



CITY OF SAN ANTONIO  
**OFFICE OF HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION**

**Historic and Design Review Commission**  
***Design Review Committee Report***

DATE: 10 May 2023 / 5 PM

HDRC Case #: 2023-123

Address: 206 Sherman

Meeting Location: Webex

APPLICANT: Jose Lopez Jr (owner)

DRC Members present: Jeff Fetzer, Monica Savino

Staff Present: Jessica Anderson

Others present: Theresa Lopez (owner)

**REQUEST:** Conceptual approval of a 640-square-foot addition.

**COMMENTS/CONCERNS:**

Savino: Any new drawings?

Anderson: No—applicant wanted to discuss current plans.

Savino: Current staff rec spot on. How would you address the stipulations?

T Lopez: Would leaving the original door and keep the second door be approvable? Does that keep the shotgun style? Or expand to the side but it's more of a different design?

Savino: Partially addresses the shotgun form. Take the shotgun in its current state—the form, scale, proportions—those are the things that define it as a shotgun typology. Id Do what I could to keep those aspects in play. Make the shotgun the priority and focus of the redevelopment plan. As an example, keep the front door, windows, and if you really don't want a window, sheetrock over it on the inside. I think there's a way to work with the existing doors and windows. Start with the shotgun and the integrity of that type of building and the elements that are indicative of that building.

Savino: As for the side elevations, because the shotgun is so in-tact, I would suggest keeping the windows. I think there are ways to minimize changes to the historic structure.

T Lopez: There are no windows.

Savino: there are openings, not windows per se. Each room had at least one window, sometimes two on either side. March of windows along each elevation a notable quality of a shotgun. Guidelines are clear about keeping openings where they historically occurred. Can see the framing when you begin to remove siding and interior sheetrock.

T Lopez: Keeping windows where they are limits additions.

Savino: There are times when we add to a building, which of course impacts existing doors and windows. For instance, on your east elevation: keep windows in their current location or, if repair the east side, reinstate those windows or add them in a way that looks original if you can't determine original location. Use window size that conforms to traditional size for building and space them in a way that meets or is similarly found on this type of building or nearby in the historic district.

J Lopez: Per plan, there will be a window on every single room.

Fetzer: Applaud you for taking on this project. These houses are humble, but they have a history and tell the story of San Antonio. It's nice to see someone want to restore them and make them livable again. The front elevation is very important, so if your plan could work with the existing door, window, and porch on that end, maybe if you look at plans and you still have a bedroom there, the bedroom has a door out to a private patio so that it's functional from the inside and still honors the front door of the house. Did you look at maybe putting the living room/kitchen/dining in the historic part and the building?

T Lopez: Wouldn't discount. We did talk about it—would like to keep that door if we can. Keep the house, keep that door, not necessarily drywall over it. Respect the history, use appropriate siding and windows. But have a block over how we would put the living room/kitchen/dining there.

Fetzer: Just wondered if you'd studied that. Go to elevations. Concerned about how addition, because of the height of the roof, really overwhelms the historic house. Right elevation: gable end that's the entire width of the elevation, including porch. Wondering if you just did the gable over the addition (living/dining room) with shallower pitch shed roof over porch, would bring ridge of the roof way down.

T Lopez: Discussed subordinate roof with Jessica. Can change so that addition roofline is lower than the existing roofline. Looked at houses surrounding the property—higher rooflines. Can we raise the roofline of the historic structure?

Fetzer: That's a tough one. Preservation and restoration guidelines usually say to maintain as much of the historic framing and configuration as possible. Yes, people have added second floors to historic houses, and at that point the rooflines go up. But the fact that you're keeping it all on a one-story house, I think I would lean more to keeping the existing framing, roof pitch, and ridge height, and working with the addition and trying to minimize the roof height and impact of the addition.

J Lopez: The ceiling is fairly low in the house to begin with.

Fetzer: Adjacent neighbor—their floor line may be higher than your house—whole floor level is taller.

Savino: May have had some foundation work done recently.

*Staff determined neighbor at 208 Sherman was constructed c 1998.*

T Lopez: When we have these conversations, is this an absolute?

Fetzer: Monica and I are here to give some suggestions re guidelines. Will come back before commission for consideration. Based on comments made in the previous commission, I believe Monica and I are trying to interpret what some of the other commissioners said as well. And the idea that we've lost the front of the shotgun, which you're working to restore, but the scale of the addition overwhelms the historic portion. If you came back to the commission, and the only thing you changed was reinstating the front door, I think you would still get comments re the scale of the addition.

Savino: The scale of the addition, the way the front entry is designed, probably windows also. There's enough for everyone to chew on. Another suggestion: The goal is for the historic structure to be primary, and the addition to be secondary or subordinate. Your addition that runs afoul of everything is the width and roof form that gobbles up the modest house and lose all relevance. The shotgun is the main house. Concerned re transition element you're using. Maybe if you think about the schematic of your plan—right now, you've got a T shape. Turn addition 90 degrees and separate with a connection to historic, and however it's different, it's not right up against the little house. Create separation and add a transitional element. Make a letter H. From Sherman side, you've created a rhythm that picks up all the other historic houses. Shift the program around a bit.

J Lopez: If we build the H Style design home. Would the new addition have to come in under the sf of the existing house?

Savino: Would do what I could to make that addition appear subordinate to the historic home. Ideally, we don't want to double the size for this reason.

Fetzer: Another approach is to completely separate the existing from the new with some sort of connector. Give prominence to the historic house. Many different ways to approach this. Overarching issues for OHP and HDRC is how the addition respects the historic house and doesn't try to overwhelm it. If you like your plan, I think there's ways to massage it so that the addition doesn't overwhelm—reinstating the existing front porch is important. Or explore going to a U or H shape with a smaller connector and basically having something like two gables facing Sherman. If you want to come back to this committee with some hand sketches with possible plans that might work for your program and discuss how that works with honoring the historic shotgun house.

Savino: We looked recently at a case that was a bit different, but it was two free-standing historic houses with connector piece. From the street, it looks like different houses, and the inside supports modern living. Not trying to copy the existing house, and it sits back from the existing house.

Fetzer: Recommend going back to DRC before being reviewed again by HDRC. DRC on May 24, HDRC on June 7.

T Lopez: That gives us time to do some sketches before coming back to DRC. One other question: Is it an option to add a second floor, keeping the same style?

Fetzer: On a small structure like this, in the past we've looked at what we call a "camelback," ie the back half is two-story but the one-story is maintained at the front. But a two-story for the full depth may be more difficult to get through the commission.

Savino: Would also mean a greater part of the budget would go to making it possible.

Fetzer: If you do decide to go to an H- or U-shaped plan with two gables facing Sherman, and putting the addition closer to the corner, would reinforce that corner in the neighborhood.

T Lopes: But roofline would still have to be lower than the historic structure?

Savino: Could be equal since they'd be separated.

***OVERALL COMMENTS:***

Commissioners recommended the applicant come back to DRC with sketches for alternate plans prior to returning to HDRC. Applicant agreed to DRC on Wednesday, May 24, and returning to HDRC on Wednesday, June 7. Staff will confirm by email.