



STAFF BRIEF

This document is the staff's comparison of the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation, Design Guidelines for Denver Landmark Structures and Districts, the Landmark Preservation Ordinance (Chapter 30, Revised Municipal Code) and other applicable adopted area guidelines as applied to the proposed application. It is intended to provide guidance during the commission's deliberation of the proposed application. Guidelines are available at www.denvergov.org/preservation

Project:	2022-COA-212	LPC Meeting:	May 17, 2022
Address:	2836 W 34th Ave	Staff:	Abigail Christman
Historic Dist/DLM:	Potter Highlands Historic District		
Year structure built:	new construction		
Council District:	#1 Amanda Sandoval		
Applicant:	Michael Beasley, Zaga Design Group		

Project Scope Under Review:

Construct ADU on a carriage lot. The ADU is accessory to 3349 Decatur Street.

Footprint: 36' x 24'

Height: 27'-8"

Materials:

Foundation: concrete	Roofing: asphalt shingle, estate grey
Siding: LP Building Solutions 38 Series Expert Finish Lap, smooth finish, 4" reveal	Trim: Hardie Plank, fiber cement, smooth
Windows: aluminum clad wood	Doors: wood, composite

Staff Summary:

Proposal is for the construction of an ADU on a carriage lot at the center of the block. Carriage lots are a distinctive feature of the Potter Highlands District. This neighborhood was laid out in square blocks with residences facing all adjacent streets and a carriage lot or carriage turnaround at the center of the block. Some carriage lots remain intact while others have been subdivided, often purchased by adjacent property owners to increase their lot size. The carriage lot on this block currently holds a neighborhood garden. The proposed ADU will be located at the northeast corner of the carriage lot. A deck has been proposed for the northwest corner of the carriage lot (page 9), but it is unclear if it is still part of the application since it is not shown elsewhere in the application. The remainder of the lot will remain a neighborhood garden.

The primary residence at 3349 Decatur Street is a two-story, brick residence with a hipped roof and prominent corner turret. However, this ADU proposal is unusual in that the ADU is not immediately adjacent to the primary structure. The proposed ADU features horizontal siding and a hipped roof. The first floor contains a three-car garage with living space located on the second floor.

The applicant is also requesting a Landmark recommendation to Zoning for an Administrative Adjustment for height. The proposed ADU is 27'-8" in height, extending 3'-8" above the zoning required height. The applicant previously proposed a design with a much shallower pitched and more complex roof form. Staff found this roof too suburban in appearance and not reflective of the district character. The applicant revised the design to have a steeper roof pitch, but this will require an Administrative Adjustment for height. The LPC may recommend an Administrative Adjustment for new construction that violates the code-required height, bulk plane, or siting standards as specified in the zoning code if they find that conforming with the zoning code "would have an adverse impact upon the historic character of the individual landmark or the historic district, if a historic district is involved." This is based on Section 12.4.5.3 of the Denver Zoning Code. This is intended "to relieve unnecessary

hardship” associated with meeting Landmark design guidelines. The Commission may recommend the AA if they find that the taller ADU proposed is more compatible with the district than an ADU that meets the zoning requirements. In this case, staff find that an Administrative Adjustment recommendation is justified. The applicant has demonstrated that the proposed height of the ADU is within the range of heights found on the block. The proposed ADU roof height of 27’-8” is also still significantly shorter than the primary structure at 3349 Decatur which is 36’ tall. Additionally, staff find the more steeply pitched roof on the current ADU design to be much more reflective of and compatible with the district character than a shallower roof would be.

There are two items in the application that need additional clarification:

- Garage doors: The application specifies that Clopay garage doors will be used but does not provide any details on the model/style of door proposed. Staff could not locate a model matching the doors shown on the plans on the Clopay website. The garage door is specified as 4-layer construction: steel + insulation + steel + composite overlay. The application does not specify the finish. Clopay doors appear to be available in solid colors or an “Ultra-Grain” a faux wood look with a simulated grain. Staff would recommend solid colors since the guidelines discourage the use of faux wood grain products.
- Deck: Earlier versions of the ADU application included a deck at the northwest corner of the carriage lot. The deck has been removed from the site plan on this version of the plans but remains on the isometric on page 9. If a deck is still proposed, it needs to be shown on the site plan. Dimensions and materials also need to be specified. If the deck is no longer proposed, then it needs to be removed from the isometric.

Registered Neighborhood Organization (RNO) comments:

The applicant met with the Planning and Community Development Committee of Highland United Neighbors, Inc. (HUNI) on January 11, 2022. The committee reviewed the earlier version of the ADU which included a lower pitch roof that was much more complicated in form. The Committee expressed the following concerns:

- The roof and massing are overly complicated. A simpler main roof with dormers might be worth considering.
- The roof slope is lower than historic structures on this block, as a result of meeting the maximum height allowed by the zoning code. We suggest considering allowing the maximum height to be increased or developing an alternative roof design.
- The east elevation has awkward relationships between window openings and garage door openings. We suggest revising the design to organize the openings and massing to improve these relationships.

The applicant has revised the design since this meeting, addressing the comments made by the RNO and Landmark staff. The roof pitch has been increased, the roof form simplified, and the windows have been aligned with the garage doors.

Excerpted from Design Guidelines for Denver Landmark Structures and Districts, January 2016

Guideline	Meets Guideline	Comments
<p>4.3 Design a building to include the typical features and rhythms of historic buildings in the surrounding context/block, using similar proportions and dimensions. Features to reference include:</p> <p>a. Foundation heights</p> <p>b. Floor-to-floor heights and overall building height</p> <p>c. Window locations, proportions, and recess in the wall</p> <p>e. Scaling elements and articulation, such as belt courses, dormers, balconies, decorative roof cornices, etc.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>The ADU references typical features and rhythms found in the district and the primary residence including height, window proportions/placements, and scaling elements.</p>

Guideline	Meets Guideline	Comments
<p>4.4 Design the height, mass and form of a new building to be compatible with the historic context.</p> <p>a. Design a new building to be within the typical range of building forms, heights, and sizes in the surrounding context/block.</p> <p>c. Use floor-to-floor heights that are similar to those in the surrounding historic context.</p> <p>d. Design the façade to reflect typical historic proportions of height to width in the surrounding context/block.</p>	Yes	<p>The height of the ADU exceeds the zoning required height by 3'8". However, it is within the range of heights found on the block. Staff find the height to be compatible with the district and with the primary structure at 3349 Decatur St.</p>
<p>4.5 Design a new building to be recognized as current construction, while respecting key features of the historic district as well as the surrounding historic context/block.</p> <p>a. Use a simplified interpretation of historic designs found in the historic district, or use a contemporary design that is compatible with historic siting, massing, and forms found in the historic district. At a minimum, an acceptable design should be neutral and not detract from the district's historic character.</p> <p>b. Include features that relate to the surrounding historic context/block, such as front porches in a residential setting, or a defined roof cornice on a commercial structure.</p>	Yes	<p>ADU is clearly recognizable as new construction while relating to the primary structure and district. The hipped roof form relates to the primary structure at 3349 Decatur St.</p>
<p>4.6 Use materials that appear similar in scale, color, texture and finish to those seen historically in the district.</p> <p>c. New materials that convey characteristics similar to historic materials may be considered if they have a similar appearance, size and shape to traditional materials. Such materials may include smooth-finish (non-wood grain) fiber cement board and cast stone, when they are detailed to convey a sense of authenticity.</p> <p>d. Use a simple combination of materials when this is a characteristic of the district.</p> <p>f. Do not use fiber cement board that is detailed to resemble wood grain.</p>	Yes/No	<p>Materials are in keeping with the historic character of the district. The ADU will be clad in horizontal siding with a 4" reveal and smooth texture. More detail is needed on the materials and finish of the proposed garage doors.</p>

Guideline	Meets Guideline	Comments
<p>4.18 Locate a new garage or secondary structure to reinforce surrounding historic development patterns.</p> <p>a. Locate a new garage or secondary structure within the typical range of locations for garages and secondary structures in the surrounding historic context.</p> <p>b. Where most secondary structures in the surrounding historic context are located along an alley, locate a new garage or secondary structure along the alley and reinforce historical patterns by using the alley for garage access.</p> <p>c. Where most secondary structures in the surrounding historic context are located along an alley and are oriented toward the alley, orient a new garage or secondary structure similarly. If historically garage doors faced the alley, design new garage with doors to also face the alley.</p>	Yes/No	<p>ADU will be on the carriage lot and accessed via the existing alley. Historically, carriage lots were typically open. However, as they have evolved over time, structures have been added to the carriage lots. The carriage lot form and alley access will remain unchanged.</p>
<p>4.19 Design a new garage or secondary structure to be compatible with, and subordinate to, the primary structure and surrounding historic context.</p> <p>a. Design the mass, form and roof shape of a new garage or secondary structure to be compatible with the primary structure and surrounding historic context.</p> <p>b. Design the height of a new garage or secondary structure to be within the range seen in the surrounding historic context.</p> <p>c. Use materials that are of a similar color, texture and scale to materials of the primary structure and the surrounding historic context.</p> <p>d. Use simplified versions of building components and details found in the surrounding historic context.</p>	Yes	<p>ADU height will be compatible with the district and the primary structure. The ADU features a hipped roof form that relates to the primary structure. The ADU will be clad in horizontal siding with a smooth texture and 4" reveal and feature simple trim boards.</p>

Recommendation: **Approval with conditions**

Conditions:

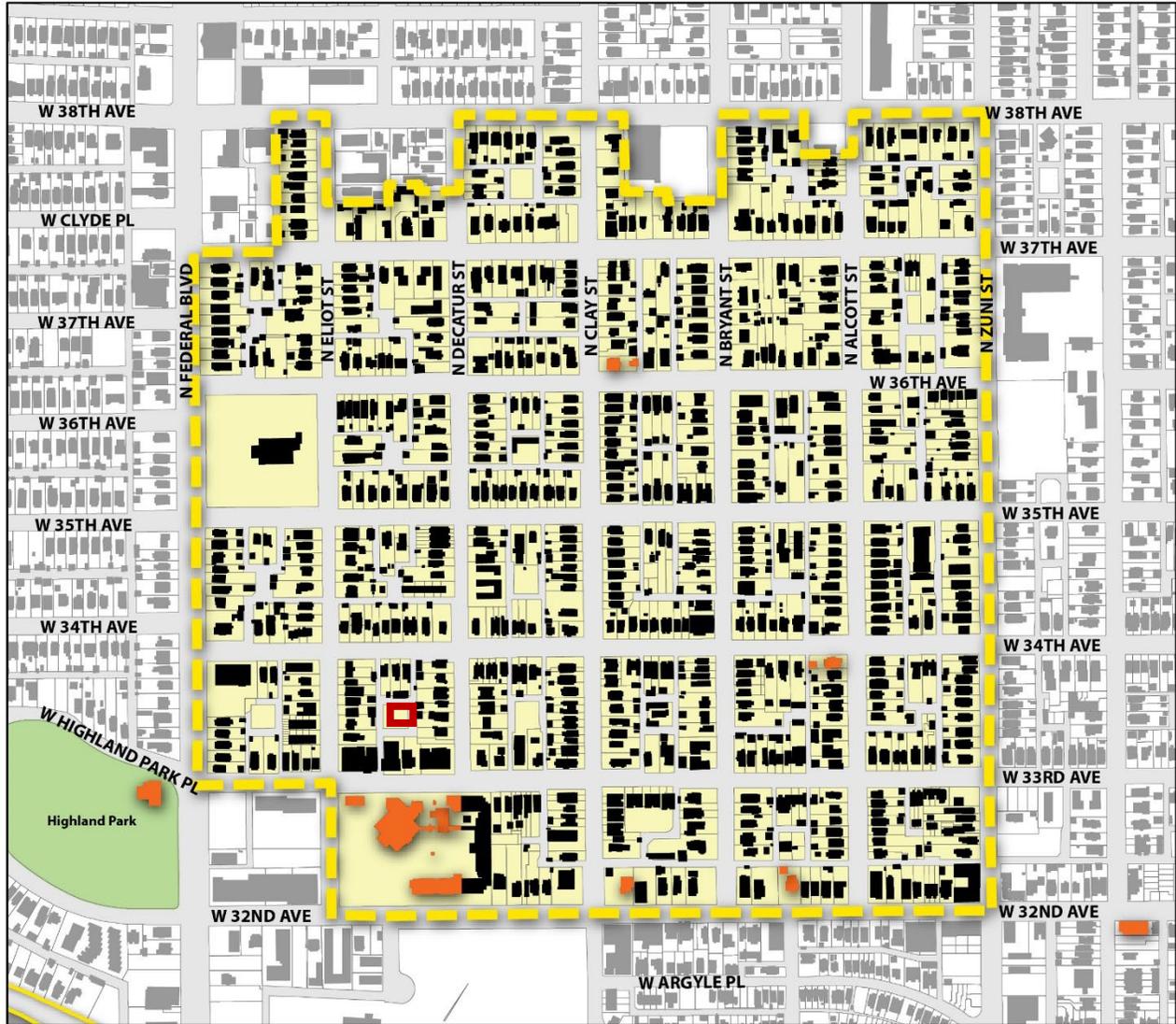
1. Provide detail on the garage door design and use a door with a solid finish rather than a faux grain finish.
2. Provide dimensions and material detail for the deck or remove from the application.

Basis: The ADU form, roof pitch, and height are compatible with the primary residence and district patterns. Windows are regularly placed and similarly proportioned to historic windows in the district (4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.18 and 4.19).

Suggested Motion: I move to CONDITIONALLY APPROVE application #2022-COA-212 for the ADU at 2836 W 34th Ave, as per design guidelines 4.3, 4.4, 4.5, 4.6, 4.18. 4.19, character-defining features for the Potter Highlands historic district, presented testimony, submitted documentation and information provided in the staff report with the following conditions: 1. Provide detail on the garage door design and use a door with a solid finish rather than a faux grain finish. 2. Provide dimensions and material detail for the deck or remove it from the application.

I also move to recommend an administrative adjustment for height per section 12.4.5.3 of the Denver Zoning Code finding that conformance to the requirements of the zoning code would have an adverse impact upon the historic district.

Potter Highlands District Map with proposed ADU location outlined in red



- District Boundary
- Other Historic District
- Property Subject to Design Review
- Individual Landmark
- Building Subject to Design Review

Date: February 2014

