# **Development Review Staff Report**

Administrative Hearing: June 23, 2021

#### 613 South Meldrum Street Carriage House, FDP 200028

#### **Summary of Request**

This is a request for a combined Project Development Plan and Final Development Plan (PDP/FDP) to construct a single family detached dwelling behind the existing single-family dwelling on the lot.

#### **Zoning Map**



#### **Next Steps**

When a plan is submitted as a combined PDP/FDP, it is simply reviewed as a Final Development Plan. That means that if approved by the decision maker, then staff and the owner are ready to proceed with final signatures on the planning and engineering documents. The owner is then eligible to apply for a building permit.

#### **Site Location**

613 S. Meldrum Street, located on the first block north of the Colorado State University (CSU) main campus.

#### Zoning

Neighborhood Conservation, Buffer District (NCB)

#### **Property Owner**

Jeff Palomo 613 S. Meldrum St. Fort Collins, CO 80521

#### Applicant/Representative

Same as above

#### Staff

Clark Mapes, City Planner

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#### Staff Recommendation

Approval.



# **1. Project Introduction**

## A. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

- The plan proposes a single family detached dwelling in the rear yard of an existing house -- also known as a 'carriage house'.
- The building is 1½ stories with a 1,570 sq.ft. footprint and 2,190 sq. ft. of floor area.
- The size of the dwelling is allowed under a set of five Modifications of Standards that were approved by City Council (on appeal of an Administrative Hearing Officer decision) on October 6, 2020. The modifications are noted under B. below, and the Resolution approved by City Council overturning the Hearing Officer's decision is attached.
- The dwelling includes a garage with space for three vehicles. Only one space would be required by the Land Use Code. Vehicular access is from the existing alley.
- A walkway is provided from the street, and signage is provided for wayfinding to meet Poudre Fire Authority emergency access requirements.
- Utility services are provided.

# **B. OVERVIEW OF MAIN CONSIDERATIONS IN STAFF REVIEW**

Typically, the main considerations in review of carriage house applications are standards for building size and configuration, emergency access requirements, and utility service lines.

In this case, the main considerations through three rounds of staff review of plan submittals have been utility services and emergency access.

The building size and configuration were the subject of a previous application for a set of modifications of standards. Those modifications of standards were denied by an Administrative Hearing Officer, but then approved by City Council on appeal, to allow the size and configuration as follows:

Subject	Zoning Standard	Modified Request
Building Footprint	600 sq. ft.(max)	1,570 sq. ft.
Total Floor Area	1,000 sq. ft. (max)	2,190 sq. ft.
Floor Area in Rear Half of Lot	1,583 sq. ft. (max)	2,190 sq. ft.
Eave Height Along Side Lot Line	13 feet (max)	23 feet
Width of Dormers Along Side Lot Line	25% of side wall length (max)	43% of side wall length

In addition to the dimensions of the building being the same as previously approved as modifications, the building design is unchanged from the design that was used to evaluate the stand-alone modification requests. Staff found no compliance issues with the building design in the review of the FDP.

# C. DEVELOPMENT STATUS AND BACKGROUND

**Historic Resource**. The subject property contains a brick Classic Cottage constructed circa 1910 that was found eligible for local landmark designation in 2018, based on its original architectural integrity.

**Old Town Neighborhoods Plan and NCB zoning.** The subject property is in the Old Town Neighborhoods subarea plan area of Fort Collins. The neighborhoods encompass many of the earliest residential blocks in Fort Collins and are characterized by the classical grid street pattern of short blocks, historic home styles, and mature trees.



An ongoing neighborhood concern has long been how best to preserve, protect and enhance neighborhood character while still allowing opportunities to adapt to evolving community and social changes.

A continuum of community planning has produced subarea plans, character studies, zoning standards, and design guidelines in open and highly engaged public processes since at least the 1980's. The NCB zoning district, and carriage house standards specifically, result from some of these processes.

The adopted Old Town Neighborhoods Plan recognizes the NCB area around south Meldrum as catering primarily to college student rental housing, including many apartment buildings (p. 16). The plan describes six 'character areas' within the overall plan area, and notably, this stretch of Meldrum Street is within an area that is *not* described as a character area and does not have a prevailing identifiable character but rather has an eclectic mix of development and buildings developed and redeveloped through the decades since the 1920's.

## D. SURROUNDING ZONING AND LAND USE

	North	South	East	West
Zoning	Neighborhood Conservation, Buffer (NCB)	Neighborhood Conservation, Buffer (NCB)	Neighborhood Conservation, Buffer (NCB)	Neighborhood Conservation, Buffer (NCB)
Land Use	Single family houses and a rear yard duplex	Single family houses and apartment buildings	CSU parking lot and single family houses	Rear yards and parking for single family houses and a rear yard duplex across the alley

# 2. Public Outreach

### A. NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING

A neighborhood meeting was not required for this land use, which requires 'Administrative Review' and for which neighborhood meeting requirements are not applicable.

### **B. PUBLIC COMMENTS:**

No public comment has been received to date. Any comments received prior to the hearing will be forwarded to the hearing officer for consideration. At the previous hearing, the abutting property owner on the north commented in support of the plan.

# 3. Land Use Code Article 2 – Procedural Requirements

### A. PROCEDURAL OVERVIEW

### 1. Conceptual Review – CDR200005

A conceptual review meeting for the property was held on January 23, 2020.

### 2. First Submittal – PDP200002

The first submittal of this modification request was completed on December 4, 2020.

### 3. Neighborhood Meeting

Not required and not held as noted above.



# 4. Notice (Posted, Written and Published)

Posted Sign: June 1, 2020, Sign #546

Written Hearing Notice: June 9, 2021, 276 addresses mailed.

Published Hearing Notice: June 13, 2021 in the Coloradoan newspaper.

# 4. Article 3 - Applicable Standards

Staff finds only two standards in Article 3 that are relevant and applicable to the plan, because the site is a platted lot in a fully developed area with streets, sidewalks, and utility infrastructure; and because building design is governed by specific standards for carriage houses in the NCB zone district in Article 4. Furthermore, the Landscaping Section 3.2.1 specifically exempts single family dwellings; and staff and the Historic Preservation Commission do not review projects using Section 3.4.7, Historic and Cultural Resources, if they involve only a single family dwelling.

# A. DIVISION 3.2 - SITE PLANNING AND DESIGN

Applicable Code Standard	Summary of Code Requirement and Analysis	Staff Findings
3.2.2 (K)(1)(c) Parking Lots – Required Number of Off-Street Spaces	This standard requires one parking space per single family detached dwelling on lots with greater than forty feet of street frontage. The lot has 50 feet of street frontage; therefore one parking space is required for each single-family dwelling. The existing house has one existing space, and the plan provides two additional spaces with alley access plus an additional tandem space in the garage. Note that this standard is repeated verbatim in Section 3.8.10.	Complies

# **B. 3.6 TRANSPORTATION AND CIRCULATION**

Applicable Code Standard	Summary of Code Requirement and Analysis	Staff Findings
3.6.6 – Emergency Access	<ul> <li>This Section is intended to ensure that emergency vehicles and personnel can access the development to provide fire protection and emergency services without delays.</li> <li>The plan includes a walkway from the street to the entry of the dwelling in a manner that is appropriate for emergency access to the development.</li> <li>The carriage house does not meet 2018 International Fire Code section 503.1.1 as written, and an alternative method of compliance was approved by the Fire Chief. The alternative method includes a 13D sprinkler system with added coverage in the garage, and the garage/dwelling separations will be upgraded to full 1-hour separations. The 13D system will include monitoring for early notification.</li> </ul>	Complies

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# 5. Article 4 – Applicable Standards:

# A. DIVISION 4.9 - NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION, BUFFER DISTRICT

The Neighborhood Conservation, Buffer District (N-C-B) is intended for areas that are a transition between residential neighborhoods and more intensive commercial-use areas or high traffic zones that have been given this designation in accordance with an adopted subarea plan.

The proposed carriage house is permitted subject to Administrative Review in this district.

Applicable Code Standard	Summary of Code Requirement and Analysis	
4.9(B) Permitted Uses	The proposed carriage house is a permitted use in the N-C-B zone district. The land use code refers to a 'carriage house' interchangeably with 'single-family detached dwelling located behind a separate dwelling on the same lot'.	Complies
4.9(D)(2) Residential	<ul> <li>This standard limits the floor footprint and floor area of a carriage house to 600 sq. ft. and 1,000 sq. ft. respectively.</li> <li>The proposed plan complies under previously approved modifications of standards noted under 1. B. on p. 2 above.</li> </ul>	Complies via Modifications
4.9(D)(5) Allowable Floor Area on Rear Half of Lots	<ul><li>This standard limits floor area on the rear half of a lot to 33 percent of the overall lot area.</li><li>The proposed plan complies under previously approved modifications of standards noted under 1. B. on p. 2 above.</li></ul>	Complies via Modifications
4.9(D)(6) Dimensional Standards	<b>Dimensional</b> setbacks of 5 feet. Building height is limited to 1½ stories.	
4.9(E)(1)(b)2. Eave Height	<ul> <li>This standard limits exterior eave height along a side lot line to 13 feet. The eave of a dormer may exceed that height if set back at least two feet from the wall below and does not exceed 25% of the wall length.</li> <li>The proposed plan complies under previously approved modifications of standards noted under 1. B. on p. 2 above.</li> </ul>	Complies via Modifications
4.9(E)(3)(c)(1) Additional Review Criteria for Carriage Houses	<ul> <li>This standard requires a yard area containing at least 120 square feet to serve both the carriage house and the existing principal dwelling. Such yard area shall be at least 10 feet in its smallest dimension and must provide privacy and screening for abutting properties.</li> <li>The plan provides approximately 2,750 sq. ft. yard space between the office building and carriage house, consisting of landscaping and walks. This rear yard space is screened from adjacent lots by existing mature landscaping along the lot lines.</li> </ul>	Complies





Applicable Code Standard	Summary of Code Requirement and Analysis	Staff Findings
4.9(E)(3)(c)(2)	This standard requires that to the extent reasonably feasible, decks, entry doors, major entry access stairs or major windows shall face the existing principal building or the alley. Windows that overlook an abutting side or rear yard must be minimized.	Complies
	<i>Extent reasonably feasible</i> shall mean that, under the circumstances, reasonable efforts have been undertaken to comply with the regulation, that the costs of compliance clearly outweigh the potential benefits to the public or would unreasonably burden the proposed project, and reasonable steps have been undertaken to minimize any potential harm or adverse impacts resulting from noncompliance with the regulation.	
	<ul> <li>The plan has decks on all four sides, which are a function of the modifications of standards previously approved. The set of modifications did not address this standard directly, however, the proposed design was the basis of approval of the size and configuration of the building.</li> <li>The most prominent windows overlooking abutting yards are the doors to the decks, and those are set back significantly from the side lot lines.</li> </ul>	
	Staff finds that removing the decks from the plan, which was used to illustrate the previously approved modifications, would unreasonably burden the proposed project because the decks are integral to the whole design, and because any potential harm is negligible or nonexistent due to the context of the particular block and the support of abutting property owners for the proposed plan.	
4.9(E)(3)(c)(3)	Buildings, structures, open spaces and other features of the site plan shall be oriented and located such that they maintain natural resources, including existing significant trees and shrubs, to the extent reasonably feasible.	Complies
	No natural resources will be impacted by the project proposal.	

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# 6. Findings of Fact/Conclusion

In evaluating the request for the 613 South Meldrum Street Carriage House, #FDP200028, staff makes the following findings of fact:

- The Final Development Plan complies with the process requirements in Division 2.2 Common Development Review Procedures for Development Applications of Article 2 Administration.
- The Final Development Plan complies with the relevant standards in Article 3 General Development Standards.
- The Final Development Plan complies with the relevant standards in Division 4.9 the Neighborhood Conservation Buffer zone district with previously approved set of five Modifications of Standards.

# 7. Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Hearing Officer approve 613 South Meldrum Street Carriage House, #FDP200028, based on the analysis and Findings of Fact/Conclusion in this Staff Report.

## 8. Attachments

- 1. Applicant Narrative
- 2. Plan Set Site, Landscape, and Architectural
- 3. Utility and Grading Plans
- 4. Adjoining Neighbor Letter of Support
- 5. Adjoining Neighbor Letter of Support

### **Project Summary:**

I purchased my home at 613 S. Meldrum in May of 2018. I was attracted to the home for its age and historic beauty. While a bit eclectic, the neighborhood is located half a block away from Colorado State University and offers the vibrancy and diverse character I cherish.

The home itself was in rough shape when I purchased it as it was maintained minimally as a rental property. The porch was dilapidated, and hazardously was detaching from the main structure. The home's brick façade needed significant repair as settling over the past century-plus, it revealed cracks and holes where pests could enter. I have acquired a bit of experience in restoring historic buildings over the years and saw through this rough exterior to the home's great bones and beauty.

I have invested a significant amount of money in rehabilitating the property, and my domestic partner and I have invested countless hours in restoring the home to its historic luster. Of course, I'm biased, but our blood and sweat equity has once again revived the home's historic charm, and many a passerby stops to comment or ask questions about the property. That said, the house is small relative to modern-day standards and user needs. It does not possess a garage, storage space, or other amenities that families expect today, like a home office. Hence, my desire to develop a carriage home on the back half of the property that adds the additional space and provides the amenities necessary for my domestic partner and me to age-in-place comfortably.

We have invested quite a bit of time and extensive analysis of the neighborhood, particularly the NCB district, relative to other abutting neighborhood districts. We were working with city planning on various iterations of designs. The planner, Mr. Mapes, made us aware of the prevailing code, which would prevent the development of our desired building plan. While we explored other options, we believed the enhanced carriage house's design to be most congruent and cohesive to the neighborhood while also accomplishing our objectives for extra space. We felt strongly about not adding onto the historic home as any attachment would compromise its original historic state rather than honor and preserve it.

The planner detailed the processes available to us in seeking approval for the development with its code infractions. This process included requesting Modifications of Use, taking our case to a hearing officer, and appealing a decision to City Council. Understanding this course, we followed the process. We are grateful that a majority of the councilmembers saw the merits of our case in our appeal. While it was quite arduous, we ultimately succeeded in obtaining the votes needed to approve and start developing the attached design.

We feel confident the 'carriage home' with updated, current amenities will provide for not only our retirement years but create a foundation for the preservation of the primary historic home beyond our lifetimes. Our project provides for ample parking with single and tandem parking for three vehicles in the garage and a carport in front of the garage. Additionally, there will be tandem two-car off-street parking in the front yard of the primary home.

I met with Mr. Rob Irish from the city on electrical plans and had a Professional Engineer (PE) draft plans based upon our discussion regarding utility requirements. The plans address the best

placement and routing for utilities, as illustrated in the documentation. Aside from utilities, we will confine all development for this project to the back half of the lot.

Regards,

Jeff Palomo Owner/Developer



OWNER'S CERTIFICATE		
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# PLANNING CERTIFICATE

APPROVED BY THE DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES OF THE CITY OF FORT COLLINS, COLORADO ON THIS \_\_\_\_\_ DAY OF \_\_\_\_\_, 20 \_\_\_\_.

Director Signature

# OWNER'S CERTIFICATE

THE UNDERSIGNED DOES/DO HEREBY CERTIFY THAT I/WE ARE THE LAWFUL OWNERS OF THE REAL PROPERTY ON THIS SITE AND DO HEREBY CERIFY THAT I/WE ACCEPT THE CONDITIONS AND RESTRICTIONS SET FORTH ON SAID SITE PLAN.

OWNER (SIGNED)

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ISSUED FOR PERMIT DATE: 10-08-20 REV: LEXT. UTILITY/ DOORS DATE: 11-23-20 BY: RM REV: PER CITY COMMENTS DATE: 01-04-21 BY: RM REV: LANDSCAPE PLAN DATE: 3-11-21 BY: RM REV: LANDSCAPE PLAN DATE: 4-20-21 BY: RM REV: CHANGES TO DATE DATE: 5-1-21 BY: RM REV: CHANGES TO DATE DATE: 5-1-21 BY: RM REV: RM REV: CHANGES TO DATE DATE: 5-1-21 BY: RM REV: RM REV: RM









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Colin Christensen (cell) 914-325-6337 CBC Construction Corp.

------ Forwarded message ------From: **Colin Christensen** <<u>Colin.B.Christensen@gmail.com</u>> Date: Mon, Jun 29, 2020 at 1:52 PM Subject: 613 S.Meldrum Rd, Fort Collins To: <<u>CMAPES@fcgov.com</u>>

Clark,

I am the current owner of 609 S.Meldrum Rd, Fort Collins. Our adjacent neighbor, Jeff Palomo, shared with my wife and I his Application for Modification Request at 613 S.Meldrum. He explained the project to us and we are aware of the elements of this request. I am writing to let you know that we take no exception to his plans and fully support the request.

We are particularly pleased to see he is maintaining the architectural and historical character of the property. Unlike many of the surrounding properties that have much more substantial structures which bear no resemblance to the original neighborhood, we believe Jeff's request helps protect and enhance the historical character of the original community.

We hope you find our support helpful in your review of Jeff & Denise's request.

Thank you

**Colin Christensen** 

Good afternoon Clark,

Jeff and Denise have shared their challenges with the approval of their architectural plans and we are reaching out to let you know that we strongly support what they are hoping to do to the property. We really appreciate their effort to thoughtfully preserve the historical appearance of the original house, while creating more livable space for themselves and also trying to allow for more affordable housing in the back. We believe that their plans would not negatively impact the character of the neighborhood, unlike the neighboring building to our south.

Thanks for taking our support into consideration as you make a decision!

Sincerely, Caroline and Nick 617 S Meldrum St (512)517-3834