STAFF REPORT

This document is the staff’s comparison of the Secretary of the Interior’s 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: #2024-COA-114
Address: 659 Vine Street
Historic District: East 7th Avenue
Year structure built: c.1918 (Period of Significance: Prior to and Including 1943)
Council District: #5 - Amanda Sawyer
Applicant: HQ Architects LLC – Alison Hagan

LPC Meeting: March 5, 2024
Staff: Brittany Bryant

Project Scope Under Review:
Portico Alterations and Terrace Roof Cover Addition

Staff Summary:
The applicant, HQ Architects, is requesting to demolish the existing portico entry feature and reconstruct a new portico to cover the entry stoop on the south elevation. The application is also requesting to remove the existing awning from the terrace and construct a permanent roof feature, supported by 4 Doric style columns.

The existing structure at 659 Vine Street is a contributing structure to the East 7th Avenue historic district. The structure has a side interior primary entrance on the south elevation with an uncovered terrace on the north elevation facing Vine Street. The original architect and/or builder of the home is unknown. Within this historic district, it is not uncommon to have side entries with front terraces, 654 Vine Street across the street has a very similar configuration with a more prominent side entry feature. It is unclear to staff if the home was originally stuccoed. However, based on the architectural style/form, it likely was originally brick, with the stucco cladding added at a later date as stucco is not a common material in Denver for this architectural style/form.

The existing portico is constructed of wood and does show some signs of deterioration, it is pulling away from the south façade. Additionally, some of the architectural connection/details of the portico are awkward. Based on a lack of historical documentation staff cannot definitely state if this element is original or within the period of significance. The existing portico is a simple classical design with Doric columns and a very simple entablature there are few classical details on the home, other than the very symmetrical façade and swag detail on the north chimney. The proposal is to demolish the existing and expand the portico out to over the existing brick stoop. The new portico cover will be a replica of the existing in terms of detailing and ornamentation with a larger depth from the south elevation.

On the east elevation, the existing awning over the existing terrace will be removed and replaced with a permanent roof structure. The roof structure will be supported by 4 Doric columns. The roof structure and column have very simple architectural detailing, matching that of an approved rear/side porch approved in 2015 on the west elevation. The new terrace cover will encroach into the front yard setback 4'-1". The footprint of the terrace is existing; however, the new cover will need an Administrative Adjustment to proceed. Zoning would require this feature to have an entry stair to act as a front porch, however, to preserve the prominence of the primary entry, the applicant and homeowners have eliminated this element. The front terrace was historically uncovered; however, the applicant has provided a number of examples of covered terraces on the front of the home in their submittal materials. Several enclosed front porches are also part of the East 7th Avenue historic district context.
Staff have reviewed the East 7th Avenue Historic District application and designating ordinance and nothing specific is stated about this home. Due to the probable changes to the existing structure over the years and proposed scope of work, staff have struggled with how to properly evaluate the proposal against the Design Guidelines as the front terrace is neither a front porch nor an insignificant design element of the home.

**Excerpted from Design Guidelines for Denver Landmark Structures & Districts, November 2022**

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<tr>
<th>Guidelines</th>
<th>Meets Guidelines?</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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| 2.10 Preserve significant stylistic and architectural features.           | Yes/No            | While the existing portico structure is proposed to be demolished, a new one will be constructed. The new portico will have more significant depth; however, it is providing a protected cover for the primary entry into the home.
| a. Retain and treat exterior stylistic features and examples of skilled craftwork with sensitivity. |                   | The existing portico does not appear to be an example of skilled craftwork and is in need of repair as it is pulling away from the home. The millwork on the existing portico is very simple and will be easy to replicate in the replacement design.
| b. Employ preventive maintenance measures such as rust removal, caulking, and repainting. |                   | The proposed expansion of the portico size will not significantly change the architectural style and features of the home. Staff speculate that the home has likely already seen changes to the architectural style with the stucco cladding and other alterations that may or may not have been within the period of significance for the district. |
| c. Do not add architectural details that were not part of the original structure. For example, decorative millwork should not be added to a structure if it was not an original feature as doing so would convey a false history. |                   | The existing front terrace is a feature of the building and this element can be found in East 7th Avenue historic district. The proposed roof covering would not be a significant change to the architectural style of the building as classical elements are not found on the home, but it may be a significant change to the ability to understand the original terrace feature. |
| d. Do not remove/add features that would change the architectural style of the building. |                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
| 2.13 Develop a new design that is a simplified interpretation of a similar feature when the original is missing and cannot be documented. | Yes               | The larger portico will match the existing in shape and architectural detailing.
| a. The new element should relate to comparable features in general size, shape, scale and finish. |                   | The new portico will have a larger scale; however, it will be expanded no further than the existing entry stoop footprint.                                                                                   |
| b. Use materials similar to those employed historically, where feasible. |                   | New portico will be constructed of wood.                                                                                                                                                                 |
| 2.37 Preserve an original porch or stoop.                                 | Yes/No            | The location of the primary entrance and stoop will not be altered.                                                                                                                                       |
| a. Maintain the historic location and form of a porch or stoop.           |                   | While the existing portico will be expanded in depth and is a change in size, it is difficult to determine if the existing portico is a historic feature.                                           |
| b. Maintain and repair historic porch and stoop components, finishes and details. |                   |                                                                                                                                                                                                          |
c. Retain the historic location, orientation and size of front porch steps.

d. Avoid enclosing a historic porch, particularly on a highly-visible façade.

e. Do not remove an original porch or stoop.

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<tr>
<th>2.39 Use historic evidence to inform replacement of a missing front porch or stoop.</th>
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<tr>
<td>a. Add a new front porch or stoop to a historic residential structure only when there is evidence that one was historically present, or an original porch or stoop is present on a very similar adjacent structure (sometimes called a “sister house”).</td>
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<td>b. If there is evidence that a porch or stoop once existed, but no historical documentation is available, design a new porch or stoop as a simplified version of a comparable feature on a similar structure in the surrounding historic context (preferred). A more decorative porch or design may be appropriate if decorative porches appear on comparable structures in the surrounding historic context (will be considered on a case-by-case basis).</td>
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<tr>
<td>c. Design a replacement porch or stoop to be appropriate to the architectural style and relate to the overall scale of the primary structure.</td>
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<td>d. When there is no evidence that a front porch or stoop existed, consider adding a sensitive and appropriately scaled patio as an outdoor seating area.</td>
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Yes/No

Portico will be reconstructed. While it is tenuous when the existing portico was added to the home, the new portico will replicate the details of the existing to preserve the architectural detailing of this element.

There is no evidence that the front terrace was ever covered or historically a side porch. Throughout East 7th Avenue, there are a number of examples of front terraces having covers added and front porches being fully enclosed, as shown in the applicant’s pact. Permanent terrace roofs and front porch enclosures are within and outside of the period of significance.

The proposed roof covering is replicating the simple classical details that have likely been added to the home over time. However, it is proposed to be much simpler in design than the reconstructed portico. This is to help distinguish between eras of construction and help define eras in which alterations to the home have been made.

No change to the existing terrace footprint will be made. With the retention of the original terrace footprint, the proposed roof structure will encroach into the front yard setback 4’-1”. Zoning would classify this element as a “front porch” that would require an entry stoop/stair element. The applicant has excluded this element from the design in an effort to preserve the prominence of the primary entry on the south elevation. The applicant is requesting an AA from the Landmark Preservation Commission for this encroachment. Staff recommend that if the Commission approve the covering, the AA is also approved as designing a roof structure to comply with zoning would create an awkward relationship to the existing terrace footprint. Otherwise, an encroachment of this nature will require Board of Adjustment review as the adjustment request is too great to qualify for other AA criteria.

3.4 Design an addition to be recognized as current construction.

c. Use simplified versions of building components and details found in the surrounding historic context. These may include:

Yes/No

Proposed roof structure on the terrace will be simplified version of building components found on the existing structure and surrounding context.

Historic alterations to front porches within East 7th Avenue are not uncommon. Proposed roof is not an exact copy of the existing style, nor does it imply an
» A cornice or other definition of the roof line
» Window, moldings or other features
» Porches
d. Do not design an addition to be an exact copy of the existing style or imply an earlier period or more ornate style than that of the original structure.

| 3.5 Do not damage historic building fabric or obscure key character-defining features of the primary structure when building an addition. | Yes/No | The addition of the permeant roof structure to the home will not damage historic building fabric, but it could have a significant impact on the character defining features of the structure. |

| 3.9 Locate an addition to a residential structure to be subordinate to the existing structure. | Yes/No | Roof covering is located on the north elevation, the street fronting façade. However, the primary façade is the south elevation. This may be a side addition but it will have significant visual impact to the existing structure as it is proposed on the street fronting elevation of the home. |

**Basis:**

Existing portico is pulling away from the home and in need of repair. Although the portico depth will be expanded, the footprint of the existing stoop will not change and the details of the existing portico will be replicated on the new portico. Additionally, the provenance of the existing portico is difficult to date. The proposed roof covering for the existing terrace is simple in design but has the potential to significantly impact the interpretation of the home although it is not totally out of character with alterations that have occurred within East 7th Avenue.

Suggested Motion: I move to APPROVE WITH CONDITIONS application #2024-COA-114 for the portico alterations at 659 Vine Street, as per design guidelines 2.10, 2.13, 2.37, and 2.39, character-defining features for the East 7th Avenue historic district, presented testimony, submitted documentation and information provided in the staff report with the condition the roof covering on the terrace be eliminated from the project scope.

Alternative Motion: I move to APPROVE application #2024-COA-114 for the portico alterations and terrace roof cover addition at 659 Vine Street, as per design guidelines 2.10, 2.13, 2.37, 2.39, 3.4, 3.5, and 3.9 character-defining features for the East 7th Avenue historic district, presented testimony, submitted documentation and information provided in the staff report. I also move to APPROVE the administrative adjustments for the front yard setback encroachment per Section 12.4.5.2 B for application 2024-COA-114 at 659 Vine Street, as per design guidelines 2.39, character-defining
features for the East 7\textsuperscript{th} Avenue historic district, presented testimony, submitted documentation and information provided in the staff report.

East 7\textsuperscript{th} Avenue historic district with 659 Vine Street outlined in red
1929 Sanborn Map with 659 Vine Street outlined in red