



# *CITY COUNCIL*

## ***Evidentiary Hearing***

**HARB Appeal Hearing  
633 S. 6<sup>th</sup> Street  
Monday, May 4, 2015  
5 pm  
Council Chambers**

The purpose of the HARB appeal hearing is to consider the request of the property owner to appeal the HARB approved Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for:

1. The proposal to approve the demolition of a rear addition and to retain vinyl siding at the eastern façade, and to retain a solid six-panel Fiberglass door which replaced a wood and glass door at the southern facade (Violation, work has been completed) at 633 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St. was represented by Gloria & Bryan Kroenig.
2. The demolition of the rear frame addition, which was not original to the building, was approved.
3. The installation of vinyl siding at the eastern façade was denied based on The Secretary on the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation #9 ("New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.").
4. The vinyl siding at the eastern façade must be removed and the exposed stucco surface beneath it must be repaired and painted to match the second floor painted brick wall above.
5. The solid six-panel Fiberglass replacement door installed at the southern façade is approved as installed due to the applicant's concerns about security.

**I. Testimony from Applicant** (No more than 10 minutes)  
**Bryan & Gloria Kroenig (owners)**

During the hearing process, applicants are cautioned not to address the Administrative staff present but to make their presentation directly to City Council. The applicant may ask the President of Council or the Hearing Master to relay a question to Administrative staff.

- **Council's Cross Examination**

**II. Testimony from City Staff** (No more than 10 minutes)

- **Council's Cross Examination**

**III. Other Testimony and Evidence**

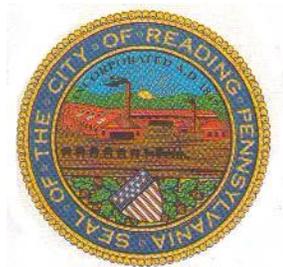
**IV. Public Comment** (No More than 3 minutes per speaker)

**V. Rebuttal by Applicant** (No more than 5 minutes)

**VI. Announcement of expected date of decision**

City Council will render a decision by adopting a resolution at the May 26th Regular Meeting of Council.

**VII. Adjourn**



**CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS**

Resolution No. 09-15

WHEREAS, the Reading Historical Architectural Review Board at its February 17, 2015 meeting reviewed the plans and specifications of Gloria & Bryan Kroenig, owners of 633 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St., Reading, Pennsylvania for

A. the demolition of a rear addition, to retain vinyl siding installed at the eastern façade, and a fiberglass door at the southern façade (violation)

B. and granted a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed work as described in the attached report.

Now, therefore, on the 17th day of February, 2015, I, Amy Woldt Johnson, Historic Preservation Specialist, hereby issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for aforesaid work in the name of the Reading Historical Architectural Review Board.

Amy Woldt Johnson  
Historic Preservation Specialist

**READING HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD**

RESOLUTION # 09-15 - It is proposed to demolish a rear frame structure and to apply vinyl siding to the resulting exposed eastern façade; and to retain a solid six-panel Fiberglass door which replaced a wood and glass door at the southern façade (Violation, work has been completed) at 633 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St., Reading, PA.

OWNER /APPLICANTS: Gloria & Bryan Kroenig

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The Historical Architectural Review Board, upon motion by Mr. Hart and seconded by Ms. LaSota, adopted the proposal to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed work and specified the following:

6. The proposal to approve the demolition of a rear addition and to retain vinyl siding at the eastern façade, and to retain a solid six-panel Fiberglass door which replaced a wood and glass door at the southern facade (Violation, work has been completed) at 633 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St. was represented by Gloria & Bryan Kroenig.
7. The demolition of the rear frame addition, which was not original to the building, was approved.
8. The installation of vinyl siding at the eastern façade was denied based on The Secretary on the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation #9 ("New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.").

9. The vinyl siding at the eastern façade must be removed and the exposed stucco surface beneath it must be repaired and painted to match the second floor painted brick wall above.
10. The solid six-panel Fiberglass replacement door installed at the southern façade is approved as installed due to the applicant's concerns about security.

The motion for the above work was approved with two members voting for and one member voting against.

CU: bhs

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By: \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Meeting: February 17, 2015

Title: Historic Preservation Consultant

**READING HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD  
CITY OF READING, PENNSYLVANIA  
February 17, 2014**

**II. CALL TO ORDER**

The monthly meeting of the Reading Historical Architectural Review Board was held on Tuesday, February 17, 2015 in the Penn Room, Reading City Hall, Reading, PA. At 6:30 PM, Mr. Booth called the meeting to order. Mr. Booth asked if there were any conflicts of interest and Mr. Hart stated that he has a conflict of interest with Item #4. Mr. Booth indicated that he has a conflict of interest with Items #5 and #6.

**A. Roll Call:**

**Members present:** Aaron Booth, Cynthia LaSota, Peter Hart, and Allen Webster.

**Visitors present:**

Gloria Kroenig, 633 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.  
Bryan Kroenig, 633 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St.  
Rick Kocher, 338 S. 5<sup>th</sup> St.  
Rafael E. Rodriguez, 410 Robeson St.  
Angel Rodriguez, 410 Robeson St.  
Steve Boust, 406 Douglass St.  
Scott Hoh, Esq., 606 N. 5<sup>th</sup> St.

**Press present:** Carole Duran, Reading Eagle

**Staff present:** Amy W. Johnson

**Consultant present:** Christine Ussler and associate, Beth Starbuck

**B. Approval of Minutes:** The minutes of the prior meetings were not available for review.

## II. HEARING OF APPLICATIONS:

**ITEM #1 - RESOLUTION #09-15** - It is proposed to demolish a rear frame structure and to apply vinyl siding to the resulting exposed eastern façade; and to retain a solid six-panel Fiberglass door which replaced a wood and glass door at the southern façade (Violation, work has been completed) at 633 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St., Reading, PA.

**Property Owners:** Bryan & Gloria Kroenig

**Owner's Address:** 633 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St., Reading, PA 19602

**Applicant:** Same

**Applicant's Address:** Same

**Building description, period, style, defining features:**

Built in the Federal style, this two and a half story, painted masonry, end of row home received a site quality survey rating of 22 and is not a significant resource in the Prince Historic District. The structure has been compromised with the application of Permastone at the front façade, the covering of the transom window above the front entrance door, the replacement of windows, and the installation of vinyl siding at three window openings on the southern façade. The building dates from the mid to late 19<sup>th</sup> Century.

**Composite Index Rating:** 22

**Proposed alterations:** It is proposed to demolish a rear frame structure and to apply vinyl siding to the eastern façade. (Violation, work has been completed) and to retain a solid six-panel door which replaced a wood and glass door, the applicant has replaced a half light door on the side façade.

**Guideline Citation:** **SIS 2.** The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterized a property shall be avoided. **SIS 6.** Deteriorated features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. **SIS 9.** New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

**Evaluation, effect on historic district, recommendations from the Historic Preservation Consultant:**

The removal of the one story frame addition, at the rear, which was not original to the structure, has not damaged the historic character of the property. However, the treatment of the rear façade is not historically appropriate. Vinyl siding has been installed over the lower two thirds of the rear brick wall covering an existing door. As installed, it is possible that the top of the vinyl sided portion of the wall is not properly flashed and water will penetrate between the brick and the siding. The most historically appropriate solution would have been to remove the interior remaining plaster, spot point where necessary and paint the brick to match. Another option would be to remove the vinyl siding and stucco the entire rear façade. The door should have been retained, but could have been infilled with a new, fixed, four panel smooth fiberglass door.

The door replaced on the side elevation is also not historically appropriate. A more appropriate approach would have been to repair the existing door or to replace with a new door to match or a 4 panel smooth fiberglass door, which is more appropriate solid door for the style and age of the house.

**Discussion:** The review of this item was tabled at the December 16, 2014 HARB Meeting due to the owners of the property being unable to attend the meeting. Ms. Kroenig explained that the pre-existing wood door on the southern façade was rotted and in disrepair. Ms. Kroenig stated that she's had her home broken into three times through this door and therefore they decided to replace the door with a more secure fiberglass door. Ms. Kroenig noted that they have lived at this property for 32 years, they are getting older and it is getting harder to maintain it. Therefore, they made improvements to make the property more maintenance free.

Mr. Hart noted that all of the proposed work has been completed and inquired as to why the owners did not obtain a Certificate of Appropriateness before the work was completed. Ms. Kroenig replied that she did not realize she was still in a historic district because she had heard rumors that the Prince Historic District was going to be decommissioned. Mr. Webster informed the owners that within the City boundaries, not just within the historic district boundaries, property owners are required to obtain a building permit for the work that was undertaken.

Mr. Booth inquired as to whether the original wood and glass door that was located on the southern façade was still on the property. Ms. Kroenig replied that she still had the door but it is in bad condition. Mr. Hart stated that he would approve the installation of the new door but takes exception with the infill of the windows with vinyl siding on the southern façade. Ms. Johnson informed the Board that the infill of the windows at the eastern end of the southern façade is a previous condition as they were infilled many years ago and this is not a part of the application. Mr. Webster suggested a compromise of allowing the owner to keep the Fiberglass door, remove the siding on the eastern façade and paint the eastern façade. Mr. Hart inquired as to what is under the siding on the eastern façade. Ms. Kroenig replied that beneath the siding there is a deteriorated brick façade that was stuccoed over before they installed the siding. Ms. Kroenig stated that she does not have the money to re-point the brick façade. Mr. Hart informed the owner that vinyl siding is not to be installed as a waterproofing system on a structure. Mr. Hart inquired as to whether the stucco under the siding is in good condition. Ms. Kroenig replied that the stucco is in good condition but she didn't like the look of the stuccoed façade. Ms. Ussler inquired as to whether the original door opening on the eastern façade was infilled and covered over with stucco. Ms. Kroenig replied that yes, the door on the eastern façade was removed and infilled and the entire façade was stuccoed up to the original roofline of the frame addition that was removed. The original painted brick façade is still extant on the eastern façade above the siding that was installed. Mr. Hart and Mr. Webster recommended that the siding be removed and the stucco underneath be painted to match the rest of the home. Mr. Hart inquired as to whether the brick façade was re-pointed before the stucco was applied or was the masonry just roughly stuccoed over. Mr. Kroenig replied that the brick façade was roughly covered over with stucco. Ms. Kroenig inquired as to why half of Reading's homes have vinyl siding on them. The Board explained the historic district boundaries to the owner.

Mr. Webster stated that he feels a site visit should be made to the property. Ms. Ussler inquired as to how visible the building's facades were. Ms. Johnson replied that the facades in question are highly visible from Canal Street. Mr. Booth stated that part of the consideration would be that there has been an attempt to re-point the eastern brick façade. Ms. Kroenig restated that the bricks were not re-pointed but were so deteriorated that they were removed as necessary and the façade was roughly stuccoed. Mr. Webster informed the Board that there was a shed that was added on in the 1930's or 1940's and the original exterior eastern masonry wall was not exposed

to the elements where the shed covered the facade. Mr. Webster stated that he feels the original masonry wall should be maintained. Reviewing the photograph taken from when the addition was removed and showing the exposed eastern facade, Mr. Booth summarized the work that was undertaken by stating that after the rear frame addition was demolished, the existing brick that had been previously exposed (above the roofline) was painted a light blue, the previously existing interior brick wall (below the roofline) had had plaster applied to it, and the brick area where the existing frame structure was attached to the building was exposed. Subsequently the newly exposed masonry wall was stuccoed over and vinyl siding was applied.

Mr. Hart inquired as to when the rear frame structure was torn down. Ms. Johnson replied that the frame structure was removed in the fall. Mr. Kroenig replied that he reused the siding from the frame structure and applied it to the eastern wall of the home and painted it to match the color of the home. Mr. Booth stated that unfortunately as explained by the owner, the manner in which the eastern masonry wall was repaired before the vinyl siding was applied, put it in a condition where the masonry wall cannot be re-exposed.

A motion was made by Mr. Hart and seconded by Ms. LaSota. Mr. Booth asked if there were further comments. The owners commented on the amount of vinyl siding that is visible in their neighborhood. The Board explained to the owners that they must follow certain standards and policies when reviewing a project. Mr. Booth stated that if there was vinyl siding applied to a property before the establishment of the historic district, the application of the siding would be grandfathered. Ms. Kroenig stated that the rear frame addition was not very visible before as she used to have a high fence and a pool in her rear yard. Mr. Booth showed the owner a photograph of the home that was taken from Canal Street demonstrating that the rear façade is now visible from a public right of way. Mr. Booth reiterated that any work that is undertaken that is visible from a public right of way requires a Certificate of Appropriateness as per the Historic District Ordinance. Mr. Webster inquired as to whether it would be possible that when the siding is removed, the Board would be willing to make a site visit and investigate an option for removing the stucco, and repairing and painting the original brick façade. Ms. Johnson stated that from what the owner has described, this treatment would not be possible as the brick has not been appropriately repaired. Ms. Johnson stated that the Board has previously made it a part of a motion for other properties that after the removal of a material, a site visit could be made to the property and it would be determined how to move forward regarding the treatment of the façade. Mr. Booth stated that it would be preferable to have all of the stucco or plaster removed, the brick façade restored, and then painted if desired.

**Motion:** The Historical Architectural Review Board, upon motion by Mr. Hart and seconded by Ms. LaSota, adopted the proposal to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed work and specified the following:

11. The proposal to approve the demolition of a rear addition and to retain vinyl siding at the eastern façade, and to retain a solid six-panel Fiberglass door which replaced a wood and glass door at the southern facade (Violation, work has been completed) at 633 S. 6<sup>th</sup> St. was represented by Gloria & Bryan Kroenig.
12. The demolition of the rear frame addition, which was not original to the building, was approved.
13. The installation of vinyl siding at the eastern façade was denied based on The Secretary on the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation #9 ("New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.").

14. The vinyl siding at the eastern façade must be removed and the exposed stucco surface beneath it must be repaired and painted to match the second floor painted brick wall above.
15. The solid six-panel Fiberglass replacement door installed at the southern façade is approved as installed due to the applicant's concerns about security.

The motion for the above work was approved with two members voting for and one member voting against.