

STATE OF TEXAS
COUNTY OF HIDALGO
CITY OF MCALLEN

The Historic Preservation Council convened in a meeting on Wednesday, February 19, 2025 at 12:06 p.m. at the McAllen Development Center – 311 N. 15th Street – Executive Conference

Present:	Dr. Jaclyn Miller	Chairperson
	Danny Boultinghouse	Vice-Chairperson
	Carolina Civarolo	Member
	Melissa S. Knerr	Member
	Marc Millis	Member
	Daniel Padilla	Member
Staff Present:	Martin Canales	Assistant City Attorney III
	Rodrigo Sanchez	Senior Planner
	Hilda Tovar	Planner II
	Carmen White	Administrative Assistant

CALL TO ORDER – Dr. Jaclyn Miller - Chairperson

1. Minutes

a) Approval or Disapproval of Minutes held on November 20, 2024

Ms. Melissa Knerr moved to approve the minutes with corrections as noted. Ms. Carolina Civarolo seconded the motion. Motion approved with five board members present and voting.

2. Public Hearing

a) Request of Jack and Hilda Edwards for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the addition of a steel frame freestanding pergola in the rear of the property on an existing McAllen City Landmark designation located at the West 25 ft. of Lot 11, and all of Lots 12 and 13, Block 11, Milmor Addition to McAllen Subdivision, Hidalgo County, Texas; 1321 Jasmine Avenue. (CLM2024-0004)

Board member Marc Millis recused himself from the item being he was 200 feet from the request.

The subject property is located at the southeast corner of North Main Street and Jasmine Avenue. The zoning designation for this tract is R-1 (single family residential) District and there is currently a residence located on the subject property. The architectural classification for the building is English Tudor. The property was designated a McAllen City Landmark in November 14, 2022.

Ms. Tovar stated the applicant is proposing to construct a pergola with an exposed metal structure. The proposed framework is made of dark steel beams, which form a canopy with creeping vines that will grow their way around the steel beams. The metal structure will contrast with decorative stained colored glass pieces and decorative antique wrought iron arranged in patterns and in the corners of the pergola. The light passing through the colored stained glass will create color shifting throughout the day as the natural light changes.

The Miller-Kelsey House is an outstanding example of a custom-designed English Tudor house built during a period of phenomenal growth in South Texas in the mid-1920s. The house was built by Mr. J.A. Traylor, contractor, while Valley Lumber Company supplied the materials. Its two-story placement across two lots of Jasmine Avenue is relieved by its projecting Tudor arch entrance and extended front chimney. The Miller-Kelsey house is in excellent condition and retains all seven aspects of integrity: location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, and association. The Miller-Kelsey House was designated a McAllen City Landmark in November 14, 2022.

The design review process for the Certificate of Appropriateness is critical for a designated Historic Landmark to ensure the unique and defining characteristics of the building are maintained according to McAllen's design standards.

1. *Consistency of Style* – New construction should not try to replicate the architectural styles of the past but should look to them for guidance on fenestration patterns, façade organization, level and extent of detailing, massing, roof forms and height, and materials used. New construction should reflect modern design but be sensitive to the historical architectural styles of the past.

The applicant submitted plans showing details of the architectural alterations. The plans submitted comply with the consistency of style design standards.

2. *Materials* – New construction should maintain the characteristics of existing exterior materials.
3. *Setbacks* – To ensure consistency, new construction should follow existing ordinance requirements.

For the proposed pergola, the applicant is proposing a rear setback of 35 feet, a side setback of 18 feet 5 inches on the west side, and a side setback of 46 feet on the east side. The plans submitted comply with the required setbacks and will be reviewed during the building permit process.

The plans submitted comply with the design standards of a Historic Landmark for Block 11, Milmor Subdivision and will be verified during the building permit review.

The proposal mentioned above is the only request being made by the applicant. There are no other changes being made to the exterior or interior of the Historic Landmark.

The plans submitted comply with the Historic Landmark Design Standards for the proposed building and do not affect the historic or architectural nature of the home. Therefore, staff recommends approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness for the proposed pergola as requested by the applicant.

Chairperson Miller asked if there were any public comments.

Ms. Angelina Millis, 1305 Jasmine Avenue. She stated the Edwards had done an amazing work with their home. However, she had concerns with the metal structure where the material use was not congruent to that of a Historic property. She stated her second concern was the

precedence had already been set. It was not of cedar nature and did not look of historic in any way.

Erika de la Garza stated they owned 1315 Kendlewood Avenue and 1321 West Maple Avenue properties. Her concerns was not with the structure or materials but it was how the process was handled. She stated the Edwards had harassed and targeted several homeowners in that area when others are doing improvements, upgrading building new modifications to their property. They had called City officials and building ordinances to stop progress in Old Towne, even though they had gone through the proper channels getting it permitted and done correctly. Ms. de la Garza stated they pergola was built without a permit.

Stacy Solis, 1312 Jasmine Avenue. She stated she lived across the street from the Edwards. Her concerns were that the Edwards had already constructed concrete pad and the metal posts without a permit. A couple of years ago, the Edwards chose to go through the Historic permit and the get the City designation to have their house as a Historic Landmark. At that time, Ms. Solis stated the Edwards should have known the requirements not just for the house itself but also for the entire property. The metal structure was not abiding by the nature of a house that was built in early part of the 20th Century. There were no metal pillars and beams in place at that time.

Mrs. Hilda Edwards, the applicant, stated they purchased the house 35 years ago. They had restored and maintained its integrity inside and out. Inside the house, it had the look of the 1920s and 1930s. She stated they had State Historical Landmark as of last year, RTHL that stands for Recorded Texas Historical Landmark. Mr. Gabriel Ozuna, who is the head of the County Historical Commission, was aware of the pergola. They had a very old oak tree in the back yard with a deck underneath it but the tree had died. Mrs. Edwards stated they had an arborist from Texas A&M and someone from Quinta Mazatlán come over and inspect the tree and advised them to take the tree down due to damage to the trunk. She had trellis in her backyard that have ivy on it. She stated she had collected throughout South Texas pieces of old rod iron, which she had sand, blasted and painted. It will be attached to the pergola in the corners. She also had some stained glass from the old San Juan Shrine. Four of those panels will be going up on the west section of the pergola. Mrs. Edwards stated she did not know they needed a permit for a pergola. On the permit process, she came to meet with the Planning Department. She then went to the Building Department to obtain a permit and was informed that they did not need a permit to build a pergola but did obtained a permit to be on the safe side and stopped construction immediately. She stated they did not have a concrete floor it was still dirt.

Mr. Edwards stated they did receive a citation and had no problem stopping construction. Mrs. Edwards read from the Secretary of the Interior Standard.

Board member Knerr had concerns with that the Edwards did not come before the Board for prior approval and feared it would set a standard.

Mr. Edwards stated they would remove the structure along with the posts and start the process over to come before the Board.

Chairperson Miller had stated that this was not part of the Historic District. The home was a Landmark. She stated the other homes in the area are not going to be governed by the same standards. Currently the City did not have Ordinances in place that require approval for changes for homes that are outside the Landmark Designation or outside the Historic District.

Following discussion, Ms. Carolina Civarolo moved to motion to approve the Certificate of Appropriateness. Vice-Chairperson Danny Boultinghouse seconded the motion. The Board voted unanimously with four members voting aye and one nay, Ms. Melissa Knerr.

3. Adjournment

Following discussion, Ms. Melissa Knerr made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Ms. Daniel Padilla seconded the motion, which passed unanimously with five members present and voting. The meeting was adjourned at 12.40 p.m.

ATTEST Carmen White
Carmen White

Jaclyn Miller
Dr. Jaclyn Miller
Chairperson