead to parking areas to the side or rear of the primary building on the site.
- b. In commercial and institutional areas, parking should be located at the side or rear of the property whenever possible.

1.4.7. Do not locate driveways or parking areas in locations where the paving will abut the principal building. A planting strip should be retained between historic residential structures and any new paving in order to minimize damage to the foundation.

1.4.8. Do not locate new off-street parking on a site where the paved area will substantially alter the proportion of the site that is paved versus landscaped.

1.4.9. Construct new walkways in traditional materials and designs that are compatible in configuration, material, scale, and detail with the character of the building, site, and district.

- a. These include red brick, flagstone, concrete, and Chapel Hill grit.
- b. Do not use asphalt or contemporary materials that mimic other materials for sidewalks within the historic districts.

1.6 Exterior Lighting: Standards (page 58):

1.6.5. 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 human scale. Fixtures should emit a white or warm spectrum light; fluorescent, neon, blinking, or colored lighting is not appropriate in the historic districts.

1.6.6. Introduce low-level lighting in residential areas as needed to ensure safety and security. Minimize their impact on the overall historic character of the site by selecting discreet fixtures—such as footlights, recessed lights, directional lights, and lights on pedestrian-scaled posts—and installing them in unobtrusive locations.

1.6.7. Introduce lighting on commercial buildings as necessary for pedestrian safety or to illuminate signage. Minimize the impact of lighting and maintain the overall historic character of

the site by selecting discreet fixtures—such as recessed lights, directional lights, and lights on pedestrian-scaled posts—and installing them in unobtrusive locations.

1.6.8. Control the direction and range of new lighting so it does not invade adjacent properties. Locate low-level or directional site lighting and motion detectors with care to ensure that light does not invade adjacent properties. Do not introduce bright security lights, floodlights, continuous lighting, or uplighting that overilluminates the facades or front yards of houses.

4.7 Garages, Carports & Accessory Structures: Standards (page 128):

4.7.1. Introduce compatible new garages, carports, and accessory buildings, as needed, in ways that do not compromise the historic character of the site or district.

4.7.2. Site new garages, carports, and accessory buildings in traditional locations that are compatible with the character of the building and site, typically beyond the rear wall of the primary building on the site.

4.7.3. Site new garages, carports, and accessory buildings to be consistent with garages and accessory buildings in the immediate surroundings, both in orientation to and setback from the street as well as in spacing between and distance from other buildings, especially when the siting is important in defining the overall historic character of the district. Whenever possible, locate garages, carports, or accessory structures behind the primary structure, in a rear yard. Structures may be placed in side yards only when rear setbacks do not allow for enough space. New garages, carports, and accessory structures are not appropriate in front yards.

4.7.4. Design and site new garages, carports, and accessory buildings so they do not compromise the overall historic character of the site, including its topography, and significant site features.

4.7.5. Design new garages, carports, and accessory buildings so that their size, scale, and form do not visually overpower the primary building on this or adjacent sites. Design garages, carports, and accessory buildings to be compatible with, but secondary to, the primary building in size, scale, and building and roof form.

4.7.10. Locate new metal- or wood-framed storage buildings or carports in rear or side yard locations that are visually screened from the street.

- a. Smaller buildings and site improvements can serve as focal points for backyard landscapes but should be minimally detailed and able to be easily removed without creating permanent damage to the site.
- b. Prefabricated wood and metal buildings may be introduced if they are compatible in size, scale, form, height, proportion, materials, and detail with other accessory structures in the district. Do not site prefabricated sheds in locations that are visible from the street.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Commission hereby grants the application for a Certificate of Appropriateness, in accord with the plan listed above and the following conditions::

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.

Signed - Historic District Commission Chair, Sean Murphy

This, the 12th day of July, 2022.