

Department of Community Planning and Economic Development – Planning Division**Variance Request
BZZ-3910**

Applicant: John Barbour, on behalf of the Lee Tricker and Todd Hess

Address of Property: 1724 Colfax Avenue South

Contact Person and Phone: John Barbour, (612) 339-5093

Planning Staff and Phone: Brian Schaffer, (612) 673-2670

Date Application Deemed Complete: January 2, 2008

Publication of Staff Report: January 18, 2008

Public Hearing: January 24, 2008

Appeal Period Expiration: February 4, 2008

End of 60 Day Decision Period: March 2, 2008

Ward: 7 **Neighborhood Organization:** Lowry Hill Residents, Inc.

Existing Zoning: R2 Two Family District

Proposed Use: An open front porch on an existing single family dwelling

Proposed Variance: A variance to increase the maximum depth of a front porch from 6 feet to 9 feet to allow for the recreation of a historic wrap-around front porch at 1724 Colfax Avenue South.

Zoning code section authorizing the requested variance: 525.520 (1)

Background: The size of the subject site is 75 feet by 135 feet (10,125 square feet). The property currently contains a single family dwelling. The dwelling, constructed in 1885, is a two-story Queen Anne known as the John Speedy House. The structure is identified as an historic resource by CPED Preservation and Design.

The applicants are currently rehabilitating the structure and making an addition to the rear of the structure. As part of the rehabilitation the applicants are intending to recreate the original wrap-around front porch. The proposed front porch will have a depth of 9 feet and run along the north 12 feet of the front façade and then wrap around to the north interior side façade for an additional 18 feet. The existing, non-original front porch also has a depth of 9 feet.

The Zoning Ordinance states that a front porch shall not project greater than 6 feet into the required front yard. The proposed open front porch has depth of 9 feet and therefore requires a variance.

Findings Required by the Minneapolis Zoning Code:

- 1. The property cannot be put to a reasonable use under the conditions allowed by the official controls and strict adherence to the regulations of this zoning ordinance would cause undue hardship.**

The applicant has requested a variance to increase the maximum depth of a front porch from 6 feet to 9 feet. The existing front porch has a depth of 9 feet and while it is not the original porch it appears that the original porch had a similar depth.

As part of the rehabilitation the applicants removed non-original stucco from the dwelling and revealed the original clapboard siding. Pictorial evidence shows that the original dwelling had a wrap-around front porch that extended along the north interior side façade for 18 feet as the proposed porch does. Staff believes that recreating the historic wrap-around is reasonable use of the property and recognizes the undue hardship caused by strict interpretation of the zoning ordinance.

- 2. The circumstances are unique to the parcel of land for which the variance is sought and have not been created by any persons presently having an interest in the property. Economic considerations alone shall not constitute an undue hardship if reasonable use for the property exists under the terms of the ordinance.**

The conditions upon which the variance is requested are unique to the parcel. The applicant is proposing a rehabilitation of an historic home including the recreation of a wrap-around front porch. The applicant did not design or build the original dwelling and they are just restoring that portion of the dwelling.

- 3. The granting of the variance will be in keeping with the spirit and intent of the ordinance and will not alter the essential character of the locality or be injurious to the use or enjoyment of other property in the vicinity.**

The proposed variance will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood. The existing front porch extends 9 feet in front of the dwelling and has a width of approximately 23 feet. The proposed porch will have roughly the same width and depth as the existing front porch.

The dwelling is located approximately 34 feet from the north interior side property line. The 18 foot long portion of the porch that extends along the north elevation of the dwelling will be nearly 25 feet from the property line. The depth and configuration of the proposed porch will not affect the adjacent property owner to the north due to this distance.

CPED Planning Division Report
BZZ-3910

Staff believes the proposed recreation of the front porch will have a positive impact on the essential character of the locality as it restores a significant dwelling in the neighborhood and the City.

4. **The proposed variance will not substantially increase the congestion of the public streets, or increase the danger of fire, or be detrimental to the public welfare or endanger the public safety.**

Granting the variance would not likely increase congestion in the area or increase the danger of fire safety, nor would the variance be detrimental to public welfare or safety.

Recommendation of the Department of Community Planning and Economic Development - Planning Division:

The Department of Community Planning and Economic Development Planning Division recommends that the Board of Adjustment adopt the findings above and **approve** a variance to increase the maximum depth of a front porch from 6 feet to 9 feet to allow for the recreation of a historic wrap-around front porch at 1724 Colfax Avenue South. with the following condition:

1. CPED-Planning review and approve final site plan, floor plans, and elevations.