

Property Location: **730 Miller Avenue**
Miller Historic District

COA Request: **(HD Case 16-15)** Consideration of a Certificate of
Appropriateness request for the construction of a garage
apartment for the property located at 730 Miller Avenue.

Owner/Applicant: Jack Hooper (Hooper Rental, LLC)
201 S Crawford
Norman, OK 73069

A. Background:

1. Historical Information:

2003 Miller Historic District National Registry Nomination Survey states:

730 South Miller Avenue. Ca. 1949. Ranch. This contributing one-story, quarry-faced concrete block, single dwelling has a concrete block foundation and an asphalt-covered, cross-hipped roof with metal cresting. The metal windows include fixed and casement. The wood door is glazed paneled. The south side partial porch is uncovered with concrete block walls, while the north side partial porch with a hipped roof supported by full-height concrete block columns has been enclosed. Other exterior features include a red brick, internal chimney. Decorative details include wide boxed eaves and roof cresting. A decorative concrete block fence has been constructed along the south side of the property.

The 2003 Miller Historic District National Registry Nomination Survey found this structure to be contributing since it was built during the period of significance of 1903-1949, which is the time period set in this survey by the architectural historian. However, the original 1988/89 Intensive Level Historic Survey of the Classen-Miller Addition found that 730 Miller Avenue was not contributing because of age and this is displayed upon the official map of the Miller Historic District adopted in 1997. At the time of the 1988/89 Survey, the house did not meet the period of significance for the survey which was set from 1903-1938. It should be noted that the property could not have been included in 1988/89 Survey as a contributing historic property since it would not have been 50 years old, which is a Secretary of the Interior Standard for historic property. The inventory sheet from the 1988/89 Survey is attached to this report.

2. Property History:

October 3, 2016 . A COA request for a garage apartment was continued in order to allow the applicant to revise drawings.

The 1925 and 1944 Sanborn Insurance Maps show vacant parcels for both years, thereby indicating the current structure was constructed later than 1944.

3. Project Description:

At the October 3, 2016 Historic District meeting the applicant, Jack Hooper, submitted two options for a garage apartment for review. The Historic District Commission advised the applicant that Option 1, which proposed a one-story garage apartment that incorporated the existing metal garage, appeared to be more compatible with the principal structure and the neighborhood than Option 2. The Commission suggested several modifications to the proposed Option 1 to make it more compatible with the neighborhood, these included: the addition of a front porch, the use of wood siding for the entire exterior material, a front door that would be more stylistically compatible with the neighborhood, such as a Craftsman 9-lite, extend the overhang of the roof to 12 inches, and to add a window to the east elevation. The Commission approved a motion to continue the request until the applicant submitted more detailed drawings of Option 1 that incorporated the suggested changes. The applicant is now returning to the Commission with revised drawings for the Commission's review and approval.

The current zoning for this property is R-3, Multi-Family Dwelling District, which allows the construction of a garage apartment. It should be noted that this property along with other surrounding properties in this area are in the process of a rezoning request that would change the zoning from R-3 to R-1. The City Council will hear the rezoning request at their November 8, 2016 meeting.

The applicant is proposing an apartment addition to the existing garage which would add 868 square feet of living space to the existing 422 square feet of the garage. This proposal would expand the footprint of the current garage while maintaining the one-story height. Historically, the concept of a garage apartment has been a living area over a garage. However, the city zoning ordinance of a garage apartment does not prohibit this proposed configuration with the garage being adjacent to the apartment in a side-by-side manner.

The applicant has modified his proposed garage apartment as suggested by the Commission as follows: the exterior wall material will be wood siding except the north and east elevations of the garage will remain metal; an additional window was added to the south half of the east elevation to break up this long expanse of wall; and the addition of a front door that is stylistically different than the original door is proposed. The applicant, upon consultation with his designer, determined that the overhangs are already at 12 inches in depth and therefore did not need to be modified. The applicant was unable to add a front porch as suggested since the zoning ordinance does not allow for the extension of

porches into the required 20qrear setback. However, the applicant did add a cantilevered porch cover over the front door that extends two feet from the exterior wall as allowed by the zoning ordinance. The revised drawings also indicate that the applicant added 4 inch wood trim to the window frames, a front stoop, a sidewalk from the driveway to the front stoop, and increased the parking pad off the alley in front of the garage door. The applicant is proposing metal windows with a 4-over-1 configuration to match the window material of the principal structure. The finished floor will be at the same height as the primary structure which is at grade. The pitch of the roof will be 6/12, the same as the existing principal structure. The same metal ridge roof cap is proposed for the garage apartment as found on the existing house.

This proposal along with the existing house and pavement will cover 45.64% of the parcel with impervious surface which is below the maximum allowable coverage of 65%. In the vicinity of the proposed garage apartment, the applicant proposes to leave two trees and remove one tree for the construction of the garage apartment.

B. Analysis of Request:

The following sections of the Historic District Guidelines are applicable to this application request.

Historic Preservation Handbook

2.7 Guidelines for Non-Contributing Resources

.1 Preservation Guidelines Apply. *The Historic Preservation Guidelines apply to all structures in Norman's Historic Districts, both contributing and non-contributing.*

.2 Support Harmony Between Old and New. *Non-contributing structures shall be controlled only to the degree necessary to make them compatible with the general atmosphere of the district with regard to alterations, additions, changes to the site, and the like. As with all requests for certificates of appropriateness in historic districts, each project will be evaluated on its own merits for overall impact on the district as a whole.*

3.5 Guidelines for Windows and Doors:

.12 Use Wood Windows in Primary Structures and Additions. *For construction of new primary structures, choose windows that complement window types in surrounding structures in material, placement, size, shape, and design. While single-pane, true divided-light, wood frame windows are the most desirable choice for new construction in historic districts, double-pane glass wood windows with interior and exterior applied muntins and shadow bars between the panes are permitted. Aluminum cladding of wooden windows is permissible for use in construction of new primary structures and additions. Vinyl cladding of wood windows is not appropriate.*

4.3 Guidelines for New Primary Structures

.1 Consider Historic Context. *Design new structures to be compatible with historic*

buildings in the district in terms of size, scale, height, form, massing, proportion, finished floor elevation, size of door and window openings, and roof shape. Proposals for new construction shall include streetscape elevation drawings that depict proposed structure as well as elevations of properties on either side to provide a comparison of massing, scale, and design.

*.2 **Select Doors & Windows Carefully.** Select doors and windows for new buildings that are compatible in material, proportion, pattern, and detail with the doors and windows of historic buildings in the district. See Chapter 3.5 Doors and Windows.*

*.3 **Select Compatible Finishes.** Select materials and finishes for proposed new buildings that are compatible with historic materials and finishes found in historic buildings in the district in terms of composition, scale, pattern, detail, texture, and finish.*

Staff Comments:

1. The primary structure is a non-contributing structure to the Miller Historic District. However, it should be noted that this structure would now qualify as a contributing structure since it is now older than 50 years, the standard for historic status.
2. The proposed garage construction meets city zoning regulations regarding use, setbacks and impervious surface coverage.
3. The property is a corner lot facing both Miller Avenue and Duffy Avenue. The lot has an alley, known as Miller Lane, running the length of the west property line as well. The property has two front elevations as defined by the Guidelines.
4. The garage apartment is proposed to be located on the west side of the property which will be primarily visible from the front streetscape of Duffy Avenue.
5. The Guidelines state that new construction should harmonize the old and new and that materials in new construction be compatible with the historic structures in the neighborhood.
6. The Guidelines state that windows in new construction should complement window types in surrounding structure in regards to material, placement, size, shape, and design. No specification sheets for the windows were submitted at the time of the writing of the staff report. The proposed metal windows match the window material of the principal structure. Typical window material in the Miller District is wood.
7. The proposed wood siding does not match the existing principal structure but is a commonly found wall material in the Miller Historic District. Two elevations of the garage are proposed to remain metal and not be covered with wood siding. The north and east elevations are not visible from Duffy and Miller,

but are visible to the neighboring property and Miller Lane. Metal is not an appropriate historic exterior wall material.

8. The proposed garage apartment will have the same roof pitch and building height as the existing house.

9. The proposed wood front door appears in the elevation drawings to be stylistically more compatible with structures in the Miller Historic District than the previous proposed door.

10. The proposed cantilevered front porch cover is architectural element found on structures in the Miller Neighborhood.

Staff Recommendations:

Staff finds that this COA request to have an unusual set of circumstances. The principal structure, while not a contributing structure to the Miller Historic District, would be considered a historic structure in its own right today. This creates a situation in which the Guidelines suggest matching the new structure to the surrounding neighborhood structures while also suggesting that new structures should not impact the historic integrity of the existing house as well. In order to help the Commission determine if the new garage apartment should be compatible with the surrounding neighborhood or if this should be superseded by matching the principal structure, staff has identified in the observations below whether the element matches the house or the surrounding neighborhood. Staff has the following observations and recommendations:

1. The primary structure is a non-contributing structure to the Miller Historic District, but qualifies for historic status under the Secretary of the Interior Standards.

2. The proposed garage apartment will alter the front streetscape on Duffy Avenue. However, a garage apartment is an allowable use for this parcel. The placement of a garage apartment on the parcel is limited by the existing house and the applicant's desire to keep the existing stand-alone metal garage.

3. The proposed windows shown on the elevation drawings appear to be similar to windows in surrounding structures in neighborhood regarding placement, size, shape and design. The window pane configuration is typical of historic structures. As of this writing of this staff report, the applicant had not submitted specification sheets for windows in order to be able to evaluate the windows fully. The applicant has stated that the window material will be metal. Metal windows are not an appropriate historic material for the neighborhood but are of a similar material as the windows in the primary structure. The Commission would need to determine if metal windows are appropriate material in this situation. It should be noted that the Commission has approved the use

of metal windows in a 1950s structure in the recent past under different circumstances. Staff recommends that the Commission consider if in this circumstance allowing metal windows in the garage apartment meets the Guidelines.

4. The Guidelines finds wood siding to be an exterior wall material that is compatible with the surrounding neighborhood while metal is not. In the past, the Commission has not approved the use of historically appropriate exterior material in just part of a new structure. Staff recommends that the Commission consider if the allowing the north and east elevation to remain metal meets the Guidelines.

5. The Guideline requires that new construction be compatible with the historic district in terms of size, scale, height, form, massing, proportion, and finished floor elevation. The proposed garage apartment matches the height of the primary structure which is the same or lower than adjacent structures. The garage apartment massing and proportions are similar to the surrounding neighborhood but the form is not the typical two-story garage apartment form found in the neighborhood. The finished floor elevation matches the existing house which is not typical of Miller Neighborhood structures.

6. The Guideline requires that roof pitch on new construction be compatible with the neighborhood. The proposed garage apartment matches the roof pitch of the existing house on this parcel. The metal ridge cap is not typical of the neighborhood but matches the existing house on this parcel.

7. While the elevation drawing indicates a door design that appears compatible with the neighborhood, staff is unable to make an evaluation of the front door since a specification sheet was not submitted for the door. Staff recommends that the front door be a compatible style for the neighborhood.

8. The proposed cantilevered front porch cover is similar to those found in the Miller Neighborhood. This architectural element helps break-up the long expanse of wall. The porch cover is similar to porch covers found in the surrounding neighborhood.

Staff recommends that the Commission consider if all aspects of the garage apartment design should be compatible with the neighborhood structures or can some aspects match the existing principal structure located on the parcel. In addition, since the specification sheets for the front door and windows had not been submitted at the time of the staff report; staff recommends the Commission provide guidance to the applicant the night of the meeting as to the appropriateness of these elements in the garage apartment.

Action Required: Motion to approve or reject the Certificate of Appropriateness request Certificate of Appropriateness request for the construction of a garage apartment for the property located at 730 Miller Avenue.