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(Newberry Blvd. to Edgewood Ave.)

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November 6, 2011

TO: Historic Preservation Commission

RE: 2134 N. Terrace Avenue

Honorable Historic Preservation Commissioners:

HWTN's Historic Preservation Committee, & Buildings & Institutions Committee, have reviewed the new plans submitted by 2134 N. Terrace Avenue and recommend that Historic Water Tower Neighborhood OPPOSE the addition. The proposed alteration clearly violates the guidelines, and is inappropriate.

The historic guidelines for this district encourage:

- *Make additions that harmonize with the existing building architecturally and are located so as not visible from the public right-of-way, if at all possible.*
- *Avoid making additions that are unsympathetic to the original structure and visually intrude upon the principal elevations.*

The addition to the east and south remain the same size as originally proposed; the footprint on those elevations *has not* changed. The change in design to the windows and doors is an improvement, and appears to be consistent with the original architecture of the house.

Both HWTN committees voiced great concern, and object to the request by the property owner to obtain a *variance to the required setback for a corner lot in the district*. This home sits on a *very* prominent corner of the district, close to the entrance of the district. This large addition is especially an issue on the south side, which alters the streetscape on Back Bay Street by failing to meet the minimum setback requirements. Altering this facade to the degree proposed is contrary to the historic guidelines and also requires a zoning variance.

The homeowners have not changed their proposal with respect to scale, and setback requirements. The new construction would be more appropriate if scaled back, on the south, to be in line with the existing garden room bay, directly to the west, which already fails to meet the required setback. The required setback on Back Bay, to the south, is 18'. The proposed setback is 8' 10.5", more than 9' less than what is required.

The required setback to the rear (east) is 20'. The proposed setback is at most 9' 4", more than 10' less than what is required.

The total massing is too great for the lot size. The grandeur of the corner lot, with surrounding landscaping, will greatly decrease.

A variance of this degree in a protected, locally designated, historic district (North Point South) sets a terrible precedent for our historic district. How will the HPC ever again be able to deny an application for an alteration that is entirely visible from the public right of way, and has setbacks that greatly alter the streetscape?

Sincerely,

David Brust, AIA
Barbara Elsner
Dawn McCarthy
Sandra McSweeney
Donna Neal
Adrienne Houck
Historic Preservation and Buildings & Institutions Committee
Historic Water Tower Neighborhood

cc: Paul Jakubovich, Carlen Hatala
cc: Alderman Kovac