

NORTHVILLE HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION
May 16, 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, Gudritz, Hoffman, Murdock, Tartaglia

Absent: Argenta (excused), Field (excused)

Also Present: Planning Consultant Elmiger, Mayor Roth, Downtown Development Authority
Director Ward

2. PUBLIC COMMENT: None.

3. APPROVAL OF AGENDA:

MOTION Hoffman, support by Gudritz, to approve the agenda as published. **Motion carried unanimously.**

4. APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES: April 18, 2018

MOTION Gudritz, support by Murdock, to approve the April 18, 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

GUIDOBONO BUILDING CO
341 E. MAIN

REQUEST DETERMINATION FOR
DEMO APPLICATION

Chair Allen explained that tonight's request was for a decision as to whether or not the application to demolish 341 E. Main was complete. If the application were found to be complete, a public hearing would be scheduled to hear the actual request for demolition.

Ed Funke, Guidobono Building Company, asked the Commission to find their application for demolition complete. The last required item for the application was to list the subject property for sale, and 341 E. Main had been listed for sale since February. No showings had resulted.

Chair Allen asked Commissioner Tartaglia to comment on his concerns at an earlier meeting regarding the question listed in the guidelines: *Has the property been marketed for a reasonable time?*

Commissioner Tartaglia said that his concern was that *reasonable* was undefined.

Commissioner Murdock asked about the asking price, as Guidobono Building Company had purchased the house at a certain price, discovered after they had purchased it that the structure had problems, and then listed it for a significantly higher price.

Mr. Funke said their realtor Rick Birdsall, Signature Associates, was present this evening and could address the asking price of the property. Guidobono's position was that the original purchase price was based on the resolution of an estate, and the desire of the family to close out the asset. Guidobono had therefore been able to purchase the property at a good price.

Commissioner Murdock asked if the selling price was set with the knowledge that whoever purchased the property could not do anything except renovate the property.

Mr. Funke asked Mr. Birdsall to address the question of asking price.

Rick Birdsall, 1030 Portsmere Court, Northville, said that he represented Signature Associates and was a commercial broker. Mr. Birdsall said Guidobono's original purchase price was irrelevant in setting the price. Mr. Birdsall had looked at the where the market was and what other properties were currently available. The subject property lent itself to development similar to other projects that had gone on in downtown Northville such as the one at North Center/Rayson Streets, which now had a new building. The corner of East Main and Hutton also had a new building that came out of a similar situation. He looked at the property and the value of the land. In this case the building was in very poor condition and in his opinion worth nothing. The property represented a great parcel for another building in downtown Northville. The land value was a stand-alone.

Commissioner Murdock asked if this price was set with the understanding that the next buyer could not demolish the structure. If the property sold, the Commission would not be able to approve demolition of the structure.

Mr. Birdsall said he priced the property based on what he felt the value of the property was. There were people who had shown interest in the property but were not yet to the point of requesting a showing.

Commissioner Gudritz asked if it was unusual to not have a showing during a 3-month period. Mr. Birdsall said the lack of showings was not necessarily unusual; selling a property took finding the right kind of buyer for a project of this nature. He felt the property could eventually sell at the asking price.

Commissioner Tartaglia asked if Mr. Birdsall had just used market value or if he had applied a capitalization rate income approach on any of the square footage. Mr. Birdsall said the building was empty and there was no way to formulate an income stream. He reiterated that the price set was for land value only. The end use was unknown.

Chair Allen asked if Mr. Birdsall felt the 3 months the property had been on the market was a reasonable period in which to sell it. Mr. Birdsall said every property was unique; it would take the right person to either build a new structure on the site or try to save something of the original house. He knew values and there was not another parcel that size on Main Street in Northville for sale. He would not want to under price the property.

Commissioner Hoffman reminded the residents present that tonight the only action requested was

whether or not the Commission found the application to be complete. If the application were found to be complete, residents would be given an opportunity to speak at the subsequently scheduled public hearing.

From the audience, Bill Stockhausen and Janice Johns spoke to the need for further discussion regarding the completeness of the application.

Chair Allen recognized Bill Stockhausen, 218 W. Dunlap Street, Vice President of the Northville Historical Society, who read a letter from himself and Carole Jean Stockhausen dated May 16, 2018, which letter is part of the permanent record for this case. Mr. Stockhausen emphasized the guidelines stated that:

The HDC's legal responsibility is the protection of the historic resources within the Historic District . . . The demolition of historic resources within the District must always be the last resort.

Mr. Stockhausen listed 11 reasons why he thought the application was not complete, and concluded that no justifiable basis for demolition of the boarding house building at 341 E. Main St. had been put forth, and asked that the application for demolition be denied.

The Chair recognized Janice Johns, 410 E. Main Street, who said the applicants had originally listed Basis #4 as the reason for demolition: *Retention of the resource was not in the interest of the majority of the community*. They later added *Basis #1: The resource constitutes a hazard to the safety of the public or the occupants*. Ms. Johns thought Basis #1 was incorrect. Two city-approved structural engineers had found that the resource was not appropriate for demolition, and that the structure could be re-used. She repeated Mr. Stockhausen's point that a need for restoration did not constitute justification for demolition.

Chair Allen recognized Bob Sochacki, 223 Linden, Northville MI, who questioned whether the application was complete based on lack of details submitted regarding what was going to replace the structure, what the replacement structure would look like compared to others in the area, and whether the replacement structure met commercial building height standards as listed on page 4-17 of the Guidelines: *The proposed highest height should be within 5% of the average height of the existing structures within a 300 feet radius*. Mr. Sochacki felt the Commission did not have all the information necessary to make a determination, and in his opinion the application was not complete.

Chair Allen recognized Kathleen Switalski, Lake Street, Northville, who responded to earlier comments by Mr. Birdsall regarding residents who had called just to find out the asking price, etc. Making such calls was the only way to keep abreast of what was happening with the house.

Commissioner Murdock asked Planning Consultant Elmiger to respond to Mr. Sochacki's comments regarding whether or not the applicant's submission of drawings was complete.

Planning Consultant Elmiger said that under Basis #4, the required drawings were:

- A site plan, drawn and printed to scale.
- A site plan that described the proposed use and appearance of the site. She noted that this requirement was for a birds-eye view, and was not a building elevation.
- Floor plans drawn and printed to scale.

Planning Consultant Elmiger said that those submission requirements had been met. There was no requirement for building elevations.

Chair Allen noted, however, that elevations had been provided, showing the neighboring historic buildings as well as the adjoining restaurant and the Engerer building.

Chair Allen brought the matter back to the Commission.

MOTION by Gudritz, support by Hoffman, that the application is complete. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Hoffman noted that the next step was to schedule a public hearing.

Planning Consultant Elmiger further noted that the Commission must act on the application within 60 days after the application had been found to be complete.

In response to a comment from Mr. Stockhausen, Chair Allen said that no action had been taken this evening regarding the actual demolition. The only action taken was to find the application was complete.

MOTION by Hoffman, support by Murdock, to set the application for demolition of 341 E. Main for public hearing on June 20, 2018. Motion carried unanimously.

CASE #2

**GITTLEMAN CONSTRUCTION
542 W. DUNLAP**

GARAGE

Scott Gittleman, Gittleman Construction, was present on behalf of this application to extend the back wall of the existing garage at 542 W. Dunlap by nine feet. Nothing else would be changed. All materials would match what was there. The trusses would be adjusted in the attic to give additional storage. The new roof would match the roof of the home.

In response to a question from Commissioner Gudritz, Mr. Gittleman said the garage was somewhat newer than the home, and he thought the home had been built in 1949.

In response to a question from Commissioner Hoffman, Planning Consultant Elmiger said the applicant had resolved the outstanding issues listed in her May 4, 2018 review letter, except that material samples had to be provided.

Mr. Gittleman said all materials would match existing, with shingles being JF Timberline Weatherwood, trim being Pratt and Lambert Snowflake white, and siding Pratt and Lambert Riviera Sand. The main garage door would stay the same and the rear door would match that.

Commissioner Murdock said that in this case it was appropriate to match the existing newer garage.

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

Chair Allen opened the meeting for public comment.

Denise Nash, 417 W. Dunlap, said the house was significantly older than 1949. Chair Allen acknowledged that possibility, but also noted this application was for the garage only, which was a newer structure.

Seeing that no else 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 2, 9 and 10, and Northville Historic District Design Standards 3-21 material, 3-24 garages, 5-9 asphalt shingles, 5-17 siding, 5-18 paint and color, with the condition that the shingles and paint will match existing, with Timberline Weatherwood for the shingles, Pratt and Lambert Snowflake white for the trim, and Pratt and Lambert Riviera Sand for the siding.

Motion carried unanimously.

CASE #3

**GARY FISCHER/WILSON
213 HIGH STREET**

NEW DOOR & PAINT

Gary Fisher, 9840 Currie Road, Northville, MI was present on behalf of this application, which had two elements:

1. Repaint the house and the detached garage with the same basic color scheme as existing, except the main walls would be slightly darker. Paint chips were presented in the package.
2. Add a passage door in the detached garage on the north elevation that was not visible from the street. The door would be fiberglass, with colors as listed in the application package, and would match the existing décor. The trim would match the existing trim on the front garage door.

In response to a question from Commissioner Hoffman, Planning Consultant Elmiger said all application requirements were met.

MOTION by Hoffman, support by Tartaglia, 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 by Murdock, support by Hoffman, 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 3-8 doors, 3-21 materials, and 5-18 paint and color.

Motion carried unanimously.

CASE #4

**ELISABETH CARTER
537 W. MAIN**

**GARAGE DOORS, WINDOWS &
PAINT**

Elizabeth Carter, 537 West Main Street, Northville MI was present on behalf of this application to replace the garage door as well as the windows on the front and sides of the house, and repaint the structure at 537 W. Main.

Ms. Carter said that none of the windows were original. Approximately half of the windows had been installed about 1960 and the other half in 1996 when the house was renovated.

Their goal was to bring the house back to its original appearance as much as possible.

Ms. Carter said she was changing the paint colors from those shown on the application, and she distributed paint chips of the new colors, which were:

- Benjamin Moore Ballet White 6-20 for the base
- Benjamin Moore White CC-117 for the trim
- Benjamin Moore Narragansett Green HC-157 for accent
- Benjamin Moore Indian River 985 for the floor

In response to questions from Commissioner Hoffman, Ms. Carter said:

- The new garage door would be insulated steel.
- The new windows would emulate the original ones. Ms. Carter presented a photograph that showed the original windows as 4-pane windows.
- The windows would fit into the existing space; trim work would not be needed. Anything that had to be replaced due to rot would be an exact replacement.

In response to a question from Commissioner Murdock, Ms. Carter said that the windows would be the same color as the white trim.

In response to a question from Commissioner Hoffman, Planning Consultant Elmiger said the outstanding issues in her May 8, 2018 review letter had been resolved.

Commissioner Gudritz asked for clarification regarding the type of windows being used.

Ms. Carter said, if permitted, she would like to use a vinyl window that had a simulated pane, with a full pane on the outside and the inside. She thought this would look “just right,” but if vinyl wasn’t allowed, she needed to know that. The vinyl windows made sense from a price perspective, but they did have quotes for doing a wood window as well.

Commissioner Gudritz thought the applicant had done a fabulous job with restoring this home; it would be a shame to use vinyl windows. Wood replacement windows were authentic and his experience was that they were also easier to maintain.

Ms. Carter said all the new replacement windows were wrapped on the outside anyway, so she thought the look of the vinyl windows was very similar. Anyone walking by would not be able to tell the difference. They were looking at a high quality vinyl window with simulated panes, which would not deter from the appearance of the house.

Commissioner Hoffman said the HDC had approved high quality vinyl retrofit windows before.

Ms. Carter said she was waiting on two more quotes, and based on pricing she might put in wood windows, but she would like to have vinyl windows approved. In terms of maintenance she felt vinyl windows were easier.

Commissioner Hoffman said Commissioner Gudritz’s point was a good one, in terms of staying as close to the original as possible, but in fairness, the guidelines allowed replacement windows with vinyl cladding. He would be comfortable with approving either/or.

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

Chair Allen opened the meeting for public comment.

Denise Nash, 417 W. Dunlap, asked if the windows would be the same size as the existing windows. Chair Allen said they would be the same size.

John Robey, 511 Dunlap, thought it would be useful if more detailed guidance could be given regarding historic restorations, in order to help a homeowner make decisions in choosing materials and design elements, etc.

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

MOTION by 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 3-24 garages, 5-14 windows, and 5-18 paint and color.

Motion carried unanimously.

CASE #5

**ANNIE SAMHAT
102 S. ROGERS**

PORCH, PAINT & FENCE

Annie and Matthew Samhat, 201 S. Rogers, distributed elevations printed to scale. Ms. Samhat explained that they would like to replace the existing siding, expand the existing porch to a wrap-around porch, replace the porch roof, replace the deck and railings of the existing deck on the north side of the house, and paint the entire structure, along with adding a few segments of fencing.

Commissioner Gudritz asked if the wood fence would replace the wrought iron fence exactly. Ms. Samhat said she would like to extend the fence in the southwest corner, as shown in the application.

The house color would be Benjamin Moore Kendall Charcoal, and the trim and fence would be painted Benjamin Moore White Dove. The Samhats had not been able to find a photo of the original porch. They had researched similar houses in the Historic District in order to come up with the simple porch wrap around design. The porch would have an opening on Rogers Street and also Main Street. For the roof, they would use the same shingles as existing on the house.

Commissioner Gudritz asked the age of the house. Ms. Samhat said they had been told the house was constructed in 1879.

In response to a question from Commissioner Hoffman, Ms. Samhat explained that they would have two approaches to the porch, not two entry doors.

Commissioner Hoffman asked Planning Consultant Elmiger to explain the average front yard setback as related to this house.

Planning Consultant Elmiger said that in the R-1B Zoning District, homeowners could average the front setback based on the front setbacks of adjoining homes within 200 feet. In order to determine the minimum front setback permitted for this house, the dimensions of the front setbacks of the houses within 200 feet had to be provided. That information had not been provided, so she could not confirm if the porch met ordinance setback requirements. Any motion for approval should state that the application had to meet zoning ordinance requirements.

Mr. Samhat gave setback calculations as he had measured them. Chair Allen reiterated that the Building Official would determine whether the setbacks met ordinance requirements. Also, Planning Consultant Elmiger's May 8, 2018 review letter said it appeared that the new porch would push the property over the maximum lot coverage allowed. Either the structures on site would need to be eliminated/reduced, or the applicant would need a variance for the excess lot coverage.

The Samhats discussed ways to modify the lot coverage. Planning Consultant Elmiger said the applicants should work with the Building Official regarding the lot coverage requirement. They had three options:

1. Seek a variance.
2. Remove some items.
3. Modify the porch. However, if the porch were modified, the applicants would need to come back to the HDC for approval of the modification.

Commissioner Hoffman reviewed other outstanding items in the May 8, 2018 review letter:

- Elevations drawn to scale had been received.
- There was still a question about the color of the garage. Ms. Samhat said they would like to paint the garage in the same color scheme as provided for the house.
- Material samples for the roof shingles, Trex flooring and porch foundation fieldstone needed to be provided. Ms. Samhat said the fieldstone and the shingles would match what was currently on the house. She provided a sample of the Trex flooring.

Commissioner Hoffman gave some information regarding newer products that were available for the porch floor that had a more authentic appearance.

Commissioner Gudritz asked about the siding replacement. Ms. Samhat said they would like to replace all the siding because they wanted continuity between the house and the garage. The garage had vinyl and aluminum siding and the house had aluminum siding. If they tried to use whatever might be under the aluminum right now on the house, there would still be nothing underneath the garage because it was built later. Therefore they were proposing HardiePlank.

Commissioner Hoffman asked what the reveal would be for the Hardie Plank. Mr. Samhat said it would be a 5" reveal.

Chair Allen asked what the rail and post material would be. Mr. Samhat said the railing system would be wood. He asked if a composite product would also be allowed.

Planning Consultant Elmiger said that columns were often composite, but railings and balustrades were generally wood.

Mr. Samhat said they would stick with the wood as proposed.

Commissioner Hoffman asked about the design of the spindles. Mr. Samhat said they would be classic spindles as shown in the application.

Mr. Samhat said they were hoping to use a vinyl tongue and groove on the underside of the porch.

Commissioner Hoffman said individual bead board was preferred; bead board plywood was also available.

Chair Allen said the vinyl would be very reflective at night; he would prefer wood. Commissioner Gudritz agreed.

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

Chair Allen opened the meeting for public comment.

Bill Stockhausen, 218 W. Dunlap Street, Northville Historic Society Vice President, spoke in support of this application. He noted that that the Samhats had done really nice work on this home.

Leanie Bayly, 222 Linden Street, Northville Historic Society President, also spoke in support of the application and the work that the Samhats had done not only on this house, but on others throughout the City.

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

Motion carried unanimously.

MOTION Murdock, 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 3-4 fences, 3-9 ornamental details, 3-10 porches, 3-11 siding, 3-21 materials, 5-12 stone and 5-18 paint and color. Motion carried unanimously.

Commissioner Hoffman added the following motion:

MOTION Hoffman, support by Gudritz, that all work comply with the City of Northville Zoning Ordinance. Motion carried unanimously.

CASE #6

ROBERT WARNER & JANE MURPHY

PARTIAL DEMO

304 W. DUNLAP STREET

Robert Warner and Jane Murphy, 304 W. Dunlap Street, were present on behalf of this application for a partial demolition in order to build a new porch on the north side of the existing home, and renovate an existing wrap-around porch on the south and east side of the home. John LaCroix, architect, was also present.

Mr. Warner said they would like to return the house to a more original look. The small enclosed north porch identified for demolition and replacement was not original to the house. It had no foundation, and was propped up with scrap beams. Construction was substandard. They wanted to bring that up to the character of the house. They understood they would need to seek a variance for the setback there.

Commissioner Hoffman noted that the grounds for this demolition request was that the resource was a deterrent to a major improvement program.

Planning Consultant Elmiger confirmed that all necessary details had been provided for the demolition request.

Chair Allen asked when the north porch had been constructed. Mr. Warner said per the Sanborn maps; the porch had probably been in place since the mid-1930’s.

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

Chair Allen opened the meeting for public comment.

Brian Turnball, 361 Eaton Drive, said that he represented both himself and his father Bruce Turnball, and they supported this application. His mother had been born in the subject house, in 1918. He had worked on the wrap-around porch in the 1960's-70's. It was old and bad then. In approximately 1915 the person who did all the sidewalks lived in the home, and that was why the Victorian structure had a cement porch.

Leanie Bayly, 222 Linden Street, Northville Historic Society President, spoke in favor of this application. She had looked at the drawings and found them impeccable. The research had also been impeccable. Bringing this home back to the original intent of the home should be applauded.

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

MOTION by Hoffman, support by Tartaglia, that the Commission finds that the north side porch is not historically significant and therefore the public hearing is waived. Motion carried unanimously.

CASE #7

**ROBERT WARNER & JANE MURPHY
304 W. DUNLAP STREET**

PORCH RECONSTRUCTION

Robert Warner and Jane Murphy, 304 W. Dunlap Street, were present on behalf of this application to build a new porch on the north side of the existing home, and renovate an existing wrap-around porch on the south and east side of the home. Also proposed were new bargeboard details along the existing rooflines of the home. The paint colors of the existing house would be used to finish the new porch features. John LaCroix, architect, was also present.

Mr. LaCroix said the main focus was to construct and restore the porches as part of the total restoration of the house.

Commissioner Hoffman asked about the proposed bargeboard details. Mr. LaCroix said the details would match what was available in pattern books of the period.

Commissioner Hoffman pointed out that the Standards discouraged adding details that weren't there when the house was built. Commissioner Gudritz asked for further clarification as to the scope of the project, especially regarding the trim work.

Mr. LaCroix explained that this was a Gothic Revival house. The proposed bargeboard details were of the era. Mr. Warner added that the base post configuration was reflected in the column shadows.

Ms. Murphy said that the picture of the Casterline Funeral Home, 122 W. Dunlap, prior to modernization showed architectural detail similar to what was being proposed for their home. Shadows also spoke to that similarity. The bargeboard details were similar to what would have been on the house originally.

In response to a question from Commissioner Gudritz, Mr. LaCroix said there would not be railings on the porch. If necessary, they would build the grade up in order to meet the height requirement of porches with no railings.

Commissioner Hoffman reviewed the outstanding issues listed in Planning Consultant Elmiger's May 7, 2018 review letter. Meeting the average front yard setback should be a condition of any approving motion, and the applicant would need to seek a setback variance from the Board of Zoning Appeals in order to construct the new porch on the north side. All other issues had been resolved.

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

Chair Allen opened the meeting for public comment.

Bill Stockhausen, 218 W. Dunlap Street, Northville Historic Society Vice President, spoke in support of this request. There were several houses on Dunlap Street that probably had originally looked like the proposed renovation.

Seeing that no one else 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 2, 9, and 10, and Northville Historic District Design Standards 3-10 porches, 3-20 hierarchy, 3-21 materials, 3-22 details, 5-17 siding, 5-18 paint and color as submitted, with the added condition that all construction meet the requirements of the Northville Zoning Ordinance. Motion carried unanimously.

CASE #8

**DANIEL SCHNEIDER/YASSY
508 W. MAIN STREET**

**PARTIAL DEMO
CONCEPTUAL DISCUSSION**

CASE #9

**DANIEL SCHNEIDER/YASSY
508 W. MAIN STREET**

**ADDITION/RENOVATION
CONCEPTUAL DISCUSSION**

Daniel Schneider, 41223 Rayburn, Northville Township, architect for this renovation, was present for this request for a conceptual discussion for a partial demolition, and addition/renovation at 508 West Main Street. Owners Randi and Michael Yassy were also present.

The applicants would like to raise the roof on the front portion of the home, construct a two-story building addition on the east side, raise the roof on the central portion of the home, and build a new garage. The application for demolition was for approximately two-thirds of the existing garage and approximately 35% of the home.

Mr. Schneider said they thought the original house was a Greek Revival built around 1840 although they had not been able to confirm that. Elaine Robinson, Commonwealth, said that as they were doing the survey for the Historic District they had found a 1926 Sanborn tax map that showed the building as one story with an original portion and 2 additions. The building had housed a doctor's and optometrist's office.

The building had been built in four sections. They believed the first part was original, with the two additions added later, and then more recently a third more modern 26' x 26' sunroom with cathedral

ceiling was added on the rear of the home. The additions didn't flow and it was hard to get around inside the house.

The main issue they were trying to address was the height of the second floor. Again, the original Sanborn photo showed the building was one story for the first 3 portions, so it was unclear if those portions were modified at some time to create a second story, or if they were really 1-1/2 stories modified to create a bedroom upstairs. The stairs went up from the front entry, with a cut door at the top. The upstairs bedroom ceiling height was less than 7 feet at the middle. This was an unsafe condition, leaving the 2300 square foot house without a single functional bedroom.

Mr. Schneider said they would like to raise the front roof 24", while keeping the character of the building including the trim.

Ms. Yassay introduced herself and her husband, and gave some of their history in Northville, along with their excitement about their home and their desire to improve it so that they could enjoy it for years to come.

Chair Allen recognized Eileen Gikas, 514 W. Main Street. Ms. Gikas said they had previously lived at 508 W. Main, and the owners prior to them told them the house was the 2nd house built in Northville, in the 1820's. She agreed the staircase was extremely dangerous and the house was dysfunctional.

Chair Allen recognized John Roby, 511 Dunlap, who said that changes were supportable if they maintained the scale and dignity of the original home.

Mr. Schneider said they would keep the rear addition intact, and their remodeling would occur on the middle two portions. The addition would be closer to a farmhouse addition and appear more natural to the original home.

Commissioner Hoffman agreed that the additions didn't add to the harmony of the home. However, raising the front roof 24" would be a significant change to the look of the historic structure. The HDC's charge was to preserve the historic fabric of the community; the front element had historic value.

Commissioner Murdock said he felt raising the roof would not put the house out of proportion with its neighbors.

Toulla Palazeti, 105 Linden Street, said that from the perspective of her home, the rear elevation of the house made it look like a garage. She supported the application.

Further discussion was held regarding raising the front roof. Some Commissioners could accept raising the roof, while others were concerned with changing the historic part of the structure so significantly. There were concerns that the historic part of the home was getting lost in the overall mass of the proposed addition, and this would be ascerbated by raising the roof 24". The Commission consistently required that historic portions be clearly delineated from newer additions, either by the use of detail, different paint color, stepbacks, etc. The focus of the front elevation should be on the historic home.

In answer to Commissioner comments, Mr. Schneider said the bay window was on the 1926 Sanborn map, and would not be changed. The existing porch would also remain. Options regarding the internal renovation were discussed.

Mr. Schneider said the other portion of the submission was the garage. Currently there was a small 1-car garage that they would like to expand and add a second story for storage. They would keep a small portion of the existing garage in order to take advantage of the current nonconforming setback.

From the audience, Mr. Roby expressed some reservations about the large visual change that raising the roof 24” would cause. The original part of the house would become subsidiary to the rest of the house.

Mr. Schneider said he would proceed with plans for the addition; he would not yet move forward with raising the front roof 24”.

8. ADMINISTRATIVE REVIEWS: None.

9. DISCUSSION:

Mayor Roth advised that there would be training for all Boards and Commission members on June 7 at 7:00 p.m.

10. ADJOURNMENT

Chair Allen adjourned the meeting at 9:14 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Cheryl McGuire
Recording Secretary

Approved as published 06/20/2018