

**ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION
STAFF REPORT**

APPLICATION NUMBER..... COA-2025-09-1873

DATE..... November 19, 2025

PETITIONER..... Andrew Malec as agent for Gregg Bayard

REQUEST..... Raising Structure and Replacing Rear Addition

LOCATION..... 127 Nantahala Avenue

PROPERTY INFORMATION.....Tax Parcel # 163C3 B003, Boulevard, RS-8

RECOMMENDATION..... Approve with Conditions

REQUEST

Approval is sought for a proposal to raise and shift the existing structure as well as replace the rear addition and front porch and add to the eastern side.

BACKGROUND

Parcel Status: The property is considered a contributing resource to the Boulevard Historic District. This means that changes are reviewed for the impact to the overall district as well as to the character of this property.

Parcel History: This COA was heard and tabled at the October HPC meeting. This project received comments on a preliminary design at the August 2025 HPC meeting. No previous applications for Certificates of Appropriateness are on file for this property. Sanborn Maps for the area show that this structure was built between 1926 and 1947 with the rear addition added by 1953 based on aerial photos.

Lot Features: The subject property is located on the southern side of Nantahala Avenue and is the second parcel west of the southwest intersection with Barber Street facing Nantahala Avenue. The parcel has around 50' of lot width and about 198 feet of lot depth. The topography of the property sees a drop of about 16 feet from the rear of the lot to the street.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The scope of this project includes the following primary revisions that are also incorporated into the project description:

- The front porch would remain about the same width as existing going from about 9'6" to 9'1". The depth of the porch would be increased from about 5'6" to 7'11".
- The proposed retaining wall behind the house is no longer planned.
- The driveway would be wider with a spot for two cars to park.
- Modified window arrangement on the western (right) side elevation.
- The brick chimney that was already removed without the benefit of review is to be returned to the structure.

Existing Conditions:

The topographical conditions cause water to run toward the house where the existing rear addition sits at grade. The west side of the house sits about 2 feet off the western side property line including both the

24' x 24' original side gable house area and the 12' x 25' rear gable addition which is in the same wall plane. Vinyl siding covers the original wood lap siding and it is unclear if corner boards remain. A porch exists at the front entry with a low gable roofline supported by square columns on brick piers. The porch is about 10' wide and 5' deep. A detached carport sits to the east of the house.

Proposed Modifications:

Demolition: The existing conditions include a 12' x 25' rear gable addition that was built between 1947 and 1953. This addition is proposed to be removed and replaced. The detached carport is also proposed for removal. A brick chimney at the center of the house has already been removed but the exterior chimney is to return as part of this request.

Shifting placement: The retained original structure area is proposed to be shifted east about 4' to allow for a west side setback of 6'. The structure would also be shifted about 4' to the south to allow for a deeper front porch while remaining compliant with zoning setback requirements at the front. The adjacent house to the east sits at the front property line while the structure to the west has a front setback of about 33'. Therefore, this structure would remain between the two in regards to front setback.

Foundation height: The house would have a foundation added to put the finished floor level at 30"-36" above grade at the front and front porch of the house. The rear would have about 18" of foundation exposed. The foundation would be continuous block with a brick pier overlay.

Front porch replacement: The existing front porch is 9'6.37" in width and 5'8.75" in depth. One step runs the full width of the opening between brick half-piers to allow for the finished floor height of about 1' above grade. The proposed front porch would retain the same general width and configuration. A low gable roofline supported by two posts on half piers. The porch would extend out over 2' further and require about 5 steps. These would be brick. A simple dark metal railing would be used at the sides of the porch.

Eastern Side Addition: A side gable addition would be added to the eastern (left) side of the house. This addition would be about 9'4" in width and be recessed about 6' back from the northeast corner of the existing house. The roof peak of this addition would be just over 1' lower than the existing. A gabled side stoop and steps would be located at the eastern side of the addition. The gable peak would be 3'7" below the gable addition peak. This side porch would have 4'9" in depth and 8'9.75" in width with four steps to reach the porch floor. A simple dark metal railing matching that to be used at the front porch would be used. The foundation would be brick piers with block infill. Two square columns would support the gable roof.

Rear Addition: The existing rear addition is about 12' in depth and 25' in width - the full width of the original structure. The proposed rear addition is to be the full width of the structure including the eastern side addition for 33'3.5" in width. The depth would be 20'5.75". With this addition, the heated and cooled space would increase from about 888 square feet to 1522 square feet. With porches, the total footprint of the structure would be 1688 square feet. Shingle roofing would be utilized on the entire structure as is the current condition.

Windows: The proposed change includes modification of window placement on the retained structure in addition to new windows at the addition areas. It is unclear if replacement of all windows is proposed. The western side elevation is to see the most modification of the existing window placement and pattern, though this is reduced from the October review. Currently there is a paired window at the northern end

and a single window at the southern end of the area to be retained. Proposed is retaining the paired window where it exists, shifting the single window to the center of this wall and adding a paired window with less height about where the single window is currently found. At the eastern side elevation, a single window at the northern end would be moved north a little more than two feet to be exposed on the recess of the new side addition.

Window openings on the new areas would include a single window centered on the front elevation of the side addition and matching the existing windows in size. The rear elevation would include two sets of paired windows as the only openings. The western side elevation at the addition would include a single window of the smaller size to be located to its north and two individual windows of the larger size. The eastern side elevation would include a single door under the side porch and five individual windows of the larger size along the remainder of the addition. The spacing of these windows would be irregular. No corner board would be used on the eastern side between the side gable portion of the addition and the rear extension as a window would cut through this position. The west side would utilize a corner board where the rear addition meets the historic house area retained. The material for the windows has not been noted aside from use of double panes. The elevations depict 3-over-1 windows as is the existing and proposed condition.

Siding: The existing vinyl siding would be removed to expose the wood siding underneath, which the applicant has characterized as wood lap siding. Staff inspection finds that it is wood novelty siding. The wood lap siding would be retained or replaced in-kind as needed. The addition areas would utilize cementitious lap siding.

~~**Rear retaining wall:** A retaining wall is shown as extending across the full width of the lot about 23 feet behind the rear wall plane. The material for the wall and height have not been provided and the applicant has stated that grading may eliminate this need. If needed, the wall would likely be parge coated block. An existing retaining wall at the western side of the front yard directs water to the storm drain. This appears to be of block construction. It is unclear if this area is to be altered as it is not depicted on the site plan.~~

Driveway and walkway: The existing gravel driveway would be replaced with a concrete driveway at the same location but with less depth due to the side extension of the house and with greater width to allow for two cars to park side by side. The existing concrete walkway would be removed and a new walkway placed to its east to align with the front porch steps of the shifted structure.

REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION:

Review of this application would follow the general set of Design Guidelines including Chapter 2 regarding the Building Materials and Features, Chapter 5 on additions, and Chapter 6 regarding demolition. Review of the shifting of the structure, which is not otherwise addressed in the Design Guidelines, uses the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation, found in Appendix A.

	Met?	Comments
2A.5 Chimneys	Yes	Chimneys are an important reminder of the past and should be preserved. Returning the chimney to the house is appropriate.
2B Windows	No	The windows maintain the same head height, appear to be the same size and configuration. However, the solid-to-void ratio and rhythm of openings is not maintained on the preserved area of the house. While adjustments were made from the previous review, significant impacts to the windows remain.

2D Porches	Partly	The replacement of the front porch with a porch but of the approximate same width, low gable roofing and post on pier supports is appropriate as is the use of a simple metal railing at the sides due to the increased height. The increase to the depth by more than 2 feet does alter the scale of the porch far less than the previous design, but an increase in scale nonetheless.
2E Exterior Siding	Yes	The exposure of the wood novelty siding is appropriate and encouraged by the Design Guidelines. In-kind repair and replacement only where necessary is appropriate.
2F Foundations	Mostly	The Design Guidelines state that addressing foundation problems should occur without alteration of the foundation form or materials. However, staff acknowledges that the progression of climate change since the guidelines were written has impacted this advice. The modest raise in foundation height proposed would not be of a significant detriment to the integrity of the historic structure. Use of brick piers with recessed block infill between them at the retained historic portion of the house visible preserves the existing conditions of brick piers without infill currently found at these areas. Use of a continuous block foundation with thin brick applied like piers would not achieve the same degree of recess with the piers being in an appropriate plane in relationship to the wall.
3A Parking, Drives, & Walkways	Yes	The use of a concrete driveway is appropriate and common to the immediate area. Concrete is the existing walkway material and it is appropriate to continue this use with the shifting of the house.
4F Applying New Construction Guidelines to Additions	Partly	The location of a side addition with a recess of only 6' from the front of the structure does increase the significance of the impact from this change. This coupled with the rear addition width including this added width at the side, the scale of the addition is difficult to see as subordinate to the very modest original structure. Details such as window sizes and types are consistent.
5A Demolition Criteria	Mostly	The rear addition proposed for removal is architecturally compatible with the original portion of the structure but not of any particular architectural significance. Its importance to the ambiance of the district speaks to the changing household needs from the original construction to the 1950s. Reproduction would be easily accomplished aside from modern zoning setbacks. Rear additions to very modest original structures are very common to this area which included a large amount of mill housing. The use of the structure without the rear addition is feasible aside from zoning codes regarding minimum house sizes.
5B Historic Additions	Yes	The rear addition was added by 1953 and does speak to the evolution of this property and the changing household needs of its time. However, the design of the addition prevents raising this area to address the water intrusion that threatens the overall structure. As a simple and modest addition to a simple and modest house, the addition lacks the significance to require its retention at the cost of the original area.
Sec. Stds for Rehab./ Shifting Structure	Mostly	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The property would be used for same residential purpose. 2. The shifting of the property does not require removal of historic materials or features for the original area of the house. The house

		<p>would remain with a front setback between those of the homes to each side.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Shifting the house away from the side property line a few feet does not create a false sense of history. 4. The shifting of the house along with the raising does prevent the retention of the later addition. 5. The distinctive features of the property would not be lost due to the shifting of the structure. 6. If found to be deteriorated, distinctive features could be replaced in kind.
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Staff finds that the demolition of the rear addition to allow for raising the foundation level and shifting the structure meets the Design Guidelines when the preservation of the original historic structure is prioritized. However, staff does not find the replacement or increase in size of the front porch to meet the guidelines and finds concerns with scale of the addition to be amplified by the minor setback of the side addition, solid-to-void ratio and rhythm of openings for the project also remain a concern.

The historic structure is of American Small or Minimal Traditional styles and very indicative of the modest structures of these styles. The changes to the form of the shifted house need to prioritize the original form through the use of a greater recess for the side addition and retention of the original window configuration for the retained structure. The following conditions of approval are recommended:

- The side addition see an increased recess from the front corner to be at least 8' and to preserve the existing window opening.
- The window openings on the retained structure be retained as existing.
- The number of window openings on the east side of the new addition be reduced by one window to better relate to the rhythm of the historic openings.

This recommendation is made to address the design guidelines noted above, as well as Section 8-5-5 D (1) of the Athens-Clarke County Historic Preservation Ordinance regarding Acceptable Historic Preservation Commission Reaction to an Application for Certificate of Appropriateness.

REPORT FOR:	127 Nantahala Avenue	
In evaluating the attached report, the following standards, which are checked, were considered in making a recommendation. Items that are not applicable are marked as such. More detailed descriptions of each item are included in the attached report.		
REVIEWED	NOT APPLICABLE	
X		1. HISTORIC USES OF PROPERTY
X		2. NECESSITY OF PROPOSED CHANGES
X		3. INTEGRITY OF HISTORIC RESOURCE
		4. THE EXTENT TO WHICH THE CHANGE WILL AFFECT:
X		A. INTEGRITY OF THE BUILDING
X		B. INTEGRITY OF THE AREA
X		5. ORIGINAL AND CURRENT USES

127 Nantahala Avenue Review Worksheet

	Met?	Comments
2A.5 Chimneys		
2B Windows		
2D Porches		
2E Exterior Siding		
2F Foundations		
3A Parking, Drives, & Walkways		
4F Applying New Construction Guidelines to Additions		
5A Demolition Criteria		
5B Historic Additions		
Sec. Stds for Rehab./ Shifting Structure		