



Staff Report

Infill Housing Design Review Committee

File Number: 12-E-23-IH

Meeting: 12/20/2023
Applicant: Mike Ballinger
Owner: Mike Ballinger

Property Information

Location: 1209 Dakota Ave. **Parcel ID** 81 | A 02001
Zoning: RN-2 (Single-Family Residential Neighborhood)
District: Lonsdale Infill Housing Overlay District

Description of Work

Level III New Primary Structure

New primary residence fronting Dakota Avenue. One-story residence features a front-gable roof (6/12 pitch), an exterior of vinyl siding, and concrete slab. The house will be set 37.4' from the front property line. The parking is proposed for the front yard, featuring an 11' wide concrete driveway with a 10' by 18' turnaround extending to the right.

The façade (east elevation) features a partial-width, front-gable roof porch supported by square wood posts. The three-bay façade features a centrally-located front door flanked by paired one-over-one windows. The left elevation features one one-over-one window, and the right elevation features two smaller fixed windows. A secondary access is located on the rear elevation.

Applicable Design Guidelines

Heart of Knoxville Infill Housing Design Guidelines

1. Front Yards

- Consistent front yard space should be created along the street with the setback of a new house matching the older houses on the block.
- A walkway should be provided from the sidewalk or street to the front door. Along grid streets, the walk should be perpendicular to the street.
- Healthy trees that are outside the building footprint should be preserved. The root area should be marked and protected during construction.

2. House Orientation and Side Yards

- New housing should be proportional to the dimensions of the lot and other houses on the block.
- Side yard setbacks should be similar to older houses on the block, keeping the rhythm of spacing between houses consistent.

3. Alleys, Parking, and Services

- Parking should not be in front yards.
 - On streets without alleys, garages or parking areas should be at least 20 feet behind the front façade of the infill
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house with access limited to one lane between the street and the front façade.

- Alley access should be used for garage or parking pad locations. On level ground, pea gravel or similar material may be used as a parking pad off alleys.
- Alley-oriented parking pads, garbage collection points, and utility boxes should be screened with a combination of landscaping and fencing.
- On those streets which have alleys, driveways should not be permitted from the front of the house.

4. Scale, Mass, and Foundation Height

- The front elevation should be designed to be similar in scale to other houses along the street.
- The front façade of new houses should be about the same width as original houses on the block.
- New foundations should be about the same height as the original houses in the neighborhood.

5. Porches and Stoops

- Small stoops centered on entry and no more than 5 feet deep are appropriate on blocks where porches were not traditional.

6. Windows and Doors

- When constructing new houses, the window and door styles should be similar to the original or historic houses on the block.
- To respect the privacy of adjacent properties, consider the placement of side windows and doors.
- The windows and doors on the front facade of an infill house should be located in similar proportion and position as the original houses on the block.
- Attention should be paid to window placement and the ratio of solid (the wall) to void (the window and door openings).

7. Roof Shapes and Materials

- New roofs should be designed to have a similar pitch to original housing on the block.
- Darker shades of shingle were often used and should be chosen in roofing houses in Heart of Knoxville neighborhoods.

8. Siding Materials

- Clapboard-like materials (such as cement fiberboard) should be used in constructing new housing where painted wood siding was traditionally used.
- Faced stone, vertical siding, and other non-historic materials should not be used in building new houses. In 1930-1950 era neighborhoods, faced stone may be appropriate (see Section 12).

11. Landscaping and Other Considerations

- One native or naturalized shade tree should be planted in the front and rear yards of infill lots with 25 feet or more in depth to front of house.

Comments

1. The house is proposed to be set 37.4' from the front property line. The proposed house will be accompanied by three additional new construction houses on the block, creating a new streetscape pattern on a block with no additional houses. The houses should be moved closer to the front property line to meet the base zoning's 20' front setback requirement.

2. The block to receive new construction is relatively vacant and lacks context. The proposed one-story, three-bay house is proportional to the dimensions of the lot and the context of the block. The side yard setbacks are consistent with the broader neighborhood.

3. The design guidelines and Infill Housing code discourage front yard parking. The parking should be revised to

place cars "at least 20 feet behind the front façade of the infill house, with access limited to one lane between the street and the front façade" to meet the guidelines. Final revisions may be necessary to meet City Engineering standards.

4. The one-story, three-bay façade is similar to the broader neighborhood context. The house is proposed for a concrete slab foundation; guidelines recommend that "new houses be about the same height as the original houses in the neighborhood." The foundation height should be elevated to at least 12" to meet guidelines.

5. The house features a partial-width front porch (depth not provided). The overall porch design meets the Infill Housing guidelines, though the applicant should provide measurements on porch supports and porch depth. The porch should be supported by posts that are at least 6 by 6 and measure at least 8' in depth.

6. Guidelines recommend window and door styles be similar, with similar proportions and ratio of solid to void to, to historic houses on the block. Revisions should be made to the side elevations to incorporate additional transparency.

7. The proposed roof pitch, 6/12, is the minimum typically approved in the Infill Housing overlay and meets the design guidelines.

8. While vinyl siding meets the Infill Housing guidelines, the final siding material should feature an overlap instead of flush panel or Dutch lap vinyl siding.

9. The site plan includes the planting of one new tree in the rear yard and the retention of an existing tree in the front.

10. 1209 Dakota Avenue is proposed to be identical to the new houses at 1205, 1215, and 1219 Dakota Avenue. Revisions should be made to the houses to differentiate the four; options could include revised rooflines, porch design and placement, or overall massing and design of the houses.

Recommendation

Staff recommends approval of Certificate 12-E-23-IH, subject to the following conditions: 1) front setback to be revised, moving house closer to the front property line; 2) final site plan to meet City Engineering standards; 3) parking to be revised to meet Infill Housing guidelines; 4) revisions to side elevation window placement and proportion; and 5) revisions to differentiate from adjacent new houses proposed on Dakota Avenue, with approval by staff.