



MEMO

To: Nichole Martin, AICP
Planner II, City of Dublin

From: Vivian Majtenyi, AIA, NCARB
Historical Architect

Date: October 19, 2020

Re: 181 S. High Street, First Review

INTRODUCTION

This is the first informal review of the proposed renovation at 181 S. High Street for the City of Dublin Planning Department. Represented by Richard Taylor Architects, the applicants wish to turn their 1967 (per Franklin County Auditor and Ohio Historic Inventory (OHI) form) rental property into their permanent residence. The applicants propose to renovate this approximately 2,800 square foot residence with attached garage by replacing the existing garage with a larger version and by placing a new addition at the rear of the property, with smaller alterations to the front. The City of Dublin Planning Department contacted Preservation Designs to address the suitability of the proposed design concept and its compatibility with structures in the local Historic Residential district. This review is based upon this reviewer's understanding of the City of Dublin Bridge Street District (BSD) Zoning Districts, and the Preservation, Rehabilitation, and New Construction Guidelines of the *Historic Dublin Design Guidelines*. These comments are based on the reviewer's professional experience and judgment regarding historic architecture and preservation projects. However, these comments do not (and cannot) identify every issue that may be of concern to the City of Dublin and its various review boards. As always, the final determination of these issues lies with the City of Dublin.

THOUGHTS on the NEW CONSTRUCTION at 181 S HIGH STREET

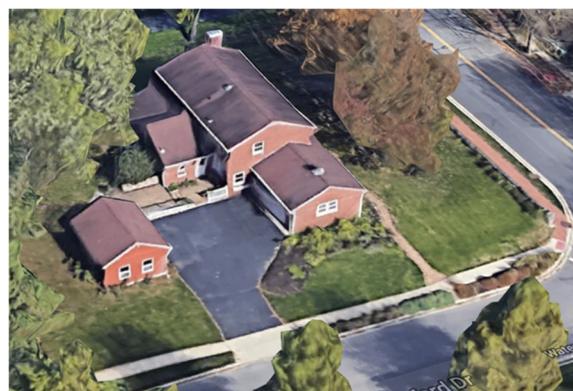
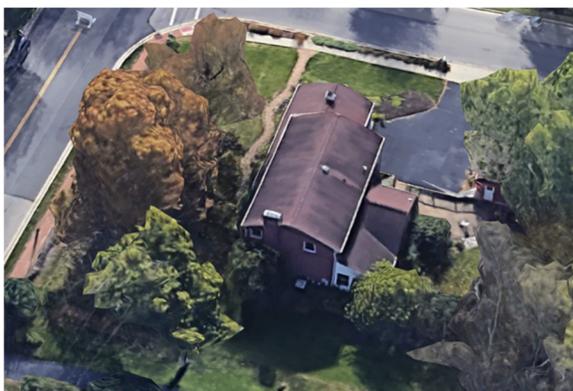
The property lies within the Bridge Street District (BSD) Historic Residential zoning district, whose purpose is to permit the preservation and development of homes on new or existing lots that are compatible in size, mass, and scale, while still maintaining and promoting the traditional residential character of the Historic Dublin area. The zoning district should protect the scale and character of the original platted village and ensure that new buildings are compatible with the existing residential uses and streets. (City of Dublin Bridge Street District (BSD) Zoning Districts Zoning Code Sections 153.057 through 153.066).

As part of the *City of Dublin Historical and Cultural Assessment* (HaCA) of May 2017, this residence was listed as, "Recommended non-contributing." However, using the same standards that were applied in this assessment, specifically the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) eligibility per the Ohio Historic Preservation Office (OHPO), this property meets NRHP eligibility criteria by being "at least 50 years old, maintain[ing] a moderate to high level of integrity," and, "embody[ing] the distinctive characteristics of type, period, or method of construction," specifically of the architectural style most similar to the 'Raised Ranch,' a variation of the traditional 'Ranch' style.

Common design characteristics of the 'Raised Ranch' include two stories with an attached garage, a low-pitched gable roof with boxed eaves, asymmetrical massing, wood porch post(s), and double-hung windows. This house also has 'Raised Ranch' elements that have been tweaked; while it has two main floors above grade and a basement below, the main entry is at the ground level of the house, not a half story up. It also has a cross gable, not at the main roof's side gable but at a single-story mass at the rear to form a 'T'. Instead of the typical picture windows, the house has grouped double-hung windows, and the overall detailing is minimalistic. These characteristics can be found in the Gabled-Roof subtype of the 'Contemporary' house style. This means this house cannot be considered a "high style" example of the 'Raised Ranch' architectural style, but as a modified 'Raised Ranch' hybrid with 'Contemporary' house style elements. Additionally, there are minor exterior alterations: an enclosed porch with shed roof has filled in the 'T' at the northwest corner, and a few landscape and hardscape elements on the west side lack the linear horizontal design of short or minimal height that best integrates the house to the horizontal "prairie" landscape. These elements are at the rear and away from the public view and do not overpower the original design intent. Regarding the more common 'Ranch' architectural style, 170 and 180 Riverview Street (also located in the BSD: Historic Residential zoning district) are both recommended eligible and contributing to the historic character per the HaCA. For these reasons, this house is recommended as eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places as a good example of the 'Raised Ranch' with 'Contemporary' elements. Because it is now NRHP eligible, it (and its architectural style) should now be considered as "contributing" as part of the local BSD Historic Residential zoning district.



Figure 1. Looking at the front elevation (left) and north elevation showing rear enclosed porch addition at the northwest corner (October 2020).



Figures 2 and 3. Looking south by southeast and north by northeast, respectively (Google Maps Globe View, October 2020).

This information advises the architect on how to proceed with the exterior alterations. Per the language of the 'Architectural Review District Code' (ARDC) 153.174,

“Every reasonable effort shall be made to ensure that the use of the property will involve minimal alteration of an existing building, structure, or site and its environment.... The distinguishing original qualities or character of a period building, structure, or site and/or its environment shall not be destroyed. The removal or alteration of any historic material or distinctive architectural or environmental features should be avoided when possible.”

This means the original 1967 house, based on the what currently is visible today, should be kept as-is. Any exterior modifications should ideally be reversible, or if determined necessary by the City of Dublin, destruction of identified original elements should be minimized. Modifying the 1967 structure and architectural elements previously called out to create a farm-house aesthetic would create a false historicism that no longer informs the district's richness of character. “All buildings, structures and sites shall be recognized as products of their own time. Alterations that have no historical basis and which seek to create an earlier appearance inconsistent or inappropriate to the original integrity of the building shall be discouraged,” (ARDC 15.174). The original farmhouse sits next door, at 167 S. High Street. It is important to maintain the history of the area by not upstaging this farmhouse with incompatible buildings (see Figures 6 and 7 for a graphic depiction on a detail site plan).

However, this assessment does not prohibit changes to the exterior. Removal of the enclosed porch is permissible, and adding additions are permitted, provided:

“[The] additions should be clearly distinguishable from the original structure by keeping the additions at a smaller scale...The intent of an addition should be that if the additions or alterations were removed the essential form and integrity of the original structure would be unimpaired. Additions should generally be located to the rear of the original building so that the most significant and visible faces of historic properties are given priority. Additions to the front should be clearly separated from the original building and simplified in design to not detract from the historic aspects of the structure.” (ARDC 15.174, D.3)

The architect should use this as basis for making alterations that best address the program needs of their client.

Regarding the demolition and replacement of the attached garage, this garage represents the standard dimensions used in 1967 for car vehicular storage. Today's vehicles probably have the similar length to the larger American cars of the Fifties and Sixties, but not the height and widths found with today's SUVs and extended cab pickups. Without knowing the client's specific vehicular needs, this reviewer recommends keeping the original garage as intact as possible and searching for alternate design possibilities that meet the above criteria.

As far as the repair, replacement and/or repainting of the exterior brick and repointing the mortar is concerned, this brick and its mortar are character-defining features, and as such should be retained and preserved as much as possible on the original 1967 house. While there may be some difficulty in matching historic brick and mortar, the National Park Service has published various bulletins on this subject that can be of help. Overall, it is recommended to repair and maintain the brick if possible.

Regarding the massing and look of the additions, the architect must balance the program needs while maintaining the characteristic footprint of the BSD: Historic Residential zoning district. Per the overall site plan (Figure 4), any new additions should not oversize the house's footprint in comparison with

nearby properties. Design solutions can also be found by creating compatible additions that are reversible. The architect may wish to examine extending the front porch in a reversible and minimal way, or to add a patio with compatible landscaping to the north end of the east elevation so as to meet program requirements while supporting the original architectural style.

Moreover, based on the materials submitted, it is difficult to tell what is new construction versus what is existing or altered original building fabric. Any additional submittals should show existing conditions, demolition areas, and new construction to ensure that character-defining features are not damaged or removed in the remodeling. New farmhouse elements should be added to the rear of the building to not detract from the original character of the area and create a false sense of history. Wood clapboard siding should be used and board and batten siding limited to outbuildings or distinct garage structures—areas where board and batten historically would have been used. In addition, this reviewer **does not** recommend painting the brick. Both the *Secretary of Interior's Standards* (page 67) and the *Historic Dublin Design Guidelines* (page 44) recommend not painting masonry that has historically been unpainted to create a new appearance.

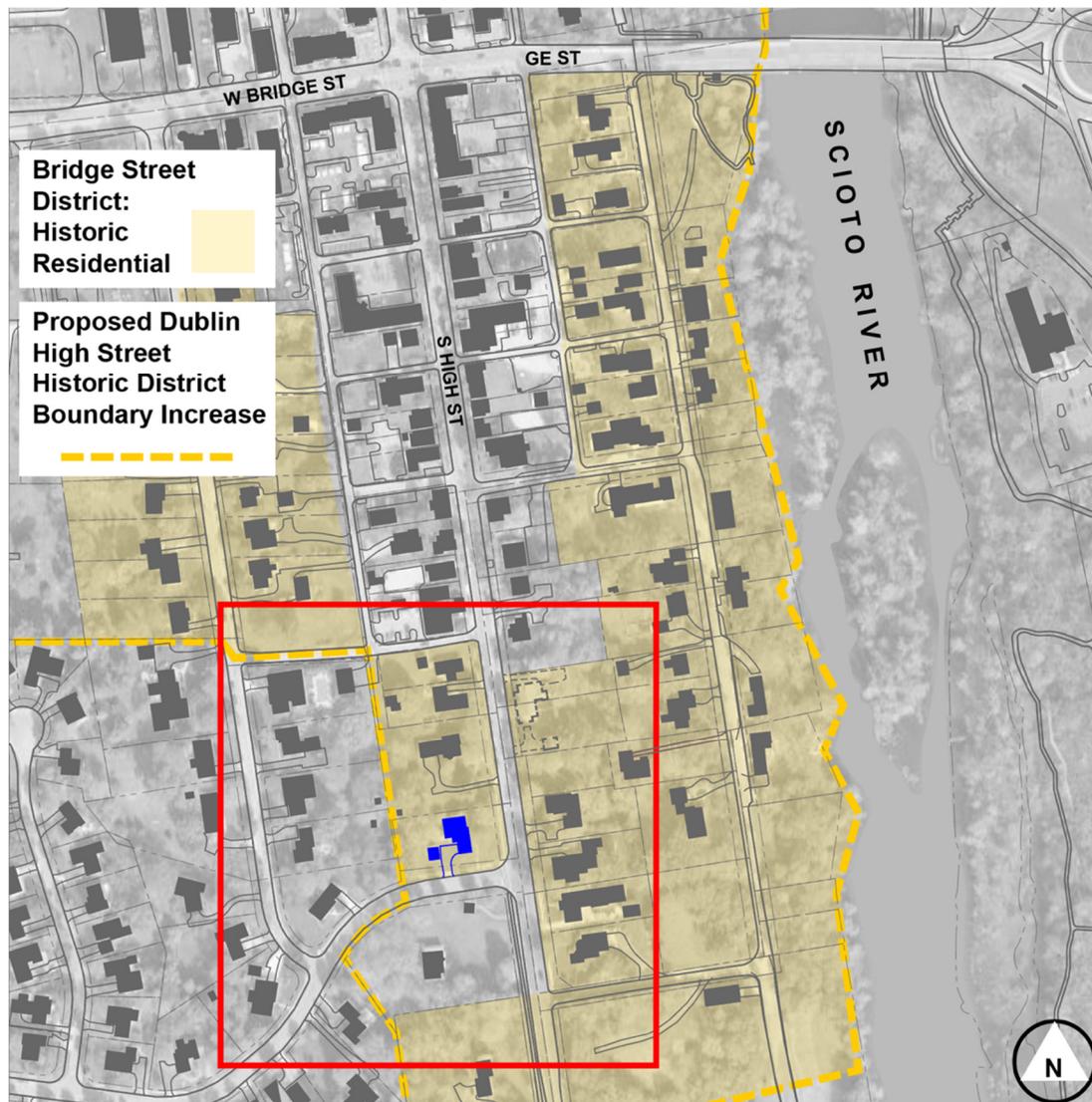


Figure 4. Overall view of the buildings south of Bridge Street with the existing building, outbuilding and driveway shown in blue. (Original Adobe Illustrator sketch using ArcGIS Data provided by the Franklin County Auditor and the City of Dublin, extracted September 9th, 2020; not to scale)



Figure 5. Proposed Site Plan with Building Interior of the proposed Bergwall Residence by Richard Taylor Architects. Note that this site plan requires revision to comply with the design recommendations, including keeping the original garage and keeping the east façade intact.



Figure 6. Existing building on the site showing the original building portions to remain in blue and portions to be demolished in red, per the proposed site plan shown in Figure 4. This proposed plan requires modification to comply with recommendations.

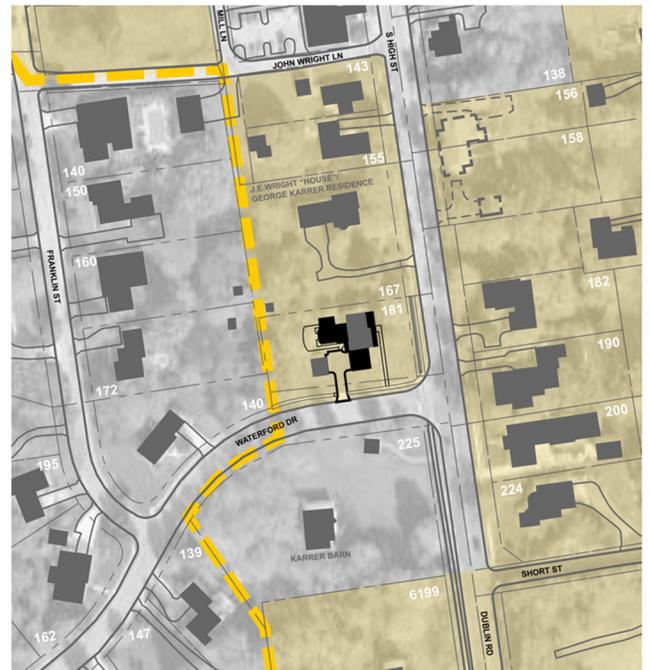


Figure 7. This shows the proposed site plan with the original building portions that remain generally intact as gray, and additions to the original structure as black. Again, this proposed plan requires modification to comply with recommendations.

Overall, I would **not approve the current design without modifications** as currently presented. It requires some simplifying in plan, removing false historical elements, and maintaining the original architectural style's character defining elements on the east and south elevations. While some materials and finishes are acceptable (such as the asphalt shingles), others need to be revised to comply more completely with the historic preservation standards, such as keeping the original brick and mortar and not installing board and batten siding on a residence.