
**HISTORIC PRESERVATION REVIEW BOARD
STAFF REPORT AND RECOMMENDATION**

Landmark/District:	Mount Pleasant Historic District	(x) Consent
Address:	3320 19th Street NW	
Meeting Date:	March 25, 2021	(x) Addition
Case Number:	21-216	(x) Permit

The applicant, Sean Shah, agent for property owner Golden Blue Investments LLC (with Arcon Design Build), requests the Board's review of a permit application to construct a two-story addition with decks to the rear of this two-story, 1906 rowhouse, as well as a two-story accessory structure at the alley.

Addition

The two-story, rear, screened porches would be demolished, to be replaced by a two-story-and-basement addition with a footprint of 16'4" x 19'8-1/2". Because of the falling slope, the basement level would be more than a full story out of the ground. Like the accessory structure, it is to be sided with fiber-cement lap siding. For the sake of scale, texture, and compatibility with the typical siding from the period of the house, its exposure should not exceed six inches.

The addition would extend slightly into the north side yard, which is not ideal, but would be inconspicuous even when sighted through the side yard.

A double rear deck at the first floor and basement would project ten feet, which is typical. There are no details for the railings and posts at the main floor and basement; they are presumably to be typical pressure-treated decks, although the lack of posts at the corners of the roof deck and first-floor deck may indicate steel railings.

The elevation of the under-deck sub-basement foundation area has not been detailed or specified, but it should be. It is probably parged concrete, like the base of the accessory building.

Demolition

Notes state that the interior demolition was previously approved. Indeed, a permit issued last month allows nonstructural demolition in the interior as well as the removal of the rear porches. It does not cover demolition of the roof or of the rear masonry wall, which are necessitated by the present plans (although the notes state that all exterior walls are to remain). The drawings do not indicate that the floor assemblies would be removed, which is as it should be; they indicate that only partitions are to be removed.

The proposed demolition is not objectionable, but the drawings leave unclear how much of the roof would be removed, and how, or if, the slope of the front portion of the roof meets the deck apparently sunk into it.

Roof deck

The roof deck is set in from each side of the house, which reduces its prominence, and it is accessed by a hatch/skylight. Again, what is not clear is exactly how the deck sits into the higher roof forward of it.

Alterations to the existing house

The only proposed alteration to the facade is window replacements. The window configuration is appropriate, but the product has not been specified and must be of a compatible material and profile.

The drawings propose a lot of alteration of openings on the north elevation (right-side elevation), including some basement openings that require window wells, leaving space for only a narrow walk to the rear of the property. This wall is perhaps only seven feet from the neighboring house, but it is still visible to the public. It would be better to retain more of the original windows, and double-ganged windows are not characteristic of this type of house, but the opening that really should be reconsidered is the first-floor double-ganged window opening. It would be among the most visible, and it is more characteristic of the windows on the contemporary addition than of a living room also lit by 1906 bay windows. It should be restudied as two punched openings.

The plans call for two living units, meaning additional utility meters which should be located on the interior of the house or in the side yard (two boxes *are* depicted on the north elevation), *not* in front.

Garage

A two-story accessory structure is proposed as a fiber-cement-sided gym over a parged CMU garage. It is to be set in a few feet from the alley as required by the zoning regulations.

With the exception of a few carriage houses, there are few two-story accessory buildings in Mount Pleasant. Because of the steep grade behind this row, however, the Board has supported such structures here in the past (at 3304, 3308 and 3310 19th), because they can be built into the grade and overshadow the downhill properties across the alley less than the hill itself and the houses upon it do. The slope of the structure's roof reduces its profile.

The garage's doors and windows need to be specified.

Recommendation

HPO recommends that the Board approve the project and delegate to staff further review, with the conditions that:

- 1. the house's floor framing be retained;*
- 2. the permit drawings indicate how the front portion of the roof relates to the deck;*
- 3. the window and door products be specified and compatible according to the window regulations and guidelines;*
- 4. the deck railings and exposed house foundation material be specified;*

5. *the siding used in the project not exceed six-inch exposure;*
6. *utility meters go inside or on the side of the house; and*
7. *the double-ganged first-floor windows be revised as single, punched window openings.*