

From:

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Date:

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To:

Rachel Rettaliata & Edward Hall  
City of San Antonio Office of Historic Preservation

Regarding:

2255 W Magnolia Ave – Garage Accessory Structure Demolition

To whom it may concern,

The denial or delay of the demolition of the above referenced garage accessory structure would represent an unreasonable economic hardship placed on the property owner for the reasons I will present to you in this letter.

- The owner cannot make reasonable beneficial use of or realize a reasonable rate of return on the structure due to unsafe conditions and deficiencies in its construction.
- The structure cannot be reasonably adapted for any other feasible use due to unsafe conditions and deficiencies in its construction.
- Construction cost estimates for rehabilitation, restoration or repair of the existing accessory structure versus demolition and building new construction are not reasonable because the foundation is not repairable and the majority of the materials are not sound enough to be repaired, salvaged and reused for in-kind reconstruction or have no historical value.

As a Registered Architect in the State of Texas, and in consultation with a general contractor, Ingram Roofing & Construction, the detached garage accessory structure located at 2255 W Magnolia Ave cannot be rehabilitated, restored or repaired at a reasonable cost. **The basis of this is that the existing wood pier foundation, wall supporting perimeter beams, non-reinforced concrete floor slab, stud walls, roof rafters, sheathing are all structurally un-sound and cannot be repaired in-place without complete reconstruction. They cannot reasonably be brought up to building code standard, nor would any reasonable contractor warranty an attempt at repairing them.** The foundation, walls and roof must be removed in their entirety and a new foundation, walls and roof constructed that would be safe and meet the building code. As the Architect on the project, I have a professional responsibility to protect the health, safety, and welfare of the users of the building as well as the potential exposure to liability if the

foundation repairs or other elements of the structure fail during the construction process or building occupancy.

It is not reasonable to construct a new foundation while keeping the structurally unsound wood framed building above it intact. Therefore, in order to rehabilitate the garage, the entire structure must be deconstructed and then reconstructed. **This in no uncertain terms would cost significantly more than the complete demolition and building of a new comparable structure** due to the amount of added skilled labor required for careful dismantling of the structure in such a way as to make the materials reusable. In addition, there is the cost of documenting and labeling building elements prior to removal, sorting and restoration of the materials for reuse, temporary storage of the materials, and the added cost of labor for working with imperfect salvaged materials during the reconstruction.

To consider the idea of rehabilitation, restoration or repair feasible, one must assume that it is possible to reuse the existing materials at all for their original purpose after deconstruction. I will therefore demonstrate in the following list the additional reasons why the accessory structure cannot be rehabilitated, restored or repaired, and why the majority of the materials either have no historical value, or are not repairable or reusable.

- The existing wood piers are rotted, not sound and must be replaced in their entirety. At least one of the corners is completely floating where the pier has rotted off below grade.
- The 4x4 wood perimeter beams are undersized, at grade level and in some areas even below grade which has allowed water infiltration for years calling their soundness into question and they must be replaced. The proximity to grade issue cannot be remedied without lifting the entire building and would be unreasonably expensive.
- Anchorage of the walls to the foundation is practically non-existent and does not meet the building code.
- The 2x4 wood wall studs are on 6-foot centers and do not meet the building code. In addition, there are not any wall studs in the corners. The walls have visibly shifted and are not plumb due to the deficiency of their construction and that of the foundation.
- The bottoms of the jack studs and some wall studs have water damage and/or rot and must be replaced in their entirety.
- The wall sheathing is rotted at the bottom all the way around due to its proximity to the grade level, it is not a sufficient substrate for the (re)installation of siding in its current condition. It also does not provide sufficient shear/wind bracing to meet the building code and must be replaced in its entirety.
- The single 2x10 wood header above the 16-foot garage door is under-sized for the span and loading conditions, does not meet the current building code, is unsafe and must be replaced.
- The exterior siding is unusable due to the potential for containing asbestos and due to its inherent brittleness, it will not be possible to remove without significant breakage making it not reusable.
- The wood trim boards all have water damage and rot and must be replaced in their entirety.

- The 2x4 wood roof rafters are at 24-inch centers, are under-sized for their spans and loading conditions as evidenced by the significant visible deflection/sagging of the roof. They do not meet the current building code, are un-safe and must be replaced in their entirety.
- The roof sheathing/decking has many holes and gaps, is water damaged in several areas from past roof leaks and approximately 50% must be replaced. It is not a sufficient substrate for the (re)installation of roofing and in its current condition. During the reframing of the roof, the sheathing must be removed regardless.
- The roofing is contemporary 3-tab/composition shingles and has no historical value.
- The garage door is a contemporary metal overhead door and has no historical value.
- The man door on the side is a contemporary metal door and has no historical value.
- The garage space itself is only 18-feet wide by 17-feet deep making it too small to park most vehicles and certainly not two vehicles side by side and to have room to exit the vehicle.

As I hope you have come to understand from the above list of facts and reasoning, that **there is almost no part of the building that does not have to be removed and replaced** in order to rehabilitate the existing structure for its original purpose as a garage or any other feasible purpose while at the same time complying with the building code. With very little material of historical value remaining, any attempt to do so would serve no purpose other than to increase the cost burden on the property owner. Because of this, any denial or delay of the demolition permit would be an unreasonable economic hardship placed on the property owner and a detriment to their safety.

Please let us know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Ryan Schmidt, Architect  
Ryan Schmidt Design LLC

