

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

APPLICATION NUMBER..... COA-2025-04-0802
DATE..... May 21, 2025
PETITIONER..... Clay Crowder as agent for Robert & Anne Moser
REQUEST..... Demolish garage and build new accessory building
LOCATION..... 317 Franklin St.
PROPERTY INFORMATION..... Tax Parcel # 122B2 J011, Cobbham, RS-8
RECOMMENDATION..... Approval with conditions

REQUEST

Approval is sought for the demolition of the existing garage structure and new construction of an accessory building at an adjusted location.

BACKGROUND

Parcel Status: The property is considered contributing to the Cobbham Historic District. This means that the proposed changes would be considered for their impact on this property as well as the district overall.

Parcel History: Several previous applications for Certificates of Appropriateness are on file for this property starting with a rear addition in 1989, plus changes to fencing, gutters, roofing and a deck between 1994 and 2011. In 2017 approval was given for enclosing a portion of the porch. A similar project was reviewed for comments at the April 2022 hearing and approved for permitting at the June 2022 hearing. The approval expired in June of 2023 after no work began on the project after two extensions. Sanborn Maps for this area date to 1918 with the subject dwelling being shown at that time. Alterations include the expansion of the front porch to extend the full width of the front and to wrap to the side, which occurred between 1918 and 1926. A small enclosed addition to the rear of the structure also occurred during this same period.

Lot Features: The subject property is on the northwest corner of the intersection of Franklin Street and Meigs Street. The property is approximately 75 feet wide and 195 feet deep with the dwelling situated at the front of the parcel. The property includes a drop in topography of approximately 6 feet from the front to the rear.

EVALUATION

Approval is requested on both the demolition of the existing garage structure and the construction of a new accessory building. More information and descriptions are as follows:

Demolition: The existing garage structure appears to have been constructed between 1926 and 1947 to replace earlier accessory structures in the same general position. The existing structure is approximately 26' x 20' with the 20' end directly at the property line along Meigs Street approximately at the middle of the lot depth. The building has a simple gable form with wood novelty siding and an asphalt shingle roof. A structural condition report from Ginn Engineering Services has been referenced and quoted with the submitted project that denotes the structure as unstable in regards to the roof framing and connections of the walls to the foundation and finds that refurbishment is not a viable option.

New Construction: The existing garage location does not meet the setback requirements of today. The new location would be up to the 10' setback line, approximately 16 feet from Meigs Street, 66 feet from the rear (west) property line, and about 42 feet from the northern interior side property line. There would be about 18' between the main section of the new structure and the existing deck of the historic home, though it would be about 10' from the front right corner of garage to the deck. The new structure would be a single story and measure 22'2" by 20'2", large enough for two cars. The overall height from grade to roof peak would be about 15'2" including a foundation of about 2' height. There are two proposed windows, both shown as six-over-six. One is on the east elevation, and the second is on the west elevation. There are two proposed pedestrian doors, one on the north elevation and one on the west next to a window. There is a two-car garage door on the south elevation facing Meigs Street. There are two proposed sconces, one next to each pedestrian door.

Materials:

- Roofing: Architectural shingles similar to existing house
- Siding and Trim: Cementitious 5" reveal lap siding.
- Windows: Wood windows, six-over-six windows to match house which has wood six-over-six windows with no transoms.
- Doors: 6-light fiberglass are noted on the application, but 9-light doors are shown on elevations.
- Foundation: Slab foundation; house has painted brick foundation
- Drive: Material used for new driveway is not noted. *Note that a concrete apron will be required along with a driveway permit from Transportation and Public Works. The parking pad itself could be approved for gravel or cement.

Fencing is proposed to extend to match on the application, though is not mentioned again on the submitted materials. The fencing design existing to be matched is a 6' tall wood picket.* Note the existing fencing does not meet the current code requirements. All new fencing must be designed to comply including with height, setbacks, and vision hazards.

RECOMMENDATION

This review utilizes the general set of Design Guidelines specifically Chapter 3 for Site Materials and Features and Chapter 5 for Demolition. More specifically, the applicable guidelines are addressed below:

Guideline	Met?	Comments
3B: Parking, Driveways, and Walks	Likely	Gravel is currently used for existing drive. If gravel will be used on new drive, that would be appropriate for the area.
3C: Fencing	Mostly	Use of wood picket fencing in the rear yard to continue is appropriate. Modifications in height or setback needed can be assessed by staff.
3G: Accessory Structures (Placement, Orientation, Scale, Massing, Materials, Details)	Likely	The placement of the proposed structure is a subordinate location behind the main structure nearer the rear property line. No depiction of the proposed structure in relationship to the historic home has been included and no height of the home provided. So, while the footprint is subordinate, a full comparison of the scale is difficult. The massing and roof forms relate to the historic home with gables and cross gables. Materials are consistent or related for roofing, siding, doors and windows and brick foundation.

5A: Demolition Criteria	Mixed	The accessory structure would be considered historic and as adding to the ambiance of the Cobbham Historic District. The structure could be reproduced in form but not the exact site as current due to setback requirements. The number of historic accessory structures in this district has decreased since designation but this is not one of the last examples of such. The engineer's report indicates that stabilization measures to rehabilitate the structure are not feasible. The structure has little to any impact on the economic return of the property.
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Staff finds that the condition of the historic accessory structure allows for the demolition to be included for approval despite the age and character of the structure. Staff recommends approval with the following conditions to address concerns noted above:

- The applicant work with staff to address the fencing modifications to meet code requirements.
- The material for the driveway be explained and found appropriate or modified if needed.
- The proposed structure be shown to be of less height to the eaves and peak than the historic home.

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:	317 Franklin St.	
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

Worksheet for 317 Franklin Street

Guideline	Met?	Comments
4B: Parking, Driveways, and Walks		
4C: Fencing		
4G: Accessory Structures (Placement, Orientation, Scale, Massing, Materials, Details)		
6A: Demolition Criteria (Historic Significant, Importance to ambiance, Replicability, Plans, Reasonable Condition, Economic Return)		