
Subject: ZBA23-0002 -- 511 East Ann Street

From: Paul Dunlap
Sent: Saturday, January 14, 2023 9:28 AM
To: Planning <Planning@a2gov.org>
Subject: ZBA23-0002 -- 511 East Ann Street

Dear Zoning Board of Appeals Members,

In providing comments here, I am responding to your mailing about the public hearing on ZBA23-0002 regarding a requested variance for 511 East Ann Street.

I have lived on East Ann Street, at 602 E Ann, since August, 2010, and am familiar with the property at 511 East Ann. As a homeowner and member of the Old Fourth Ward Association, I believe that maintaining, and where possible improving, the appearance and condition of our homes, while fully retaining their historic character, are important endeavors.

I approve of the plans the new owner is making for the care and refurbishment of the property at 511 East Ann Street, including his plan to create a second unit. There are two main reasons for this approval.

First, the property at 511 East Ann was allowed by the previous owner to degrade over the years, such that it presents a decayed, abandoned appearance, one that is the antithesis of good stewardship of houses on this historic street. I spoke a few times over the years with the previous owner, and I was disappointed to learn from him that he had no plans to refurbish or live in the house at 511. He appeared to do the minimum maintenance to the front of the house to keep it, or remove it, from being listed by the City as condemned. Consequently, the decay of the front of the house that I can see from the sidewalk has remained and has slowly gotten worse. I fully expected that the house would at some point collapse from decay, its remains would then be removed, and the site cleared. In other words, the house really needs serious refurbishing to save it and to restore it to its past historic beauty.

Second, the new owner, with whom I have spoken at length, has already demonstrated substantial interest and skill in refurbishing an old house, through his work on the house at 603 East Ann Street, directly across from my house. The dilapidated, collapsing, ugly appearance of the house at 603 East Ann, an eyesore on this street, was a major concern for me from the time I moved in to 602 East Ann, and it was one factor that caused me to hesitate in purchasing my property. I often had to chide the renters at 603 East Ann to remove trash and clear away clutter from the front yard and porch, and to seek out ways to encourage the previous owner to make repairs to the porch and its steps and to deal with the overgrowth of long-neglected foliage. Regardless, the ugly decaying appearance of the house was depressing for me. Now, through the costly and attentive work of the new owner, those problems are gone, and the 603 property has emerged as an attractive and pleasing house. The new owner's refurbishing of the 603 East Ann house has made a huge improvement for me in how it feels to live on East Ann. And, he very capably retained the charm of the old style of the house. I believe that he, as the new owner of 511 East Ann, will provide the same care, concern for history, and consideration for quality that his work on the house at 603 East Ann demonstrates. I feel very lucky that he, instead of a less well intentioned individual, bought the 511 East Ann property.

With respect to the requested variance in area, I can comment only that the large amount of space behind the house at 511 East Ann will, according to the new owner, be used for resident parking and garden space. Presumably, the garden space will include landscaping. To my eye, there seems to be more than sufficient space for the planned duplex format together with the parking and garden space.

Overall, given what I have seen of the new owner's work on 603 East Ann, I anticipate that his refurbishing, outside and inside, of 511 East Ann will make it a very attractive house, one that retains its historical character and charm. His work thereby will strongly enhance our historic street.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide my comments to you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Paul Dunlap

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