

NORTHVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
April 18, 2018
Wednesday 7:00 P.M. – Northville City Hall – Council Chambers

1. CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL:

Chair Allen called the Historic District Commission meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Present: Allen, Field (left 8:32 p.m.), Gudritz, Hoffman, Murdock, Tartaglia
Absent: Argenta (excused)
Also Present: Planning Consultant Elmiger

2. PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION Field, support by Murdock, to approve the agenda as published. **Motion carried unanimously.**

4. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES: March 21, 2018

MOTION Gudritz, support by Field, to approve the March 21, 2018 minutes as published.

Motion carried unanimously.

5. REPORTS:

- A. CITY ADMINISTRATION:** None
- B. CITY COUNCIL:** None
- C. PLANNING COMMISSIONER:** None
- D. OTHER COMMUNITY/GOVERNMENTAL LIAISONS:** None

6. PUBLIC HEARING: None

7. CASES TO BE HEARD – BY CASE

CASE #1
TODD WISELEY
504 W. DUNLAP

DEMOLISH SHED ADDITION

Greg Presley, Presley Architecture, 108 N. Center Street, Northville MI was present on behalf of this application, which was to demolish a shed addition in order to add a one-story addition on the east side of the existing house. The addition would expand the kitchen, and widen the hallway coming from the garage, resulting in a larger mud hall. Owners Todd and Lisa Wisely were also present.

Mr. Presley said that in 1989 he had come to the Historic District Commission (HDC) to get approval for alterations to this home. At that time the front half of the house from the south side of the kitchen north was altered, including the shed that they were asking to remove. Now the 30-year old shed was in the way of a little larger one-story addition, which would be added if the demolition were approved.

Commissioner Field said he found nothing significant historically or architecturally regarding the shed, and he did not consider it a contributing resource. The proposed work would improve the

overall structure of the house.

In response to a comment from Commissioner Murdock, Planning Consultant Elmiger explained that if the Commission deemed that the portion being demolished did not have historic or architectural significance, the public hearing could be waived and the application could be considered for its completeness.

Commissioner Hoffman agreed that the shed was not historically significant.

MOTION Field, support by Gudritz, that the shed proposed to be demolished at 504 West Dunlap Street has no architectural or historic significance.

Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Murdock asked for additional clarification regarding why the property did not first have to be placed for sale. Commissioner Field commented that the demolition was for a very small nonhistoric portion of the home. Planning Consultant Elmiger added that in her opinion the requirement for first placing a property for sale was intended to be combined with the basis for financial hardship only. Any other reading would illogically prohibit anyone from making a small alteration to a recent addition, as in this case.

Commissioner Field added that page 6 of the demolition guidelines included a paragraph which read: *Exception: If the structure proposed for demolition or moving is found, by majority vote, to have no historical or architectural significance, the Commission may approve the demolition or moving at this first meeting, without holding a public hearing.*

Commissioner Murdock asked that the motion include clear reasons for the HDC's findings in this case.

MOTION Hoffman, support by Field, that since a public hearing is not required, and since the portion to be removed was built in 1989, the Historic District Commission finds that the application is complete.

Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION Field, support Gudritz, to grant a Notice to Proceed for the demolition of the shed as described.

Motion carried unanimously.

**CASE #2
TODD WISELY
504 W. DUNLAP**

ADDITION

Greg Presley, Presley Architecture, 108 N. Center Street, Northville MI was present on behalf of this application, which as noted above was to add a one-story building addition on the east side of the existing house in order to expand the kitchen, and widen the hallway coming from the garage, resulting in a larger mud hall. Owners Todd and Lisa Wisely were also present.

Mr. Presley further explained that the addition was 6'x20'. They were matching materials and paint color. The shingles would be Certainteed Landmark as shown in the application. The entire roof would be replaced.

In response to a question from Commissioner Field, Mr. Presley explained that the radial and elliptical windows helped differentiate this newer portion from the original house.

MOTION Field, support by Murdock, to accept the application as complete. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Allen opened the meeting for public comment. Seeing that no one came forward to speak, Chair Allen brought the matter back to the Commission.

MOTION Hoffman, support by Gudritz, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as presented, referencing the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, in particular Standards 9 and 10, and Northville Historic District Design Standards 3-16 mass, 3-21 rhythm, 3-21 material, 5-9 asphalt shingles, with the entire roof to be replaced with Georgetown Gray Landmark CertainTeed shingles, 5-14 windows, 5-17 siding, and 5-18 for paint and color.

Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Allen noted that proof of ownership would have to be provided prior to permits being pulled.

**CASE #3
PAUL JOHNSON
537 RANDOLPH**

**FOUNDATION/FEATURE
DEMOLITION/MOVE**

Greg Presley, Presley Architecture, 108 N. Center Street, Northville MI was present on behalf of this application, which was to demolish the existing house foundations, the one-story rear addition, the west side covered porch, and the existing garage, as well as moving the remaining portion of the home to the south, and reorienting it so that the rear of the home faced the back yard. Owners Paul and Karen Johnson were also present. Mr. Johnson was a builder and would be the general contractor on this project.

Mr. Presley referred to materials included in the application and gave some history of the houses on Randolph Street. The site plan showed that the house faced the back the neighbor’s yard. That configuration was also true of the house two properties to the east, which in 1988 had received HDC approval to be lifted and moved so that it faced its own back yard, with an addition added to the rear. The house immediately to the east added an addition in the mid-1990’s, with that addition being more centered on the property.

The subject house began as a Sears kit home, and grew with additions, a garage, porches, etc. The garage was constructed in the 1930s. The house sat on a partial basement that was not room size, and with the sole access being through a trap door in the porch. The foundation did not provide a crawl space, and folks had tunneled through dirt to get to the mechanicals underneath: forced air, plumbing, electrical, etc.

The applicants proposed to demolish the later additions and the garage using the basis that those structural elements were a deterrent to a major improvement program. The proposed alteration served a better purpose and would save the original structure. They wanted to move the structure so that the original home would stand out and be the dominant feature. Additionally they would construct a new foundation with a basement that could be accessed from inside the home, and orient the house to its own backyard.

Mr. Presley pointed out that the two houses to the east were angled to the west. The house to the west of the property was angled 90 degrees to the south. Tonight the applicants were proposing to orient their house to its own property. To do so they had chosen an angle that was halfway between the angle of the house to the east and the house to the west.

The inside length of the existing garage was 6'9", too small to fit a mid-sized car, and was in need of repair. It was also too close to the house to meet current standards. Last, the 1930s garage was in the way of the proposed project, which would save a 19th century home and bring it into the 21st century.

Mr. Presley concluded by stating they would keep the window hoods and all the detail important to the structure, and asked for demolition approval of the elements described.

Commissioner Field said that it seemed from the site plans, especially Sheet A4, that the house was disproportionately wide in comparison to other homes on the block, especially with the new garage being attached to the house.

Mr. Presley pointed out that the home two doors away had a garage that faced the street. He also related this project to others he had done in the City.

Mr. Presley said that the footprint did appear big compared to the original structure. However, they were taking off portions of the home that were not original, so the overall addition was smaller than it appeared.

Commissioner Field asked how the new part of the house would be differentiated from the old. Mr. Presley explained that the connecting breezeway with a 2nd floor space above was an obvious new addition. The garage would be vertical board and batten, and would be painted a slightly different color than the house. The rest of the addition was in the rear.

Chair Allen said he was concerned that this addition along with the re-orientation of the home was changing the character of the street more than previous additions on the street had done.

Mr. Presley disagreed, explaining that this house would be less severe than the home two houses to the east relative to Randolph Street. He thought it blended with the homes on Randolph Street, that the orientation to its own backyard at an angle that still respected the existing streetscape maintained the character of the street.

Commissioner Hoffman noted that the drawings on Sheet A-3 appeared flat and out of scale compared to the other homes. Elements that were stepped back also appeared flat.

Mr. Presley commented that the addition was mainly behind the main structure, and the intentional hierarchy ensured the original house was the focus, and that the garage would not compete with the house.

Chair Allen agreed the elevation was deceiving. He asked if there was a way to move the garage further back, or move the existing house forward to the setback line. Mr. Presley said that because of the angle of the house, the further back the garage was placed the less garage could be constructed. In terms of the front yard placement, they were attempting to keep the house in line with the two adjacent houses.

Chair Allen suggesting moving the relocated house further east, which would give more room on

the west to slide the garage further back, increasing the prominence of the original home. He remained concerned about the impact the change would have on the character of the street. The Secretary of Interior discouraged moving structures, although the term *moving* was not defined – it could mean moving to a completely different lot, for instance. But other homes the HDC had approved for moving were moved only a few feet. This home was being significantly moved on the lot. Also, in his opinion, visually the garage was still competing with the original structure. Even moving that garage four feet further back could help it not to compete with the home.

In response to questions from Commissioner Tartaglia, Mr. Presley said they were moving the house 20 feet to the east and 4 feet to the south. They would be touching the setback lines on each side.

Commissioner Gudritz agreed that moving the garage back a little further would reduce the apparent mass of the house.

In response to comments from Commissioner Tartaglia, Planning Consultant Elmiger advised that an application for demolition had to explain why the demolition was being requested, and the applicant had to bring the plans in order to get approval for the demolition. The garage had to be part of the demolition application. The Commission needed to determine if the application met the Secretary of Interior standards and the requirements of Northville's ordinance. Each property was unique, and the standards required interpretation by the Commission.

Commissioner Field said the philosophical question was that the house needed substantial work in order for someone in the 21st century to live in it, and the City needed to allow folks who wanted to invest time and money into the structure do that while ensuring that the structure flowed with the rest of the street.

Commissioner Tartaglia thought that moving the garage back 4 feet would not make enough of a difference to require this be done.

Mr. Presley said they didn't want to pull the house forward. The current discussion was about the garage. Perhaps they could eliminate the bumpout for the left bay. This would square it off and would gain 2 feet, resulting in the house being 4 feet off the corner of the main plane of the building.

Commissioner Hoffman said he had a different perspective. He supported the existing design. Preserving the original house was most important. The new was differentiated from the old. Because the house was angled, for someone driving east on Randolph the garage would not stick out because they would not be driving parallel to the house, so the garage would naturally appear to be further back, because it would literally be farther away from the street. He thought the design as presented made sense.

Commissioner Hoffman asked about moving the house. He was concerned that the house would be damaged by the move. Who would be doing that work?

Mr. Johnson said they were hiring a professional to move the house. He had crawled underneath the structure and found it to be sound.

Commissioner Field said that the more he looked at the drawings the more satisfied he was. He did think the elevation on Sheet A-3 was deceptive. He understood that the focal point would be the original old house.

Commissioner Gudritz asked how large the original home was. Mr. Presley said that the original home was about 1330 square feet, and the home with the current additions was 1800 square feet.

Commissioner Gudritz said it appeared that the addition would be 100 – 110% of the original structure. The guidelines said that the addition should not exceed 50% of the original structure, though the concern was mitigated by the fact that most of the addition was in the rear.

Mr. Presley said they had interpreted the guidelines to encompass the entire house as it existed today. Calculated from that total, the addition would not be 100%, but rather a 70% addition to the structure. If only the original house was being considered, the allowed addition would be substantially less than what was being removed. The existing structure had habitable 1788 square feet. The proposed alteration would result in 3068 habitable square feet.

Mr. Gudritz said his interpretation was that the part of the house that was being preserved formed the base for the addition calculation, as noted in Section 3.20 of the demolition guidelines.

Commissioner Field directed the Commission's attention to the drawing under the paragraph cited. In that drawing the original house was not the focal point of the additions, the original house had lost all emphasis, the original profile had been obscured, and the garage was more prominent than the house. What the applicants had done in the present instance was to provide the old house as the focal point of everything else, and the garage was subordinate. Most of the addition was in the rear and would not be seen from the street.

Commissioner Gudritz agreed with that analysis. However, he would rather see a detached garage.

Mr. Presley said that they felt they had achieved a result that looked like a detached garage, because the connection was set back from the face of the garage.

A discussion of process followed. The HDC would need to act on both the demolition and moving the structure.

Mr. Presley emphasized the value of saving the original house, and making improvements that would allow it to last for another 100 years.

MOTION Field, support by Hoffman, that the elements proposed to be demolished at 537 Randolph Street, including the west porch, garage, the south side wing and the foundation have no architectural or historic significance.

Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION Hoffman, support by Gudritz, regarding 537 Randolph Street, that because the elements to be demolished are not historically or architecturally significant, and because the resource is a deterrent to a major improvement program, the public hearing is not necessary, and the application is complete.

Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION Field, support Gudritz, to grant a Notice to Proceed for the demolition of the west porch, garage, south side wing, and foundation at 537 Randolph Street as described.

Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION Hoffman, support by Field, to grant a Notice to Proceed for the house to be moved on the property at 537 Randolph Street as described in the application drawings.

Motion carried unanimously.

**CASE #4
PAUL JOHNSON
537 RANDOLPH**

**BUILDING ADDITION,
NEW GARAGE**

Greg Presley, Presley Architecture, 108 N. Center Street, Northville MI was present on behalf of this application to construct a new, two-story addition to the south and a 1.5 story garage addition to the west that was attached to the original structure with a breezeway. Additional changes included a new foundation, replacement of existing windows, refurbishment of original siding and trim, with replacement as necessary, and a new roof over the original and new structures. Owners Paul and Karen Johnson were also present.

Mr. Presley explained that they were proposing to add a portion to the porch, and add a dormer and window to the front bedroom on the second story in order to provide 2nd story egress. They would distinguish the main house from the addition by using Hardie Board and regular trim. The garage and connecting breezeway would be vertical board and batten, with the garage color a little darker than the main body of the house.

Commissioner Field asked why there were verticals on the garage but not on the new portion of the east side of the house. Mr. Presley said they were trying to distinguish the garage from the house but not necessarily the addition.

Chair Allen asked if the upstairs windows were original. Mr. Johnson said the downstairs windows were original; the upstairs windows were not.

Commissioner Hoffman asked if the new dormer on the historic part of the house was necessary. Could a side window provide egress, and thus preserve the front of the house? Mr. Presley said the side windows were not wide enough.

Ms. Johnson said there were 2 homes on Dunlap that were Sears kit homes that did have a dormer in that location, and also had the extension of the overhang. That was where they got the idea to design it in this way.

In response to a question from Chair Allen, Mr. Presley said the windows would have exterior mullions.

Commissioner Murdock asked if the applicants were mimicking the roof and other features of the Sears kit houses on Dunlap. Mr. Presley said this home was different than the homes on Dunlap; they were all Sears kit homes but this was a different model.

MOTION Hoffman, support by Field, to accept the application as complete. **Motion carried unanimously.**

Chair Allen opened the meeting for public comment. Seeing that no one came forward to speak, Chair Allen brought the matter back to the Commission.

MOTION Hoffman, support by Murdock, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as presented, referencing the Secretary of Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, in particular Standards 9 and 10, and Northville Historic District Design Standards 3-1 preserving porches, 3-14 setback and spacing, 3-16 mass, 3-19 proportion, 3-20 heirarchy, 3-21 materials, 3-22 dormers, 3-24 garages, 5-4 masonry, 5-9 asphalt shingles, 5-12 stone, 5-14 windows, 5-17 siding with the option of using cement board siding if needed, and 5-18 paint and color.

Mr. Presley provided examples of the shingles and stone. Shingles would be Certainteed Landmark and the chimney stone would be Veneerstone, as shown in the application packet.

Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Field left the meeting at 8:32 p.m.

**CASE #5
CENTER STREET GRILL
135 N. CENTER STREET**

NEW ACCESSORY BUILDINGS

Dan Johnson, Center Street Grill owner, was present on behalf of this application, which was to install a ramp on the interior of the front entryway to provide barrier-free access to the existing sidewalk. They were also proposing to install an outdoor cooler to the west of the stairs, add fencing at the foot of the stairs to the second floor apartments, and extend the existing rear entry deck and ramp. The building owner was proposing to install a canopy over the existing stairs to the second floor apartments (color and style of the awning would match the existing awning at the back door).

Dwayne White, property owner, was also present.

Mr. Johnson related some history of this property. When the Mr. White purchased the property he brought the badly dilapidated rear stairs into code compliance. In doing so, the restaurant’s returnables storage under the stairs was removed, and also the accessibility ramp was narrowed. The entire back area now had to be demolished and rebuilt to accommodate a correct accessibility ramp.

Additionally, the back hallway was very narrow. When deliveries were being made and customers were using the hallway for access to the restrooms or to exit the building, bottlenecks occurred. By placing the cooler outside, delivery drivers never had to enter the store at all. They would drop off the deliveries outside and then use EFT for payment.

The proposed ramp would flow into the alley, mitigating the aggressive grade of the asphalt there.

The ramp would be on City property, and Mr. Johnson acknowledged that he would need to obtain permission from the City to install the ramp. They would purchase extra insurance as needed and indemnify the City.

Mr. Johnson explained that he had been before the Planning Commission for this project. He said that initially they had hoped to use a more durable product than wood for the fence, but wood was required by ordinance.

Chair Allen asked if the HDC could recommend a material other than wood for the fence. Planning Consultant Elmiger explained that the HDC could make a recommendation, but the Planning Commission would have final approval, as the applicant had to return to the Planning Commission for final site plan approval.

Planning Consultant Elmiger further explained that the Planning Commission had granted preliminary approval, conditioned on:

1. Obtain City Council approval of construction of the barrier-free ramp on City-owned property.
2. Show loading/unloading area on the site plan.
3. Proposed fence to be made of wood.
4. Approval of HDC.
5. Provide proof of combination of the lots.

If the HDC decided to approve this request, they could indicate their preference for fence material, and then the Planning Commission could work with that when the applicant returned to them for final site plan approval.

Chair Allen asked if the fence was intended to be a screen or to create a safe environment. Mr. Johnson said the fence was intended to act as a screen only.

Chair Allen noted that the fence would be in a hot environment. Any fencing material would need to withstand that. Vinyl was not preferred for a variety of reasons, including its inability to withstand high heat and glare.

The consensus of the Commission was to recommend the fence material be wood or wood-like material.

In response to a question from Commissioner Hoffman, Planning Consultant Elmiger said all 5 items listed in her September 8, 2017 review letter had been resolved.

Commissioner Hoffman asked the timeline for this project. Mr. Johnson explained that they would have to go before City Council, then return to the Planning Commission. They hoped to complete the project in summer 2018.

MOTION Gudritz, support by Murdock, to accept the application as complete. Motion carried unanimously.

Chair Allen opened the meeting for public comment.

Mr. White asked if combining the two properties would have an impact on his taxes. Planning Consultant Elmiger referred him to the City Assessor.

Mr. Johnson explained that he had worked with the landlord next door, and had placed the cooler in between the two glass block windows so as not to block the light to the tenants there.

In response to a question from Commission Hoffman, Mr. Johnson said the cooler was whisper quiet, and ran on 14 volts.

Seeing that no one else came forward to speak, Chair Allen brought the matter back to the Commission.

Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION Hoffman, support by Gudritz, to grant a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as presented, referencing the Secretary of Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, in particular Standards 9 and 10, and Northville Historic District Design Standards 4-16 mass, 4-

21 materials, 4-27 rear façade development, 5-18 paint and color with the fencing to be wood or durable wood-like product.

Motion carried unanimously.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS: None.

9. DISCUSSION: None.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Allen adjourned the meeting at 8:49 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl McGuire
Recording Secretary

Approved as published 05/16/18