

DeKalb County Historic Preservation Commission

Tuesday, January 16th, 2024 - 6:00 P.M.

Staff Report

New Construction Agenda

K. 1713 Coventry Road, Atlantic Investment Ventures LLC. Demolish and replace non-historic home. **1246740.**

Built 1947 - Nonhistoric (18 004 06 026)

This property is in the Chelsea Heights Character Area but is not in a National Register Historic District.

Note: Although the proposed construction fails to comply with the zoning code in several ways, the preservation commission does not enforce the zoning code.

Summary

The applicant proposes demolition of a nonhistoric house and construction of a new house and detached garage.

1. The proposed house is 1½ stories with the main roof at an 8:12 pitch. Materials are not identified. The first floor appears to be about 5'10" above grade (The current house appears to be about 5' above grade). The site plan shows the house set back 65' from the right-of-way, but this appears to be roughly 10'-12' in front of the houses on each side. A streetscape was not provided so the height in relation to the flanking houses cannot be determined.
2. The garage is two stories tall. Materials are not identified. Because of the height above the street and the distance from the street, the garage might not be visible.
3. Demolition of the nonhistoric house.

Recommendation

1. **Deny.** The proposed house does not comply with guideline 17.1. The applicant has not provided sufficient information to determine compliance with guidelines 17.4, 17.7, and the *Special note regarding materials*.
2. **Deny.** The proposed garage does not comply with guideline 17.2. The applicant has not provided sufficient information to determine compliance with guidelines 17.4 and the *Special note regarding materials*.
3. **Deny.** Demolitions are not approved until there is an approvable plan for their replacement.

New plans were requested from the applicant; however, new plans for the proposed new construction have not been submitted for review.

DeKalb County Code Sec. 13.5-8(1) "*Application for certificate of appropriateness*. Owners of historic property or of property in a historic district, or their duly authorized agents, must make application for a certificate of appropriateness on forms and according to procedures promulgated by the preservation commission for such purpose. The Georgia Department of Transportation and contractors performing work funded by the Georgia Department of Transportation are exempt from provisions of this chapter. Local governments are also exempt from obtaining certificates of appropriateness but shall notify the

preservation commission at least forty-five (45) days prior to beginning or undertaking any work that will otherwise require a certificate of appropriateness, so as to allow the preservation commission an opportunity to comment. All applications for certificates of appropriateness shall be accompanied by drawings, photographs, plans and documentation as required by the preservation commission. Written authorization of the property owner shall be required if the applicant is not the owner of record.”

Relevant Guidelines

- 5.0 *Design Review Objective* (p45) - When making a material change to a structure that is in view from a public right-of-way, a higher standard is required to ensure that design changes are compatible with the architectural style of the structure and retain character-defining features. When a proposed material change to a structure is not in view from the public-right-way, the Preservation Commission may review the project with a less strict standard so as to allow the owner more flexibility. Such changes, however, shall not have a substantial adverse effect on the overall architectural character of the structure.
- 17.1 *Setbacks – Recommendation* – New construction front-yard setbacks should rarely exceed the plane of existing setbacks. In other words, the distance from the street should be about the same for new construction as adjacent existing homes.
- 17.2 *Horizontal emphasis – Guideline* – New construction and additions should preserve and reinforce the streetscape character of Chelsea Heights by maintaining the predominant horizontal building emphasis of the neighborhood. Primary building facades should create a horizontal emphasis versus a vertical emphasis.
- 17.3 *Plate heights – Recommendation* – New construction and additions should have plate heights that are compatible with those of adjacent properties and homes along the street. Ensuring compatible plate heights can address, more specifically, the appropriate scale of new construction than addressing the number of stories alone.
- 17.4 *Scale – Recommendation* – In keeping with the guidelines of scale, the perceived scale of new infill residences and additions should be minimized. New construction or additions generally should be consistent with the height of nearby structures. Typically, there should be no more than two floors as viewed from primary street frontage to ensure compatibility with the predominant housing character of Chelsea Heights. This means that those lots that slope down and away from the fronting street can accommodate taller structures and still maintain the general character of the street. Lots that slope upward from the street will need special attention given to building height and rooflines to avoid a building that towers over the street and neighboring homes. Special attention will need to be paid to foundation heights and topography represented on drawings to ensure that foundation do not add to the visual perception of height.
- 17.5 *Roofs – Guideline* – Primary roof forms on new and renovated buildings should be side gable, flat or hip roofs. Front gable roofs are appropriate when they are greatly subordinate to the primary.
- 17.6 *Roof pitch – Guideline* – Roofs typically should feature a low (4/12) to moderate (12/12) pitch.
- 17.7 *Foundation height – Guideline* – The height of foundations and retaining walls should be modest and congruous with the existing topography and homes in the area of influence. Special attention should be given to grading plans during design review to ensure that cuts are necessary and not excessive, with contour grading being the norm.
- 17.8 *Foundation material – Guideline* – Foundation and retaining wall materials should be limited to brick, concrete block, cast concrete and granite. Application of other materials as a façade should not be allowed if visible from the right of way.
- 17.9 *Additions – Recommendation* – Place an addition at the rear of a building or set back from the front to minimize the visual impact on the original structure to allow the original proportions and character to remain prominent and to differentiate the old from the new.

Special note regarding materials – In general, materials should be in keeping with those that are endemic to the neighborhood, namely, wood, granite, brick and asphalt. However, newer material may be introduced into the neighborhood if in keeping with the historical context of these older materials. For example, the use of cementitious siding that mimics the profile and texture of wood (commonly referred to as Hardieplank) may be consistent with some exterior applications. The introduction of some “green” materials, for example, solar shingling and panels, may be appropriate and should be given special design consideration.