

## 8. COA-077183-2020

PUBLIC HEARING DATE

August 25, 2020

PROPERTY ADDRESS

3101-3105 East Marshall Street

DISTRICT

St. John's Church

# Commission of Architectural Review

## STAFF REPORT



APPLICANT

Datapro Investments, Inc.

STAFF CONTACT

C. Jones

### PROJECT DESCRIPTION

**Modify previously approved plans to rehabilitate an existing building and build an addition onto the roof and rear; and to construct a new, connected, mixed-use addition on the corner.**

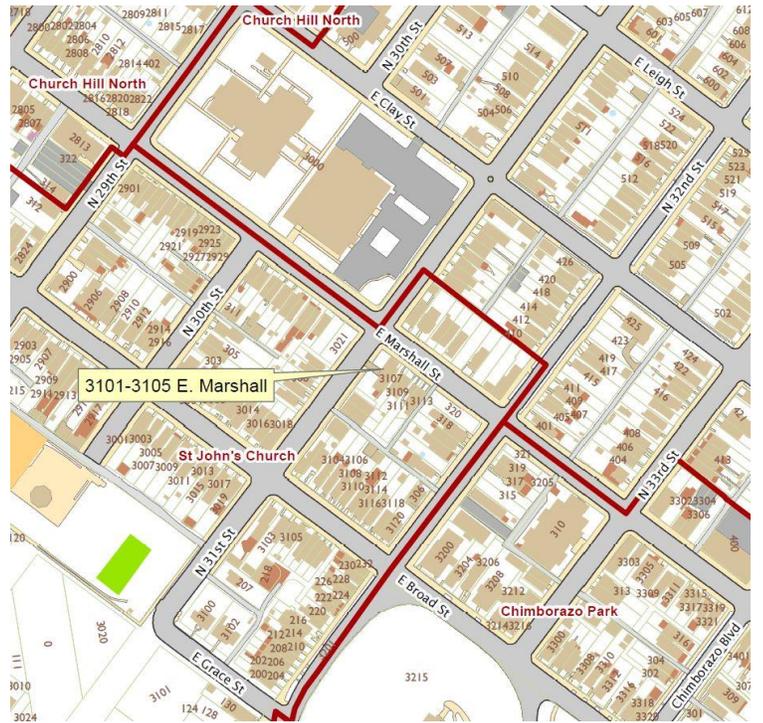
The Commission approved an application for this project at the January 28, 2020 Commission meeting. This staff report addresses revisions between the Commission approved plans and the resubmitted plans, described below in project details.

The applicant is also applying for a special use permit (SUP).

### PROJECT DETAILS

#### 3105 East Marshall Street – Existing building

- The Commission approved plans to renovate an existing two-story mixed-use building and build rooftop and rear additions. The approved renovation includes the removal of the non-historic masonry on the ground floor and the installation of a storefront window and door system.
- The approved plans also include rear and rooftop additions (second and third floor). The additions will be set back from the existing roof line and will extend past the rear wall of the building. Full-width, open porches will be attached to the rear of the additions and extend over ground-level parking.
- The Commission previously approved rehabilitation of the historic storefront. Based on the revised plans, it appears the applicant proposes changes to the rehabilitation plans including removal of the bulkhead panel and columns. The applicant has also changed the window sizes from the previous plans.
- The applicant now proposes to increase the height of the parapet walls, faux mansard roof, and cornice lines, and remove the decorative elements on the cornice line.
- The applicant has changed the massing of the rooftop addition and has introduced a new material, split-face granite block, for the HVAC enclosure.
- On the east elevation the applicant now proposes to infill all of the existing windows with salvaged bricks, increase the height of the side wall from the parapet, change the fenestration pattern, install a downspout, and demolish the one-story masonry mass.



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- On the rear of the existing building the applicant now proposes additional windows, new porch supports, and deletion of the brick piers. Staff notes the plans indicate a Colonial Grille window, but show a one-over-one window.

**PROJECT DETAILS**

**3101-3103 East Marshall Street – Addition**

- The Commission approved plans to construct a new three-story addition on the west elevation of the existing building, connected to the historic building by an internal corridor and shared walls.
- The applicant proposes a change in the overall massing of the addition. The Commission previously approved a flat roof with a solid cornice line that continues along the East 31<sup>st</sup> Street (west) elevation. The applicant now proposes a sloped roof with gutters and downspouts.
- On the East Marshall (north) elevation, the Commission previously approved a curtain wall connector between the historic building and the new construction. The applicant now proposes windows of differing sizes on each story with a multi-light configuration framed in hardi panels. Also on the north elevation the Commission approved a storefront system with brick piers, a cornice line at the same height as the historic building, and a single transom above the windows. The applicant now proposes a single, multi-light window and no exterior details. Staff also notes on the approved plans the window openings aligned with the hardi panels, and this detail is no longer proposed.
- On the North 31<sup>st</sup> Street (west) elevation the applicant has removed a vertical bay of windows above the commercial area, changed the first story (ground floor) fenestration pattern, removed the curtain wall and replaced it with the multi-light windows and hardi panels as on North 31<sup>st</sup> Street, relocated the gutters and downspouts, changed the doorway to recess it (to prevent an encroachment), and changed the spacing of the windows in the rear section. The entrance on this elevation is no longer proposed as a glass curtain wall, and is instead a narrower door framed in brick. The applicants have also reduced the size of the glazing in the connector section and the size of the patio doors and changed the window sizes.
- On the rear (south) elevation the applicant removed one of the piers, replaced the approved brick piers with steel posts, and added an additional window on the first story (ground floor).
- On the roof the applicant has relocated the HVAC units. The applicant now proposes to construct a granite enclosure around them.
- Changes to the approved site improvements include reducing the amount of parking from five spaces to four, relocating the trash storage area to the southeast corner of the lot, and changing the screening of the trash enclosure and parking spaces from composite panels to Trex composite fencing.

**PREVIOUS REVIEWS**

The Commission conceptually reviewed this application during the August 27, 2019 meeting. The Commission expressed concerns that the rooftop addition as proposed was too big and visible and overwhelmed the existing building, and ultimately questioned if a rooftop addition was appropriate for this building. The Commission suggested the addition should be set back from the roof slope. The Commission confirmed that the historic building and the new side addition needed to have a clear distinction with a physical and visual break. The Commission also discussed whether the height of the planned new construction is appropriate and how it engulfs the historic building and obscures its architectural features.

The Commission reviewed this application at the October 22nd, 2019 meeting. At this meeting the Commission voted to defer the application to allow the applicant the opportunity to make design changes in response to Commission feedback. For the addition, the Commission continued to have concerns regarding the addition engulfing the historic building and the proposed new height. The Commission also noted that the sloped pitched roof form on the Marshall Street side is not a typical form found in the district. Finally, the Commission expressed concern about the lack of fenestration on the west (North 31<sup>st</sup> Street) elevation and questioned if new windows would be allowed on the east elevation, since it appears to be on the property line.

The Commission reviewed the application again at the November 26, 2019 meeting. During the meeting, the Commission requested clarification about the height of the addition in relation to the historic building, stating a concern that the addition appeared to be taller. The Commission also expressed concern that the plans were confusing as to the window locations in relation to the parapet. The Commission again stated a concern with the

plans to demolish and extend the rear wall of the historic building. The Commission voted to defer the application to allow the applicant the opportunity to respond to staff and Commission comments.

The Commission approved a revised application at the January 28, 2020 Commission meeting. The Commission approved the application with the following conditions: the new masonry be differentiated from the historic masonry in tone, size, and/or bond pattern and that the final masonry specifications be submitted to staff for review and approval; the final window specifications be submitted to staff for review and approval; the final material specifications and colors, including the screening for the parking and trash receptacle area, be submitted for review and approval; clarification of the design treatment above the storefront window be submitted for staff review and approval.

Since the Commission approved the application, the applicant has applied for a SUP. A review of the SUP in late December 2019 resulted in additional comments and requests for information from a number of City agencies including Zoning, Public Works, and Building Plans Review. The applicant submitted revised SUP plans on April 15<sup>th</sup> and May 6<sup>th</sup> to address concerns from these agencies including encroachments with door swings and building code concerns. In late June 2020, the applicant contacted Commission staff with revised plans and proposed materials. Staff reviewed the information provided by the applicant and noted a number of design changes. Staff contacted the applicant and informed them that the changes to the Commission approved plans would require review and approval by the Commission.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION

**DEFER**

STAFF COMMENTS

**For 3105 East Marshall Street, staff recommends:**

- **Denial** of the request to increase the height of the parapet walls and faux mansard roof, and of the removal of the historic decorative elements and chimneys.
- **Deferral** of the plan to demolish the one-story rear mass to allow the applicant the opportunity to provide additional information to the Commission about the condition of this section and the need to demolish it, including that there are no feasible alternatives to demolition or opportunities to retain it.
- For the proposed storefront rehabilitation, the design match the historic photograph including, but not limited to, the wood panels below the windows and the pilasters separating the bays; and the windows surrounding the door be a consistent size .
- If permissible by building code, the applicant retain the previously approved fenestration pattern for the east elevation of the addition to maintain the balance of solid wall space and openings; staff requests confirmation that the proposed window openings meet current code requirements
- The brick infill for the historic window openings be recessed from the original opening and any decorative elements, such as exterior sills and headers, be maintained.
- Approval of the new rear porch supports with the condition that the applicant provide material specifications.
- Maintain the appearance of a flat roof for the additions.
- Retention of the three-story brick pier as a terminating element to unify the overall design.

**For 3101-3103 East Marshall Street, staff recommends:**

- **Denial** of the change from a curtain wall system to the proposed multi-light and hardi panel system proposed by the applicant for the connector on East Marshall Street and for the entrance area on North 31<sup>st</sup> Street.
- Confirmation that a greater portion of the historic west wall will be demolished for the addition.
- The applicant submit a fully dimensioned elevation with the height of the exterior elements
- The applicant retain the corner elements, incorporate simple piers that turn the corner, and include a subtle cornice line detail to be compatible with the surrounding historic storefronts and new construction
- The applicant align the heads and sills of the windows on the front and side elevations, or install glazing that turns the corner in keeping with other corner commercial properties in the area.

- The applicant maintain the vertical alignment between the first story and upper story windows on the North 31<sup>st</sup> Street (east) elevation including retaining a bank of windows on the east side elevation and centering the first story window below the balcony openings.
- The applicant retain the original size of the balcony door openings to maintain the balance between solids and voids on this elevation.
- The applicant align the panels with the windows openings.
- The applicant install the HVAC units in a non-visible location.

**Staff requests that the applicant address the following:**

- Encroachments on the east side, notably the garbage enclosure area and the addition on the east side; potential encroachments on the west elevation. Staff requests the applicant indicate the property line on all elevations to address potential encroachments.
- Water management for the addition on the east and rear elevation
- Inconsistences on the site plan, such as the garbage storage area being also marked bike or compact car parking.
- Windows schedule for the rehabilitated storefront at 3105 East Marshall Street, clarification of the window light pattern, and additional details for the windows that are not hung, i.e. casement, fixed.
- Add a key to the plans and elevations.

Commission staff reviewed the project through the lens of the “Standards for New Construction” of the Richmond Old and Historic District Handbook and Design Review Guidelines utilizing the Guidelines presented below. Since the new construction will be internally connected to the historic building, staff reviewed it through the lens of an addition. The Guidelines do not specifically address rooftop additions and large, multi-story, side additions, so staff used the guidance found in the National Park Service Technical Preservation Brief #14, New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns, available on-line at: <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/14-exterior-additions.htm> and presented below.

**STAFF ANALYSIS**

**3105 East Marshall Street – storefront rehabilitation and rear and rooftop additions**

Secretary of the Interior Standards, pg. 4-5

*2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*

*9. New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*

*10. New construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

Staff finds the plans to increase the height of the parapet walls and the false mansard, demolish the chimneys on the east wall of the historic building, and remove the decorative details on the cornice line are not in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior Standards since they will irreversibly alter a character-defining feature of the historic building. Staff further finds that based on the submitted plans there is not a differentiation in materials or design between the historic walls and roof form, and what is specified in the current proposal. Staff recommends denial of the request to increase the height of the parapet walls and faux mansard roof, and of the removal of the historic decorative elements and chimneys.

The applicant also proposes to demolish a one-story rear mass. The applicant has not provided any justification for demolishing this section. Staff recommends deferral of this demolition request to allow the applicant the opportunity to provide additional information to the Commission about the condition of this section and the need to demolish it, including that there are no feasible alternatives to

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demolition or opportunities to retain it.

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Technical Preservation Briefs #14, New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns, Rooftop Additions

- *A rooftop addition is generally not appropriate for a one, two or three-story building—and often is not appropriate for taller buildings.*
- *A rooftop addition should be minimally visible.*
- *Generally, a rooftop addition must be set back at least one full bay from the primary elevation of the building, as well as from the other elevations if the building is freestanding or highly visible.*
- *Generally, a rooftop addition should not be more than one story in height.*
- *Generally, a rooftop addition is more likely to be compatible on a building that is adjacent to similarly-sized or taller buildings.*

The applicant proposes to construct a rooftop addition on top of a two-story building. The addition will be set back from the front roof line of the existing building and will extend past the rear wall to create a third story.

The applicant has reconfigured the roof for the two rear additions. Staff notes that there will be limited visibility of the roof slope. However, staff has concerns that there does not appear to be a gutter proposed for the 3105 East Marshall Street addition and requests the applicant provide additional information about how they intend to manage rain water from this section.

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New Construction, Storefront Facades, pg. 49, #1

*Historically, storefronts were defined by simple piers, large storefront windows, a cornice, a signboard and/or attached signage, and awnings. The new storefront should be compatible with other historic storefronts within the district.*

The applicant has submitted a complete window and door schedule for the rehabilitation. Staff notes that the windows surrounding the new storefront door are varying sizes and recommends approval of the rehabilitated storefront with the condition that the windows surrounding the door are a consistent size.

Staff also notes that the historic storefront and the approved plans had pilasters separating the bays and wood panels below the windows. Staff recommends the design match the historic photograph including, but not limited to, the wood panels below the windows and the pilasters separating the bays, and that the windows surrounding the door be a consistent size.

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Doors and Windows, pg. 49, #s1, 4

*1. The size, proportion and spacing patterns of door and window openings on a new addition should follow patterns established by the original building. Windows on most commercial and residential properties throughout Old and Historic Districts have a vertical orientation.*

The Commission approved four vertically oriented windows on the third floor of the east wall of the addition. The applicant has removed these windows from the plans and now proposes two horizontal, approximately 64x18 windows. Staff recommends against the removal of the proposed windows from this elevation and the change in window size. Staff recommends that, if allowed by building code, the applicant retain the approved fenestration pattern and size to maintain the balance of solid walls and openings.

*4. Original masonry openings for doors and windows should be maintained. Infilling original masonry openings is strongly discouraged.*

The applicant now proposes to infill the original openings on the east elevation with salvaged brick. While the *Guidelines* recommend against infilling original masonry openings, staff understands that this is a building code requirement and the windows

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are minimally visible, and recommends approval with the condition that the brick infill be recessed from the original opening and that any decorative elements, such as exterior sills and headers, be maintained. Staff further notes that one window is shown in the southeast corner bedroom and staff requests confirmation that this window meets current code requirements.

Height, Width, Proportion, & Massing, pg. 47

1. *New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.*

The majority of the buildings in the surrounding area, both historic and new construction, are two stories in height. Staff finds that the new rooftop addition and newly proposed HVAC enclosure will be taller than the surrounding buildings.

2. *New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in surrounding historic districts.*

Staff finds that the new rear fenestration pattern is in keeping with the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in the surrounding district and recommends approval of this change.

Materials and Colors, pg. 47

2. *Materials used in new residential construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.*

The applicant now proposes new porch supports for the rear inset porches. Staff recommends approval of the new porch supports with the condition that the applicant provide material specifications for approval.

Staff further notes that the approved plans had a three-story brick pier at the corner as a terminating element and staff recommends this element be retained in the plans to unify the overall design.

**3101-3103 East Marshall Street – new side addition**

Technical Preservation Briefs #14, New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns

*In other instances, particularly in urban areas, there may be no other place but adjacent to the primary façade to locate an addition needed for the new use. It may be possible to design a lateral addition attached on the side that is compatible with the historic building, even though it is a highly-visible new element...Large new additions may sometimes be successful if they read as a separate volume, rather than as an extension of the historic structure, although the scale, massing and proportions of the addition still need to be compatible with the historic building. However, similar expansion of smaller buildings would be dramatically out of scale. In summary, where any new addition is proposed, correctly assessing the relationship between actual size and relative scale will be a key to preserving the character of the historic building.*

- *Incorporate a simple, recessed, small-scale hyphen to physically separate the old and the new volumes or set the addition back from the wall plane(s) of the historic building.*
- *Avoid designs that unify the two volumes into a single architectural whole. The new addition may include simplified architectural features that reflect, but do not duplicate, similar features on the historic building.*
- *Use building materials in the same color range or value as those of the historic building. The materials need not be the same as those on the historic building, but they should be harmonious; they should not be so different that they stand out or distract from the historic building. (Even clear glass can be as prominent as a less transparent material. Generally, glass may be most appropriate for small-scale additions, such as an entrance on a secondary elevation or a connector between an addition and the historic building.)*
- *Base the size, rhythm and alignment of the new addition's window and door openings on those of the historic building.*
- *Respect the architectural expression of the historic building type.*

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Staff finds that the proposed side addition generally meets the guidance of TPS #14 and the use of the recessed setback on East Marshall Street helps to create a visual separation between the historic building and the new construction. However, staff finds the change from a curtain wall system to framed, multi-light system does not meet the guidance provided in the technical brief. Staff recommends denial of the proposed multi-light and hardi panel system proposed by the applicant.

Staff further finds the removal of the simplified storefront design details is not compatible with the historic building. Staff recommends the applicant retain the previous design, including the simplified piers, cornice line, and transoms, to relate to the historic building and unify the design.

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Secretary of the Interior Standards, pg. 5

*9. New additions, exterior alterations or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*

Staff notes that the plans call for a masonry treatment on the first floor. Staff recommends that the new masonry be differentiated from the historic masonry in tone, size, and bond pattern and that the final masonry specifications be submitted to staff for review and approval.

*10. New construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

Staff also notes that it appears a greater portion of the historic west wall will be demolished for the addition and requests confirmation of this change from the applicants.

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Height, Width, Proportion, & Massing, pg. 47, #s1-3

*1. New residential construction should respect the typical height of surrounding residential buildings.*

Staff notes that the height of the addition shown in the revised application is generally consistent with the approved plans. However, staff notes not all exterior dimensions of the proposed new construction were provided, and requests the applicant submit a fully dimensioned exterior elevation.

*2. New residential construction should respect the vertical orientation typical of other residential properties in surrounding historic districts.*

The revised plans include the removal of a vertical bay of windows from the second and third stories and relocation of the windows on the first story (ground floor). Staff finds that deletion of a bank of windows creates a solid wall that adds to the overall bulk and massing of the building. Staff recommends denial of the request to remove this bank of windows. Staff further finds that the originally approved plans had a balanced fenestration pattern and recommends the applicant maintain the vertical alignment between the first-story and upper-story windows.

*3. The cornice height should be compatible with that of adjacent historic buildings.*

The proposed cornice line for the addition will be approximately one story taller than the surrounding historic buildings. Staff notes not all of the exterior dimensions of the proposed new construction were provided, and requests the applicant submit a fully dimensioned elevation with the height of the exterior elements.

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Materials and

*2. Materials used in new residential*

The applicant proposes a mix of masonry,

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Colors, pg. 47	<i>construction should be visually compatible with original materials used throughout the district.</i>	cementitious panels, and large panels of glazing. <u>Staff notes the previous plans had the panels aligned with the windows openings, and staff recommends this design feature be maintained.</u>
New Construction, Storefront Facades, pg. 49	<i>1. Historically, storefronts were defined by simple piers, large storefront windows, a cornice, a signboard and/or attached signage, and awnings. The new storefront should be compatible with other historic storefronts within the district.</i>	The Commission previously approved a storefront system with brick piers, a subtle cornice line at the same height as the historic building, and a single transom above the windows. The applicant has removed these design details from the plans. Staff finds the currently proposed storefront does not meet the Guidelines and recommends <u>the applicant retain the previously approved designs to be compatible with the surrounding historic storefronts and new construction.</u>
New Construction, Doors and Windows, pg. 49 #1	<i>1. The size, proportion and spacing patterns of door and window openings on a new addition should follow patterns established by the original building. Windows on most commercial and residential properties throughout Old and Historic Districts have a vertical orientation.</i>	On the rear section of the East Marshall Street elevation, the applicant has more evenly spaced the windows on the second and third story, and staff supports this change. Staff notes that the approved plans had two single windows below the balcony opening, and the revised plans have an off-center four-light window. <u>Staff recommends the first-story window be centered below the balcony openings. Staff also notes the balcony door openings have been reduced by two feet and recommends that the applicant retain the original size and maintain the balance between solids and voids on this elevation.</u>
Standards for New Construction: Corner Properties – Residential, pg. 48	<i>1. Secondary elevations of corner properties should reference massing similar to other corner locations in the historic district.</i>	Staff notes the previous application had a corner pier on the first story that continued around the corner, a heavy projecting cornice line that turned the corner and extended to the first set of balconies, and a flat roof that created a strong corner statement. The revised plans remove the pier details and cornice lines, and utilize a sloped roof. Staff finds that this is not in keeping with the corner guidelines or the other corner mixed-use properties in the surrounding area. <u>Staff recommends the applicant retain the corner elements of the approved design.</u> Staff also notes that heights of the windows on the East Marshall and North 31 <sup>st</sup> Street elevations appear inconsistent, and <u>recommends the applicant align the heads and sills of the windows on the front and side elevations, or install glazing that turns the corner in keeping with other corner commercial properties in the area.</u>
Standards for Site Improvements, Parking Lots,	<i>1. Parking lots should be broken up as much as possible with interior landscaped islands and should be well</i>	Staff also notes the applicant has introduced a projecting, K-style gutter and downspouts, on the East Marshall Street elevation, discussed below.  The applicant has changed the screening materials from composite trim to vertical Trex fencing. Staff finds that Trex fencing is not a common material found in the historic district for fences.

pg. 77	<i>screened from the public right-of-way and adjacent properties.</i>	
Mechanical Equipment, pg. 68	<i>The visual impact of new mechanical equipment should be minimized to protect the historic character of the district.</i>	The applicant has revised the location of the rooftop HVAC equipment and also proposes a granite block enclosure. Staff finds that the previously approved plans included the HVAC in a location that would not be visible from the surrounding right-of-way. Staff believes the HVAC enclosure will be visible and <u>recommends against the relocation of the HVAC.</u>
Admin Approval of Gutters and Downspouts	<i>New gutters and downspouts should be as unobtrusive as possible and should be painted a color that is compatible with the building, such as the body of trim color.</i>	The applicant proposes to install modern, K-style gutters along the East Marshall Street elevation. Staff finds that this will create a visual element that is not compatible with the overall design of the building or with the surrounding area. Staff also notes that the downspouts appear to terminate at the top of the first-story masonry.  Staff further notes that there is a not a drainage system proposed for the east and rear addition to the historic building, though a sloped roof is proposed. Staff is concerned about water runoff from this addition and <u>requests the applicant provide additional information about the gutters and downspouts for this section of the building.</u>

FIGURES



Figure 1. 3105 East Marshall Street, ca. 1957

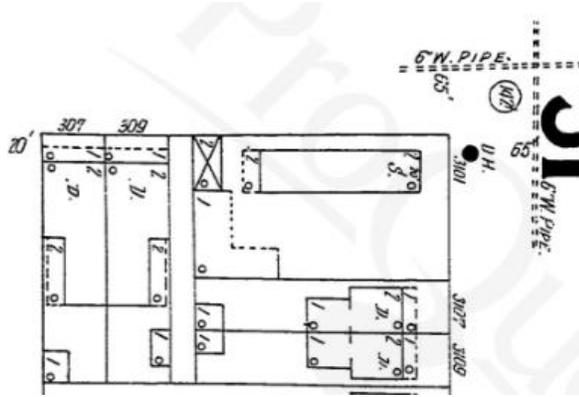


Figure 2. 3101 East Marshall Street, 1905 Sanborn map

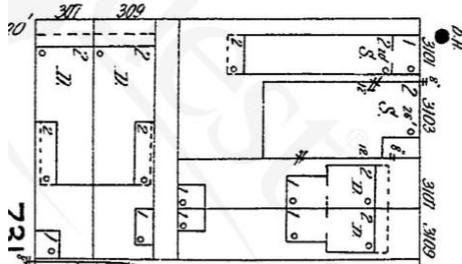


Figure 3. 3101, and 3103-3105 East Marshall Street, 1925 Sanborn map.



Figure 4. 3105 East Marshall Street.



Figure 5. 3105 East Marshall Street west and rear elevations.



Figure 6. 3105 East Marshall Street, side and rear elevation.



Figure 7. 3105 East Marshall Street, rear elevation.



Figure 8. 3101-3113 East Marshall Street.