

DeKalb County Historic Preservation Commission

Monday, June 17th, 2024- 6:00 P.M.

Staff Report

Regular Agenda

L. 1384 Emory Road, Sean Lehnerr. Paint a brick house. **1247072.**

Built in 1924 (18 054 11 015)

This property is located in Druid Hills Character Area #2 and in the Druid Hills National Register Historic District.

Summary

The applicant proposes painting a previously unpainted exterior brick. The paint is an elastomeric masonry specific coating and has already been applied to the property after an application for a COA to paint the exterior of the house was denied in April of 2024. Applicant states that the purpose of painting the brick is to address previous mismatched repairs to the masonry and that the paint cannot be removed without damaging the historic brick.

Recommendation

Deny. Paint and other surface treatments should not be applied to historic masonry in accordance with guidelines 6.1.1, 6.1.2, and 6.8. Painting the masonry does not address the underlying issue of the failing mortar, which should be maintained and repaired as needed in accordance with guidelines 6.1.1 and 6.7. Staff recommends removal of the paint that has been applied prior to review with a solvent based chemical paint remover and gentle abrasion. Once the paint has been removed, staff recommends repairing the failed mortar with a lime-based mortar to match the color, texture, depth, and width of the current joints.

Relevant Guidelines

- 5.0 *Design Review Objective* (p45) - When making a material change to a structure that is in view from a public right-of-way, a higher standard is required to ensure that design changes are compatible with the architectural style of the structure and retain character-defining features. When a proposed material change to a structure is not in view from the public-right-way, the Preservation Commission may review the project with a less strict standard so as to allow the owner more flexibility. Such changes, however, shall not have a substantial adverse effect on the overall architectural character of the structure.
- 6.1.1 *Exterior Materials* (p50) Guideline - Original masonry should be retained to the greatest extent possible without the application of any surface treatment, including paint. Repointing of mortar joints should only be undertaken when necessary, and the new mortar should duplicate the original material in composition, color, texture, method of application, and joint profile. Repaired joints should not exceed the width of original joints. The use of electric saws and hammers in the removal of old mortar is strongly discouraged as these methods can seriously damage adjacent bricks.
- 6.1.2 *Architectural Details* (p52) Guideline - Stylistic details should be maintained and treated with sensitivity. The removal of such details or application of details inappropriate to the period or style of a house is strongly discouraged. Damaged elements should be repaired rather than replaced if at all possible. Historic details that have been lost or are beyond repair may be replaced with new materials, provided that their earlier presence can be substantiated by historical documentation and that the new materials match the original in composition, design, color, and texture.
- 6.7 *Maintenance* (p60) Recommendation - The most effective and economical way to preserve a historic building and its site features is to provide regular maintenance, thus minimizing the need to replace historic materials.

6.8 *Exterior Colors* (p60) Guideline - The initial painting or other surface treatment of masonry and stucco will be reviewed by the preservation commission, and shall not be precluded if brought in a retroactive application. The specific color of the paint, however, will not be reviewed. Appropriate paint colors are usually related to the style and type of the property in question. (Approved 6-18-2018)