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2662 Curtis St.

Porch modifications and exterior restoration
Landmark Preservation Commission design review submittal
3 May 2021
The proposed work at 2662 Curtis St. consists of the following:

1. Exterior preservation and restoration work to remove paint from existing brick walls and stone foundations, repair existing brick walls and stone foundations, install new roofing, restore miscellaneous exterior woodwork, and repaint.

2. Modifications to the existing front porch to resolve drainage issues, expand the upper floor walk-out, and replace missing life-safety components.
2662 Curtis St. is a 2-story Queen Anne home built in 1885. It is in the Curtis Park B historic district and is noted in the 1975 National Register application for Curtis Park. While it was originally constructed as a house, it is currently a commercial property with a grandfathered office use. The current owner has carried out multiple interior restoration projects since purchasing the house in 1996 but this will be the first major exterior restoration during his ownership.

According to the National Register application, the front porch had been altered by 1975. Our research has not succeeded in locating further information on the original design or the alterations.

In the 1980s, a previous owner had a new front porch built from a design by architect Kathy Hoeft. This is the current front porch. This information has been verified by direct contact with the previous owner and by a 1984 Rocky Mountain News article (attached in the Supplemental Information section).

The Sanborn Atlas shows the original front porch in essentially the same location as the present porch. The porch is shown with a ‘1’, but the owner’s research has demonstrated that other nearby 2-story porches without a 2nd-story roof are consistently shown with a ‘1’ as well. 2-story porches with a 2nd-story roof are consistently shown with a ‘2’. Several examples are attached in the Supplemental Information section.

There is a ‘sister house’ at 2724 Champa, but its porch was also altered and is now in a Craftsman configuration. (See p. 24 for image).

Based on observation of the existing masonry and framing, and comparison with the ‘sister house’ at 2724 Champa, we have a high degree of confidence that the 2nd-floor walkout door is original.

As part of the proposed work, the owner wishes to carry out modifications to the upper porch walkout to resolve existing drainage issues and to increase the useable floor space. Please see Part 2, Porch Alterations, for more detail on the existing issues and the proposed modifications.
Part 1: Exterior Restoration and Preservation Work

- Repair & repaint woodwork
- Restore existing gable ornament (currently covered in epoxy)
- New roofing
- Repair & repaint woodwork
- Strip paint from (e) brick and stone foundation
- Remove ‘bathtub’ condition (see Part 2, Porch Alterations)
- New half-round gutters
- Repair & repaint woodwork
- Restore ground floor windows
- Repair / reinstall newel post and railing

Front Elevation (from Curtis St.)
2662 Curtis has a highly detailed and distinctive front elevation. The largest part of the proposed scope occurs at the front. In addition to paint removal, new roofing, window restoration, woodwork restoration, and the proposed upper-level porch modifications, the scope also includes a new newel post at the front steps. The existing railing and balusters are currently in storage to be reinstalled when the new newel post has been constructed.
Chimney may require reconstruction after paint removal due to non-matching brick. Reconstruction to match existing design. (See p. 24)

New roofing

Reconstruct kitchen and back chimneys (based on existing main chimney)

Repair side-porch (see detail photos)

Restore ground floor windows

Strip paint from (e) masonry

Strip paint from brick and stone foundation

**Side Elevation (from 27th St.)**
The side-porch consists of wood framing bearing directly on grade. Severe deterioration is visible on joists, flooring, railings, and post bases. Close examination of the posts shows finger-jointing, indicating that the posts are not original. The bases have rotted out, necessitating replacement. The porch floor is on sleepers resting on dirt, which will be replaced by wood porch flooring on furring on concrete.

The proposed side-porch replacement columns are selected for the closest possible match to the sister house’s side porch columns, which appear to be original. (Photo at left).
Paint has already been removed from the rear elevation. Scope at the rear elevation is limited to window restoration, roofing and gutter replacement, and reconstruction of a pair of brick chimneys.

Rear Elevation
Visibility of the interior side elevation is extremely limited by the placement of neighboring structures and fence-lines. Scope is limited to paint removal, roofing, gutters, window restoration, and restoration of any woodwork found to be deteriorated.
Part 2: Upper Level Porch Alterations

The existing porch roof walkout has multiple technical issues that require complete reconstruction. The deck is constructed as a ‘bathtub’ with sheet metal lining. There is inadequate provision for drainage and the cleaning out of debris. The sleepers have rotted out and the floorboards are currently sitting on a layer of organic mulch.

At the northeast corner of the deck, a trough between the deck and the wall creates a space that collects snow and holds it up against the brick, contributing to long-term deterioration.

While the underlying brick is partially obscured by deteriorating paint, there are visible nails and nail-holes that may indicate the original upper porch was a different size. The existing wood pilasters are notched around the belt-course rather than inset into it.
The existing usable floor area of the deck is severely restricted by the low-hanging eave and gutter above. The gutter projects approximately 18” from the wall at a height of 4’-7 1/2” above the surface of the deck. As such, the upper level walkout is not suitable for sitting, or for occupation by more than one person at a time.

As part of reconstructing the deck, the owner wishes to expand the usable area to the front and the side.

Vertically aligned nail holes are visible beyond the outer corner of the deck.
The existing porch roof deck is approximately symmetrical around the door. The proposed expansion would enlarge the deck symmetrically. One side of the deck would be expanded to the side brick wall - resolving the issue with snow retention against the brick - and the other side would be placed symmetrically around the door.

To address the 'bathtub' issue, a new deck would be constructed without a raised curb. The shingled fascia would be preserved due to the slope of the existing porch roof. An open-bottomed rail would be provided, similar to the lower porch railing.

The owner is in possession of a number of balusters that were salvaged and restored from the original roof deck railing. The balusters are 18 1/2" high. With a top rail placed at 36" above the deck surface, an additional tier of balusters is required for code compliance. It is proposed to use rosettes, dimensionally based on the existing rosettes at the lower porch, to establish the lower tier of balusters. The existing quantity of balusters will not be sufficient for the new design and matching balusters will be fabricated.
Contextual analysis of nearby porches shows a common pattern of upper-level walkouts, without roofs, with ornamental wood railings and an exposed shingle fascia. Some examples use octagon-edge shingles at the fascia similar to those found in the front gable end at 2662 Curtis.

In summary, our research has established that:
1. There was originally a 2-story porch (without an upper roof) at 2662 Curtis.
2. The existing porch is not original and was constructed in the 1980s.
3. The existing upper level porch is deficient both technically and in terms of usability.
4. There is a common pattern of upper-level walkouts in the neighborhood context.
5. Other upper-level walkouts in the neighborhood are of useable size.

Based on these considerations, we suggest that the proposed alterations are consistent with the Guidelines for Preserving Historic Buildings, particularly items 2.36-B (contextual analysis) and 2.36-D. Please see the following pages for elevations and details of the proposed upper level porch alterations.
A broader survey of porches in the area shows that the upper walkouts are universally larger and more useable than the existing non-historic walkout at 2662 Curtis. Even the smallest walkouts from the context have enough space for a bistro table and a few chairs.
Demolish (e) curb
Cut (e) roof decking
Demolish (e) corner posts
Porch roof structure to remain
Porch substructure to remain
Upper Porch Plan - Demolition.  1/4" = 1'

Demolish existing deck & curb
Cut (e) roof deck for new deck
Edge of existing porch
Upper Porch Plan - Proposed. 1/4” = 1’
New Guardrail - Elevation Detail. 1 1/2” = 1’
Upper Porch - Section Detail. 1” = 1’
(E) roof to remain with new asphalt shingles

(E) header to remain; repair & refinish wood

Painted wood replacement column
Mr. Spindle 'Traditional' profile, 6 x 6

Yellawood t & g pressure treated porch flooring, painted

Treated 2 x 4 sleepers, 16" OC

Treated 2 x 4s, 16" OC, laid flat and fastened to slab

1 x 6 redwood fascia board

(E) FFE
0' - 0"

4" concrete slab on grade w/ thickened slab edge

Flagstone walk
Proposed Materials

**Asphalt Roof Shingles**

Owens-Corning TruDefinition Duration asphalt shingles - final color TBD

![Image of asphalt roof shingles]

**Side-Porch Replacement Post**

Mr. Spindle ‘San Francisco’ profile, 6 x 6, cedar, painted

![Image of side-porch replacement post]

**Cedar Shingles (Octagon edge)**

Shakertown Fancy Cut Western Red Cedar shingles, paint finish

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Existing Chimney Detail

- 4 courses at widest
- Corbel out 1/2" every 2 courses
- 1 soldier course
- Belt course
- 6 courses
- Belt course
- 10 courses
Chimney may require reconstruction after paint removal due to non-matching brick. Reconstruction to match existing design.

Reconstruct (2) historic chimneys based on (e) chimney detail

Reinstall (e) brackets

New porch posts and pilasters

Reconstructed Chimney Detail - Rear Elevation. 1/4" = 1'
2663 Curtis Street, c. 1904, is a large, two story brick house with a truncated hip roof with front and side gables. The plan is irregular. Most windows are round arched and there is a round window to one side of the front. The front porch has a small, low gable over the entrance. The original owner is shown as John George Mayer.

2662 Curtis Street, c. 1885, is somewhat Queen Anne in style. The main roof structure of this two story, brick house is a truncated hip with a variety of intersecting gables, the largest over the front bay. This bay has a segmental brick arch over double windows on the first floor and over the double windows on the second floor is a segmental arch in the wood detailing of the gable end. The original front porch has been changed.

2640 Curtis Street, c. 1885, has a steeply pitched gable roof. The front entrance is at the side of the house from the side veranda which has a flat roof supported by turned wood posts with brackets. There are also smaller brackets under the eaves of the porch roof. The house is of brick, painted white, and is two and one half stories.

2634 Curtis Street, c. 1890. This house is of brick, two stories, with a gabled hip roof which is the dominant element of the front. The porch has a shed-type roof with slender turned posts.
LIVING IN THE PAST

By Marjorie Barrett

Historic preservation. It shapes the visual character of a community. It provides unusual housing not otherwise available.

And it links our roots and our future.

National Historic Preservation Week begins Sunday, and for the first time, Denver will highlight the week with a series of events designed to educate and entertain.

The force behind the celebration is Historic Denver Inc. and its executive director, Elizabeth Schlosser-Schlosser and her husband, lawyer Charles Jordan, don't just talk historic preservation — they live it.

The couple and their two small daughters live in Curtis Park, one of the city's historic districts. They are restoring their 95-year-old home at 2848 Curtis St. — history by blood.

Schlosser feels it important to live in the community and for their daughters to grow up there, attending neighborhood schools.

Schlosser and Jordan say they like the sociological mix in a historic district and its history.

Few people who live in Curtis Park, and fewer still live outside it, know its history. The area began in 1884 after Francis Case and Frederick Ebert donated a 100-acre park to the city. It was Denver's first park and was named for Samuel Curtis, one of the 145ers.

The land, wooded and unhabited, lay approximately where 31st and Curtis streets are today.

At the time, Denver was booming. With the arrival of the railroad in 1872 more and more people flocked to the young community. Between 1870 and 1880, the population increased 760 percent — from 5,000 to 25,000.

By 1890 the population reached 90,000.

Denver needed a public transportation, and in 1871 construction began on Denver's horse-drawn streetcar system. The first line went as far as 27th Street, into an area adjacent to Curtis Park.

A varied economic mix in the area contributed to Curtis Park's architectural diversity. But the homes, regardless of their size, all bear the stamp of the Victorian era.

Today the homes of Curtis Park are considered one of the country's best examples of Victorian architecture.

It was this richness that attracted Historic Denver, and through the organization's efforts the area was awarded a district designation on the National Register of Historic Places in 1975.

The district at that time ran roughly from California to Arapahoe streets and from 31st to 35th streets.

From previous page

September 1983 it was extended approximately seven blocks northeast, including Curtis Park and adding 75 structures to the 280 already covered.

The district's name was changed from the Curtis-Champa Streets Historic District to the Curtis Park Historic District.

The Schlosser-Jordan home probably was originally a tradesman's abode. It is a simple but stylish two-story Victorian with high ceilings. It has 1,900 square feet of living space. Previous owners divided the house into two units — one up and one down.

Because it works better for them, the Jordans use the front parlor as their dining room, the dining room for a living room and the family parlor as a den.

Much of what the family has done to the house is unseen — replaced plumbing, wiring and windows.

"I stripped all the paint off the banister," Schlosser said, and the porch, which was a concrete stoop when the family bought the house, has been rebuilt. They also added a kitchen porch.

The owners have continued the Victorian practice of graining woodwork in rooms where it does not meet the tastes of the occupants. The woodwork is much of the downstairs, therefore, has the appearance of oak, but is not, although oak was used in parts of the house.

Central City collection wall coverings (created some years ago for the fabric house Scalamandre) have been used to excellent advantage in the master bedroom.

In talking about historic preservation and the celebration of it, Schlosser said: "Nationally, the National Trust for Historic Preservation has celebrated the week for years. This is the first year we have served in on it, and Historic Denver is going to try to celebrate it in a major way."

This is the first of a series about historic preservation in the Denver area. On Monday, Letterswill feature the Oddfellows Hall and the commercial side of historic preservation.

Marjorie Barrett is a feature writer for the Rocky Mountain News. Dick Davis is a staff photographer.
Letter of Support - Curtis Park Neighbors Design Review Committee

Keith Pryor  
Design Review Chair  
2418 Champa Street  
Denver, Co 80205

Jan 8, 2019

Landmark Preservation Committee

Brittany Paige Bryant | Senior City Planner  
Community Planning and Development | City and County of Denver

Via Email - Brittany.Bryant@denvergov.org

Re 2662 Curtis Street

Dear Commission,

The Curtis Park Design Review committee has received and reviewed the proposed porch design for 2662 Curtis Street along with supporting documentation and reference materials. The committee is in support of the applicant for the modification of the deck footprint, simplified railing design and repair work proposed. As the applicant has stated and as the supporting pictures and documentation verify, two story uncovered porches where documented as one story on the Sanborn Maps. The “sister house” on Champa shows a door on the second story which is consistent with the door opening found 2662 Curtis St., and further supports the concept of a second story uncovered porch area on this house. The sister house’s porch was removed at some point and rebuilt in a Craftsman Style, which was common with many porch replacements when the original wood porches rotted and fell into disrepair. We feel the proposed modification is an appropriate interpretation of what the original porch may have been. Landmark guidelines 2.35 b, c and d as well as guideline 2.36 a, b and c for replacing historical elements when the original design is unknown are applicable to this application. We feel that the modification is sensitive to the intent of the porch, corrects design defects of the earlier replacement porch, and allows for functional use of the upper deck which would have been the intent of the original porch design. We feel that the material choices work well yet are simple and respectful of the home and the district. We feel this design should be recommended for approval by the commission.

Sincerely,

Keith Pryor,  
Curtis Park Design Review Committee Chair
2662 Curtis (Subject property) - 2-story porch with no 2nd-story roof - shown in Sanborn as 1 story

2721 Curtis - 2-story porch with no 2nd-story roof - shown in Sanborn as 1 story

2724 Curtis - 2-story porch with no 2nd-story roof - shown in Sanborn as 1 story

1340 Pennsylvania (Molly Brown House) - 2-story porch with no 2nd-story roof - shown in Sanborn as 1 story
2724 Champa - 'sister house' to 2662 Curtis - Original door at 2nd story for walkout (original porch replaced by Craftsman style porch at unknown date) - shown in Sanborn as 1 story

723 26th St - 2-story porch with a 2nd-story roof - shown in Sanborn as 2 story

2825 Curtis St.
2-story porch with a 2nd-story roof - shown in Sanborn as partial 2 story

Sanborn Analysis