

## Department of Planning and Zoning

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**TO:** Design Advisory Board  
**FROM:** Scott Gustin  
**DATE:** December 13, 2017  
**RE:** 18-0498CA; 70 Marble Avenue

=====  
Zone: RM                                      Ward: 5S  
Owner/Representative:                      Jane Michaud

**Request:** Amend prior zoning permit 17-0665CA to adjust roof height of addition.

### **OVERVIEW:**

The applicant is requesting approval for an amendment to a recently issued zoning permit for a rear addition to her single family home. The home is included on the Vermont state register of historic places. As approved, the rear addition has a 220 sf footprint and is 2 stories tall. It is tucked behind the existing home. At the recommendation of staff, the roofline of the approved addition is slightly lower than that of the existing home. The applicant is now seeking approval to increase the height of the addition above that of the existing home.

Marble Avenue consists largely of detached single family homes with some larger multi-family structures mixed in. Much of the street was developed as worker housing in the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The homes along this street remain largely intact and reflect a distinctive Vermont vernacular. Most of the homes are 2 stories tall with gable ends facing the street, some with porches and some without. Many of the homes have rear additions. In most cases, these rear additions are single story or at least lower than the height of the original structure. The applicant asserts zoning inconsistencies in allowing taller rear additions. A search of the zoning files for Marble Avenue indicate just two such cases. One at 56 Marble Avenue was approved prior to adoption of the city's historic preservation standards. The other at 48 Marble Avenue was approved by newly hired staff. In most cases, additions to historic buildings include lower roof heights. Such practice is reflected in the built environment of this neighborhood.

## **ARTICLE 5: CITYWIDE GENERAL REGULATIONS**

### **Part 4: Special Use Regulations**

The existing home is included in the Vermont state register of historic places and dates to circa 1906. The building retains its original form and style. The proposed alteration is subject to review under these criteria.

#### ***Sec. 5.4.8, Historic Buildings and Sites***

##### ***(b) Standards and Guidelines***

- 1. A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.***

The property's use as a single family home will remain.

2. *The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*

The form and style of the existing historic structure will remain. No features are to be removed or altered as part of this request. The addition as now proposed; however, will increase in height and mass. As a result, it will become more prominent, more easily viewable from the street. This taller, larger addition will detract from the historic character of the existing home and will depart from the pattern of more subordinate additions in this historic neighborhood.

3. *Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.*

No conjectural features or alterations are proposed.

4. *Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved.*

None proposed.

5. *Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.*

The original structure will remain largely intact.

6. *Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials recognizing that new technologies may provide an appropriate alternative in order to adapt to ever changing conditions and provide for an efficient contemporary use. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.*

Except where connected to the rear addition, no distinctive features of the existing historic home will be altered.

7. *Chemical or physical treatments, if appropriate, will be undertaken using the gentlest means possible. Treatments that cause damage to historic materials will not be used.*

Not applicable.

8. *Archeological resources will be protected and preserved in place. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures will be undertaken.*

There are no known archeological resources on the property.

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

The new addition is clearly differentiated from the existing home. The materials and form of the new addition are acceptable. The increase in height and mass; however, threatens to invert the primary versus subordinate relationship between the existing historic home and the

addition. While the scale of the addition does not consume the original structure, its larger mass and increased height do, in fact, make it more visible from the street and lessen focus on the original structure. As proposed, the addition would break from the established neighborhood pattern, further eroding its historic integrity.

*10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction will 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.*

See #9 above.

**RECOMMENDED MOTION:**

Denial of the requested amendment is recommended per the foregoing comments.