

NR 2022 – 14 for 1004 N. French Street

The French Park Architectural Review Committee considered the project and offer the following comments:

1. Drawing for Unit 1002

* All doors on the house should be historic. Replacement doors, either salvage or new, should match Unit 1004 like-for-like (including the transom).

* Please provide a drawing for the entrance for Unit 1002 to include the new door, existing frame, trim and siding. The Committee wishes to learn whether the new replacement door will impact the existing door frame dimensions, siding, transom window, or other elements.

* Amend the project application title to include Unit 1002 and the other Unit numbers where stair replacements are proposed..

2. Request for Additional Drawings of the South and East Facing Elevations

Please provide a drawing(s) of the two existing porch elevations, minus the proposed improvements, so the Committee may compare the existing condition to the proposed condition.

3. Status of the Railing at 1002 N. French and Rear Apartments

It appears the project may not replace the stair railing at the northeast corner unit, or the upstairs unit railing at the rear of the property. Will the owner replace these two sets of stair railings, and the rear baluster as part of the current project?

* If the work is part of the current provide please provide drawings for these two railings and the rear baluster.

4. Replacement Stair Railings

* Replacement stair railings and posts should be wood, not metal or composite, and match the porch railings and spindles, including the newel posts found on the porch pillars, like-for-like.

* All stair railings on the house must match.

5. Removal of the Existing Porch Enclosure

* The Committee supports the removal of the existing porch enclosure leading to Unit 1004.

6. Decorative Wood Spindles

* Committee supports the addition of a new horizontal wood rail, below the frieze, to the match the existing wood rail like-for-like.

The owner proposes to install new vertical wood spindles between the rail and the frieze.

* Committee supports new wood spindles to match the existing wood spindles like-for-like.

7. Baluster Fabrication

Committee supports the installation of a new, all-wood, baluster to match the existing wood baluster, like-for-like. Please confirm that the replacement baluster is indeed like-for-like to the existing wood baluster.

8. Replacement Wood and Glass Door

*Please provide a copy of the manufacturer's information for the wood door for Unit 1002 for the Committee to compare with the line drawing provided for Unit 1004's front door as shown in the application.

* Submit a color photograph of the new wood / single pane door for Unit 1002.

* Please confirm that the owner *will not* install a new metal security door in addition to the new wood door.

* Provide a drawing and photograph, or the actual door knob and plate, for the new front door to Unit 1002. The Committee will review whether the replacement items will match the original knob and knob plate.

9. Porch Post

Applicant proposes to replace or add one or more “composite columns” to the front porch. Only one non-wood column is identified on the plan set, and it is unclear whether other wood columns are also proposed for replacement.

* Please explain which posts are planned for replacement and whether the Applicant considered repairing the post(s) using readily available, conservation quality repair materials, such as Abatron Wood Epox.

* The French Park Architectural Review Committee *does not support* the use of composite posts and suggests the Applicant repair the wood post(s), or replace the wood post(s) with new, like-for-like, wood posts.

10. Replacement Elements

Replacement elements, including the porch post brackets, should all be historic in design, either matching salvage, or custom made from wood.

11. Landscaping

The Committee suspects the Applicant will install landscaping for the south and east yard areas.

* The Committee requests the Applicant provide a landscape plan, including a plant palette, for it to consider as part of this review.

General Comment:

Committee requests Applicant respond in writing, to each comment, including those from August 2022 (see below). Replies include “Agree,” or “Accept” to affirm, or “Completed” if done. Use “do not accept”, or “disagree” where there is a dispute. Feel free to also respond with a sentence, if such is appropriate.

Purpose for this is to confirm Applicant’s intent, mitigate misunderstandings between it and the Committee, and serve as a record of decision.

1. Committee requests Applicant use wood, instead of metal, to replace the aging staircase safety railing sets. Compatible railings reflect the building’s architectural style, including porch, stair components, and its overall use of wood. Other reasons to use wood, instead of metal railings, include:

a. Metal safety railing is appropriate for a Spanish Colonial Revival, or similar architectural style

b. Use of metal railing on other architectural styles, like this property, the 1898 Thomas-Hamilton House, a wood-frame Colonial Revival, is incompatible with its original design

b. Where staircase safety railing is present in French Park, it is mostly wood construction

c. Where metal safety railing is present in French Park, it is likely un-permitted, and was not considered by the Committee

d. Committee has considered numerous neighborhood reviews (over 25 years) which replaced staircase safety railings. All of these projects, including several apartments, use wood, and not metal railings

e. Committee has not approved use of metal railings since it began work in 1999

2. Retain the existing wood staircase safety railing leading to the rear second-story unit along Tenth Street. Doing so insures this staircase will continue to match a second wood staircase safety railing, located on the north side of the rear apartment

3. Create a new wood staircase safety baluster by slightly elongating the original porch baluster design. The components of the porch baluster design include a square base and cap, three (3) sets of three (3) ribbed elements, and two smooth areas

4. Copy the original porch baluster cap rail (with its modest crown), like-for-like, to create a new, matching, staircase cap rail for use on the staircase safety railing sets for the main house

5. Committee recommends creating new 8" x 8" wide newel-posts. Existing newel posts are approximately 5"-6" x 5"-6" wide. The design for the *new* newel-post to match the existing newel-post design. Locate newel posts on the lowest step of each staircase (for the main house), and at the end of the each rail set.

6. Ensure newel post fasteners (plates, bolts, nails) are not visible, once installed

7. Committee supports removing non-original architectural elements which enclose the wrap-around porch. Non-original elements may include, but not limited to, panes of glass, wood framing, horizontal wood siding, associated wood trim, and plain diagonal braces

8. Committee endorses restoration of the porch to its original appearance using "like-for-like" materials, including dimensioned and shaped lumber, to match

9. Reuse, repair original wood elements as much as possible

10. Damaged wood elements are often repairable using wood restoration products like Abatron Wood Epox, and Abatron Liquid Wood. Committee is available to demonstrate these products if requested

11. Please provide product information (or samples) for each, different, exterior light fixture(s)

12 Consider using quality redwood to fabricate missing or severely damaged porch skirting, porch skirting trim, wood porch deck, and the three vent grates

13. Consider repairing, sanding and painting the five (5) concrete porches, to create an attractive, and uniform appearance