

Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Historic Rehabilitation

Providence Academy Mechanical & Electrical Upgrades

(1) A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.

Applicant Response: There is no change in use associated with the proposed mechanical and electrical upgrades at the Providence Academy Building.

This Standard is met.

(2) The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.

The exterior alterations to the property will be minimal and will not negatively affect the historic character of the property.

The project will remove two existing residential-style window air conditioners that serve the ballroom. One is located within an infilled transom above a door on the south elevation. The other is located within an infilled transom above a door on the north elevation under one of the porches. The existing infill panels will be replaced with new painted MDO infill panels. The project budget does not allow for the transoms to be restored at this time. However, removal of the unsightly AC units will improve the historic character of the property.

At the north end of the building, three new heat pumps will be discreetly located in an existing niche. This is the ideal location for these new mechanical units, as it greatly minimizes their visibility.

On the south side of the building, the existing electrical transformer will be replaced. This is required, as the building currently does not have enough power to support upgrading the mechanical systems. We are asking for approval of two potential locations and the flexibility to choose between these locations based on their construction feasibility. Both locations are on the south side, toward the west end of the building. Both locations greatly improve upon the existing transformer location, which is adjacent to the heart-shaped driveway and closer to the center of the building. The transformer must remain on the building's south side to reduce the trenching distance from Evergreen Blvd and to access the existing electrical room, which is on the south side of the basement. New landscaping will screen the transformer.

In order to realize the mechanical upgrades in the ballroom and chapel, louvers are required at several locations to provide a fresh air intake and exhaust. These have been discretely located in secondary windows. The goal is to not disturb any of the masonry exterior or primary historic windows. All sashes removed will be placed in storage in the building, allowing the louver condition to be reversed if needed at any time in the future. Louvers will be located in three basement windows, in one transom at the north tower restroom, and three of the small roof dormer windows on the north/east sides of the building

While the louvers do require that a small amount of historic material be removed, it is the best solution because it is easily reversible. Furthermore, this alteration also occurs at windows that are not high character-defining features to the historic facades. The dormer windows are located on the secondary façade with minimal public exposure. The basement windows are all obscured by existing lattice screens or plantings.

This Standard is met.

(3) Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

The project does not involve making changes that would create a false sense of historical development, such as conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings.

This Standard is met.

(4) Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.

This project does not entail altering or removing any changes to the property that have acquired historic significance.

This Standard is met.

(5) Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a historic property shall be preserved.

No distinctive features, finishes, construction techniques, or examples of craftsmanship that characterize the Academy will be disturbed or removed.

This Standard is met.

(6) Deteriorated historic 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. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

The scope of work does not involve work on any deteriorated historic features at the building's exterior.

This Standard is met.

(7) Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.

No chemical or physical treatments are part of the scope of this project.

This Standard is met.

(8) Significant archeological resources affected by a project shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.

The scope of this project is unlikely to cause any ground disturbance that would affect archaeological resources. The trenching required for the electrical transformer will be in an area that was previously disturbed several times. If any archaeological resources are discovered, the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation will be contacted immediately.

This Standard is met.

(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.

The proposed exterior alterations will not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. Where the basement windows, restroom transom, and dormer windows are proposed for removal and replacement with a louver, these sashes will be salvaged and stored at the building. A ventilation solution that penetrates the masonry would cause greater destruction to historic materials, as would louvers placed in any of the large character-defining windows.

The removal of the AC units and the replacement of existing non-historic infill panels with new infill panels does not destroy any historic materials and is a compatible solution.

Placement of three outdoor HVAC heat pumps in the niche north of the one-story courtyard addition is also an appropriate historic solution, as this screens the mechanical units. Clustering mechanical equipment at the back of the building provides for less cluttered views of the primary elevations.

The two proposed locations for the new electrical transformer will be a great improvement over the existing location, which is close to the historic entry and historic landscaping. Pulling the transformer away from this key area of the building and screening it with landscaping, will improve the most important view of the Academy's primary façade.

This Standard is met.

(10) New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

No new additions or related new construction is proposed with this project.

This Standard is met.