


CITY OF JERSEY CITY

Department of Housing, Economic Development & Commerce
Division of City Planning



Interdepartmental Memorandum

DATE: 10/21/22
TO: Historic Preservation Commission
FROM: Sara Quinlan, Historic Preservation Specialist 
CC: Tom Fodice, Esq., HPC Counsel
Jensen C. Vasil, Architect P.C., Applicant on behalf of
Michael Amorim and Diana Fernandes, Owners
/File
RE: Case #H22-272
322 York Street
Block: 12806, Lot 17
Zone: H / Van Vorst Park Historic District

I. PLANS AND DOCUMENTS REVIEWED

1. Historic Preservation Application, submitted 6/17/22
2. Architectural Plans entitled *Amorim Residence, 322 York Street, Jersey City, NJ 07302* by Jensen C. Vasil Architect P.C. most recently revised October 19, 2022.

II. PROJECT & PROPOSAL BACKGROUND

The property has been owned by Michael Amorim and Diana Fernandes (herein referred to as "The Owner") since December 2021. The property is currently used as a two-unit residence.

Per the submitted application and plans prepared by Jensen C. Vasil Architect P.C., entitled *Amorim Residence, 322 York Street, Jersey City, NJ 07302* most recently revised October 19, 2022, the applicant is seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for the interior renovation, the construction a two story rear yard addition and terrace partially visible from Varick Street, and rooftop deck with bulkhead (not visible from the Public Right of Way) of an altered, contributing *circa* 1870 Italianate brownstone fronted rowhouse in the Van Vorst Park Historic District. The proposed scope of work includes (but is not limited to):

1. Interior alterations
2. Rear façade alterations
3. Construction of a new 2-story, rear addition (partially visible from Varick Street) and a rooftop deck with bulkhead (not visible from the Public Right of Way)
4. Construction of a rear terrace on the second story and a rear deck on the first story.

The application and submitted plans were deemed complete by HPC Staff on October 19, 2022.

III. PROPERTY LOCATION & JURISDICTION

322 York Street (herein referred to as “The Property”) is located in the Van Vorst Park Historic District. The property is located on a 16.67 x 100 lot fronting York Street between Varick Street and Jersey Avenue. As defined in the City of Jersey City Zoning Ordinance, the property is zoned as H.

The property was designated as a contributing building within the Van Vorst Park Historic District on February 1, 1977, as well as on the on the National and State Registers of Historic Places on March 4, 1980 and August 1, 1978, respectively. The HPC’s jurisdiction regarding the property is defined per § 345-30, entitled *Historic Preservation Review Procedures*:

- a. *No permit shall be issued or amended nor shall any construction, alteration, minor alteration, ordinary maintenance and repair or demolition be started on a landmark building nor on any sign, building, structure, object, site or landscape feature within a designated historic district, whether or not a construction permit is required, prior to a filing of an application for review by the Historic Preservation Commission or the issuance of either a Certificate of Appropriateness or a Certificate of No Effect.*

Additionally, per 2(a), *“The Historic Preservation Officer shall refer all applications for **new construction, alterations, relocation or demolition** to the Historic Preservation Commission for review.”*

IV. REQUIREMENTS AND STANDARDS FOR CONSIDERATION

Staff notes regarding the Powers and Duties of the Historic Preservation Commission:

Per § 345-9, entitled Historic Preservation Commission, Section (B) entitled Powers and Duties of the Historic Preservation Commission, the Commission has the following relevant powers and duties:

- (4) To advise and assist City officers, employees, boards and other bodies, including those at County, regional, State and Federal levels, on all matters which have potential impact on the landmark buildings, sites, structures, object or landscape features in the City or on the ambience of a historic district.
- (17) To issue Certificates of Appropriateness or Certificates of No Effect in accordance with the rules and standards set forth herein.

The property is subject to following standards during the Board’s consideration regarding the application seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness:

1. *Secretary of Interior Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties*
2. *City of Jersey City Zoning Ordinance § 345-58 entitled H - Historic District*
3. *City of Jersey City Zoning Ordinance § 345-71 entitled Historic Design Standards*
4. *City of Jersey City Historic Preservation Commission Rules & Regulations for Alterations & Additions to Buildings & New Construction in Historic Districts*

V. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMENTS

After reviewing the proposed project, Staff finds that the proposal is mostly consistent with the Secretary of Interior Standards for Restoration and New Construction, as well as with the Historic Design Standards and Rules & Regulations. The proposed addition and roof deck are consistent with the existing paradigm of the block and fall within the vernacular traditions of the neighborhood. While the rear addition is partially visible from Varick Street, as seen on the Block Site Plan on page HP-1, there are a number of rear additions and decks in this row that are also partially visible from Varick Street, including a similar sized addition at 318 York Street.

In HPC Staff's opinion, the project as proposed will not cause an adverse effect on the character and/or integrity of the historic resource, proximate resources or the Van Vorst Park Historic District. HPC Staff recommends approval of a Certificate of Appropriateness with the following conditions:

1. The architect, Jensen C. Vasil Architect P.C., shall be retained during construction and shall submit a signed and sealed letter representing and noting that site construction was consistent with work approved under the final Certificate of Appropriateness before the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.
2. Details, Specifications, and Material Submissions not currently submitted to and/or approved by the HPC are to be submitted to and approved by the HPO prior to purchase and installation. Any materials approved under this Certificate of Appropriateness that are to be changed during the course of construction are remanded back to the HPC.
3. Any proposed planting or landscaping shall conform with the City of Jersey City Forestry Standards.
4. No portion of the bulkhead or roof deck shall be visible from any public right of way. If any components of the roof deck or bulkhead are visible from the public right of way are visible this approval shall be considered null and void.
5. All lighting on the roof deck, bulkhead, rear terrace and deck shall be downcast in nature. Any fixtures proposed for this area shall be included in the submission of construction documents to be reviewed by HPC staff.
6. Construction drawings, noting materials and finishes, cross referenced with the material sample board, are to be reviewed by, approved by and signed by the Historic Preservation Officer for compliance with the issued Certificate of Appropriateness before construction permits are applied for and issued. Any changes or deviations from the approved drawings are to be clearly bubbled on the Construction Drawings and noted in an accompanying signed and sealed letter to staff.
7. Upon final approval of this Certificate by the HPC, any deviations from the granted approval must be approved by the HPC, except in cases of emergency affecting the public safety, health and welfare. Requests for deviations are to be submitted through written request of the architect.