STAFF BRIEF

This document is the staff’s comparison of the Secretary of the Interniors 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-081
Address: 2535 W River Dr.
Historic Dist/DLM: River Drive Historic District
Year structure built: 1888 (Period of Significance: 1885-1923)
Council District: #1 – Amanda Sandoval
Applicant: Robert Laudick, Homeowner

LPC Meeting: May 21, 2024
Staff: Krystal Marquez

Past Action:

February 20, 2024:
#2023-COA-081 2535 West River Drive – River Drive
Description: Violation - Windows
Motion by G. Johnson: I move to conditionally approve application #2024-COA-081 for the window violations at 2535 W River Drive, as per design guidelines 2.14, 2.19, presented testimony, submitted documentation and information provided in the staff report with the condition that the two front windows be replaced to match the original size, operation, and proportion.
Second: G. Petri
Friendly Amendment from N. Foussianes: Window material be compatible with the design guidelines Amendment accepted
Vote: Unanimous in favor, (5-0-0), motion passes

September 1, 2020:
2020-COA-257 2535 W River Drive – River Drive
Description: Addition and Alterations
Motion by G. Petri: I move to conditionally approve application #2020-COA-257 for the addition and alterations at 2535 W River Drive, as per design guidelines 2.14, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 3.5, 3.6, 3.7, 3.8, presented testimony, submitted documentation and information provided in the staff report with the following conditions:
1. Maintain the one historic window on the east elevation of the primary structure,
2. Provide a recess on both the addition and the original building of the connector element; and recommend to the Zoning Administrator approval of an administrative adjustment for bulk plane violations on the zone lot per Section 12.4.5.3 of the Denver Zoning Code, presented testimony, submitted documentation and information provided in the staff report.
Second: B. Gassman
Vote: unanimous in favor (8-0-0), motion passes

Project Scope Under Review:
Replacement of 2 casement windows at the front elevation that were installed without Landmark review and approval. Applicant proposes to keep the front windows at the same existing dimensions, but change them to double hung windows that better match the operation that likely would have historically been present.
Materials:
Windows Installed: Jeld Wen aluminum clad Casement; applicant proposes Jeld Wen aluminum clad double hung windows using existing opening dimensions.

Staff Summary:
The property at 2535 W River Drive is located within the River Drive Historic District. It was built in 1888 and is a gable front contributing structure to the district. The property owner's original project was reviewed and approved for a rear addition and for changing 2 windows at the east elevation. During demolition and building of the new addition that was previously approved the Demolition Contractor removed and destroyed all the windows on the property.

The designation application property inventory form stated that the windows had previously been replaced, and only the 1 remaining on the east elevation had been original. The demolition contractor ordered new windows that matched the addition windows and dimensions, and not what would have matched existing openings or style of operation that were present on the historic structure. The windows violation was not discovered until the Landmark Inspector went out to the property for inspection and the new windows had already been installed, additionally a citizen also emailed Landmark about the property with window concerns and a historic photo. Staff has included that photo as well as some Google Street View images for context at the end of the staff report.

At the February 20th Landmark Preservation Commission (LPC) meeting the Commission approved the side windows to remain as is, but required that “…the two front windows be replaced to match the original size, operation, and proportion.” The applicant has concerns about infilling the openings to match the smaller sized windows that previously existed. The applicant is now proposing to replace the existing casement windows with double hung aluminum clad windows that better a historic operation style, but that fill the current existing opening that does not match previous size or proportion.

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

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<th>Guideline</th>
<th>Meets Guideline?</th>
<th>Comments</th>
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<tr>
<td>2.14 Maintain the pattern and proportion of historic window and door openings.</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>The primary structure’s property inventory states that windows have been replaced on the primary structure. The primary structure only has 4 windows: 2 on the front elevation and 2 on the east elevation. 3 of them appeared to be non-original windows and only 1 appeared to be original on the east elevation. However, during construction of the new addition the demolition contractor removed and destroyed all windows on the primary structure and replaced them with windows to match the new structure in size and operation. The issue was not discovered until after the new windows were installed and inspected by the Landmark inspector. The windows at the front elevation were likely not original, but did originally appear to maintain...</td>
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| d. Restore altered window or door openings on primary façades to their original configuration, when feasible. | historic window proportions and style/operation whereas the existing windows do not. The change of windows at the front façade enlarged the openings and changed the window style and operation at the most visible façade not meeting design guideline 2.14.f.  

The applicant now proposes to replace the 2 front casement windows with double hung windows, but maintain the existing enlarged openings not meeting design guideline 2.14.f. |
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<td>e. Avoid enclosing a historic window or door opening or adding a new opening.</td>
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<tr>
<td>f. Do not reduce an original opening to accommodate a smaller window or door, or increase it to accommodate a larger one. More flexibility may be appropriate on a façade that is not visible. See page 24 for more information.</td>
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<td>2.19 When replacement of an historic window is necessary, match the replacement design to the historic window design (see “Review &amp; Approval Process for Windows” on page 30 for more information).</td>
<td>Yes/No</td>
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| a. Only replace an historic window if it is damaged beyond repair. | All windows on the primary structure were replaced without review and approval by Landmark. The windows at the front elevation were likely not the original windows, but likely did maintain overall type and operation as well as historic proportions.  

The proposed windows that have already been installed do not match historic window size, type or operation that would have likely existed per design guidelines 2.19.b and c.  

The applicant is now proposing to change the 2 front casement windows to double hung windows that would better match a historic type and operation, though it does not match the historic window size. |
| b. Match the historic window size. | |
| c. Match the historic window type and operation. For example, if the historic window is a double-hung window, the new window should be double-hung window. New windows may be double or triple glazed. | |
| d. Set a replacement window in the wall at the same depth as the window being replaced. | |
| e. Replace a historic wood window with a wood or aluminum-clad wood window. Replace a historic steel window with a steel or aluminum window that replicates the historic steel. Match the original outward facing width and depth of perimeter framing material. | |
| g. Use clear, or nearly clear low-e glass. A window and door on secondary elevations may have frosted glazing. | |
| h. Closely match the historic window profile. | |
| i. Match the historic divided-light type and pattern. | |
j. For replacements of a divided-light window, use true divided lights or simulated divided lights with a spacer bar (interstitial spacer between the double-glazed panes of glass). A window with only muntins between the panes of glass shall not be allowed.

k. Do not use perimeter infill framing to create a smaller window within historic opening on primary facades. Perimeter infill framing may be used to minimally reduce original openings on secondary elevations where they are not readily visible from the public vantage points when the original opening proportions, headers or sills remain expressed.

**Basis:** The new proposed windows at the front elevation do not maintain the size and proportions of the historic window openings (2.14, 2.19).

**Motion for DENIAL:** I move to DENY application #2024-COA-081 for the window violations at 2535 W River Drive, as per design guidelines 2.14, 2.19, presented testimony, submitted documentation and information provided in the staff report.
River Drive Historic Landmark District
Part of Blocks 2 and 3 of the River Front Addition
Town of Highlands
1890-97 Sanborn Map with 2535 W River Dr outlined in red

Historic Photo emailed to Landmark Staff – date unknown
IDENTIFICATION

1. **District Name:** River Drive Historic District

2. **Building/Structure Street Address:** 2535 West River Drive

3. **Date of Construction:** c.1888  
   **Source:** Sanborn Map (1890), Denver Assessor Records, Denver City Directories

ARCHITECTURAL

4. **Architectural Style/Building Type:** No Style/Gable Front

5. **Primary Exterior Wall Material(s):** Asbestos, wood

6. **Primary Exterior Roof Material(s):** Asphalt shingle

7. **Key Architectural Features:** Rectangular plan, one story, gable front, central front porch supported by turned wood columns, rectangular window and door openings

8. **Construction History:** Constructed around 1888, brick coal house constructed in 1933, frame addition to house for a bathroom constructed in 1933, several rear additions since 1961 extending the house back toward the alley, windows replaced

9. **Landscape or Special Setting Features:** Corner lot anchoring northeast end of the district, yard enclosed with chain link and wood lattice, step down from concrete sidewalk/street level to front entrance

10. **Associated existing buildings, features, or objects:** One-story brick outbuilding on rear of property

RECORDING INFORMATION

11. **Date Form Completed:** December 2018
12. Completed By: Kristi H. Minnello

CONTRIBUTING STATUS (Check one only) ☒ CONTRIBUTING ☐ NONCONTRIBUTING

HISTORICAL

13. Architect (if known): Unknown Source: N/A
14. Builder/Contractor (if known): Unknown Source: N/A


17. Current Use: Domestic: Single Dwelling

18. Historic Building/Structure Name: N/A

19. Owner Name and Address (If different from street address): Roy and Elena Siggins

20. Historical background: According to the Denver Assessor Records, this property was built in 1888. At the time, city directories only listed residents by their block within “River Front Addition, Highlands” rather than by street address. Ownership of the house changed hands several times over the decades, and many owners chose to rent out the house rather than live in it themselves. The 1890 city directory lists Benjamin Schott as the primary resident with Henry Oswald as a boarder living at 222 River Drive. Both men were brewers, likely at the nearby Zang Brewery. In 1897, three-room frame house was advertised in the Rocky Mountain News at the affordable rate of $5.00 per month (approximately $180 in 2017). Tenants over time included a butcher at the John Thompson Grocery Co.; laborers and firemen for the Colorado & Southern Railway; a blacksmith; and employees of Burhnam & Sons Steel & Ironworks, Ralston-Purina, the Colorado Highway Department, Joe Coffee, and the Colorado Department of Public Health. In 1933, the owners made improvements to the property. A brick coal house measuring 8 feet by 10 feet was built on the rear of the property, and it still stands. An 8 feet by 10 feet frame addition was also made to the house for a bathroom. The current owners purchased the property in 2014.

Perhaps the most notorious tenants were Frank LeBfroin and his wife, Mary, who lived in the house by 1903. Frank worked in the malt room at Zang's Brewery, and his friend, Alphonse Gladk, was engineer at the brewery. While at work a couple of days before Christmas in 1903, Frank struck Alphonse over the head with a gun that also discharged, and the bullet grazed Alphonse's face. Apparently, Frank was jealous of the friendship between his wife and his friend, believing that Alphonse had been too attentive to Mary (Rocky Mountain News, December 24, 1903). The following May, Frank filed for divorce after Mary gave birth to a boy, shouting for everyone to hear, "This child is not my child!!" By then, Frank was working as a saloonkeeper (one can presume that he was fired from the brewery following the attack on his friend). Mary filed a cross-complaint, stating that her husband had long "...forced her into a life of shame," and that he had repeatedly met women in "wine rooms for immoral purposes." Additionally, "One night he took her to a saloon at Twenty-first and Market streets, where women were smoking cigarettes and drinking, and told her that she must live in the same manner. 'It will help me in my saloon business,' he is said to have told his wife." She further claimed that he frequently struck her, specifically noting that he hit her in the abdomen when she was pregnant several years before (Denver Post, May 7, 1904).


21. Attachments ☒ Yes ☐ No

REVIEW BOX - TO BE COMPLETED BY LANDMARK PRESERVATION STAFF — PLEASE DO NOT REMOVE THIS BOX

Checked by: ___________________________ Date: ___________________________

Summary of Information Updated on Form: ___________________________
Camera looking northwest at brick coal house