

STAFF REPORT: 12/13/2023 REGULAR MEETING

PREPARED BY: D. RIEDEN

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2023-00136

ADDRESS: 3627 LINCOLN

HISTORIC DISTRICT: WOODBRIDGE FARM

APPLICANT/ PROPERTY OWNER: RICHARD CHASE

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 11/20/23

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 11/28/2023

SCOPE: ERECT THREE-CAR GARAGE, REMOVE FENCE

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Built in 1875, the property at 3627 Lincoln is a 2-story, Italianate-style residence facing east and sits north of two empty lots near the corner of Brainard and Lincoln streets. The shallow hipped roof with protracted eaves overhangs the red brick cladding. The attic reveals a round arched window in a heavily molded frame. Evenly spaced, double-hung, elongated windows with heavy stone window hoods above are placed on the front and side elevations of the house. A box-bay sits under the shelter of the cross gable on south elevation. A three-sided bay sits next to the main arched entrance to the property. Scarring on the brick cladding discloses brackets that once supported the roof soffits and front porch roof. The raised porch is concrete over a brick cladded wingwalls, which leads to a concrete walkway to the front yard sidewalk. No plants, shrubs or trees, other than a shaded public berm exists on the landscape. The rear yard is surrounded by a non-historic wood privacy fence, proposed for removal. At the rear of the property, the site is a public alley which was once the site of a wood frame garage built in 1920 but long since been removed.

The Detroit's Historic Designation Advisory Board recognized sale activities of this property:

"The Hodges Brothers sold this property to Thomas J. Craft, agent with Hoosac Tunnel Line, for \$1000 in 1874. Mr. Craft, who evidently built the house, sold it to Eugene K. Parker, a conductor with Michigan Central Railroad for \$6000 in 1876, obviously with a house on it. It does not appear that Parker ever lived in this house; his heirs sold it John Bristow, a foreman and his wife, Elizabeth, a teacher at Cass school in 1894..."

This property has no standing violations, however a shipping container in the adjacent lot sits on the south property line without approval.



Site Photo 1, by Staff November 28, 2023: (East) front



by Staff November 28, 2023: (west) rear elevation, showing existing fence to be removed and garage site along the alley.



Site Photo 3, by Staff November 28, 2023: rear yard, looking east.



Aerial#1 of Parcel # 06005788., showing rear lot and alley.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to construct a 22 ft. x 40 ft., three-car garage with new concrete footing/floor slab at the rear of the lot. The structure would sit 2' inside the west property line to accommodate a concrete apron that allows access to the garage from the alley, an 8' setback from the north property line to accommodate utility line service, and a 2' setback from the south property line. The wood fence that surrounds the rear yard would be removed. No proposal for a new fence is in the application currently. (See Figures 1-4 below.)

Construction of New, Three-Car 22'x40' Garage Addition (880 SF) and removal of the wood fence:

- Remove existing rear yard fence. No replacement fence to be installed at this time.
- Dig and pour concrete foundation.
- Lay one layer of CMU on perimeter as shown in the attached drawings.
- Construct concrete flatwork on the interior perimeter of the footing.
- Construct wood frame and side-gabled roof with 8/12 pitch, 17' height and 1' overhang at the eaves and gable.
- Install CertainTeed Landmark dimensional, asphalt shingles with a roof vent, color moire black.
- Install aluminum gutter system, color bronze.
- Install exterior sheathing, wood trim, color dark greyish olive (HDC B:14) and Hardie board siding, 8.25" color greyish green (HDC B:10), smooth finish.
- Install one 36" x 80" Jeld-Wen steel, 6-panel, pedestrian door at the east elevation, color dark reddish brown (HDC B:18).
- Install 3 aluminum, 9'x8' sectional garage doors, color dark reddish brown (HDC B:18), at the west elevation and 1 access aluminum, 9'x8' sectional garage doors, color dark reddish brown (HDC B:18), at the east elevation.
- No windows, exterior lights or additional paved areas will be installed.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- Woodbridge Farm Historic District was established in 1991. Its Elements of Design (Sec. 21-2-155) provide the following guidance for new construction and the landscape:
 - "Relationship of materials. The district exhibits a wide variety of building materials characteristic of Victorian architecture. Brick is prevalent; there are a few wood frame houses...

Wooden details and trim are prevalent. Original slate roofs exist, although asphalt shingle roofs have replaced many of the original roofs...

- “Relationship of textures. The most common textural relationship in the Victorian buildings is that of several materials juxtaposed within the same building to create a variety of rich textural effects. Brick with mortar joints is the most common textural effect, and often contrasts with the texture of other masonry and/or wood. Wooden shingles and/or clapboard on wood frame houses on Lincoln create substantial textural interest, as does carved or repetitious wooden detail. Smooth or rough-faced stone foundations and detail provide substantial textural contrast... Whereas slate and wood shingle on roofs and in gables create substantial textural interest, asphalt shingled roofs generally do not contribute to textural interest.”
- “Relationship of colors. Paint colors generally relate to style. Victorian buildings display freedom in the selection and placement of color; other buildings in the district generally do not. Orange-red brick frequently contrasting with light gray stone or red stone is the most common color relationship... The most common roof colors are brown, dark gray, green, and black and these are generally in the natural slate or stained wood shingle color range... Colors known to have been in use on buildings of similar type in the 19th Century and early 20th Century may be considered for suitability on similar buildings.”
- “Relationship of architectural details. Architectural details generally relate to style. The majority of the buildings in the district are from the Victorian period and are of the Italianate, Second Empire, Queen Anne, and Richardsonian Romanesque styles...”
- “Relationship of roof shapes. A multiplicity of roof types exist, and frequently within the same building. The predominant forms of roof are the hipped, mansard and gabled varieties,



Figure 1, by Applicant: showing alley (west) side elevation of the proposed garage.

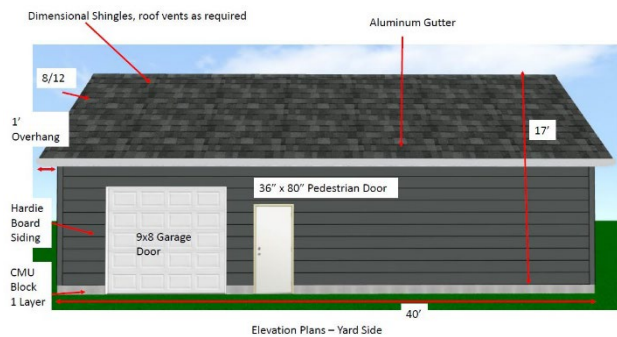


Figure 2, by Applicant: showing yard (east) side elevation of the proposed garage.

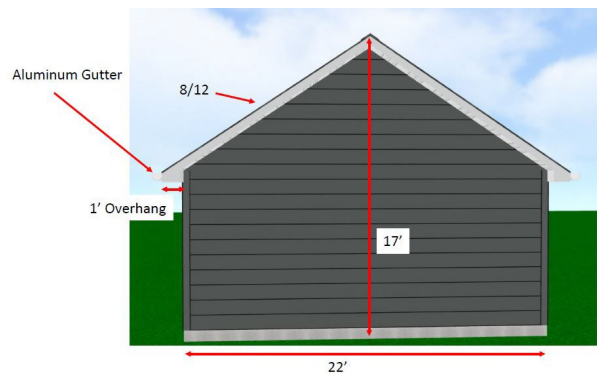


Figure 3, by Applicant: showing proposed side elevation of the garage.

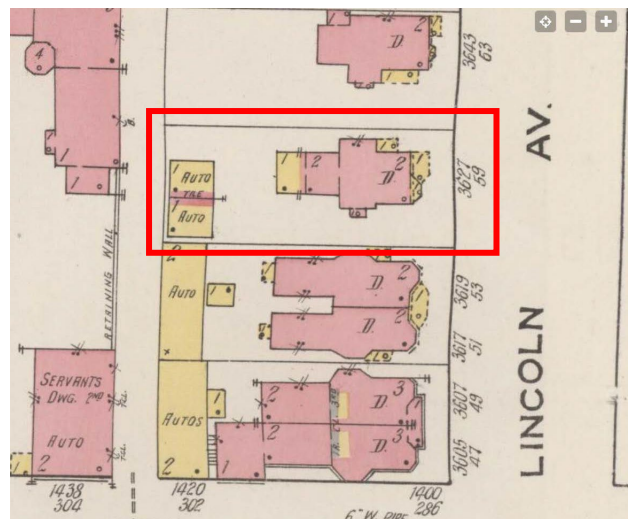


Figure 4, by Applicant: showing proposed color scheme. (Please note colors in figures 1-3 above are not accurate.)

frequently punctured with dormers, sometimes with intersecting gables and conical roofs over towers.”

- “Relationship of significant landscape features and surface treatments. The Lincoln streetscape consists of a 70-foot right-of-way with the widths of tree lawns varying by block, although most are narrow...Characteristic treatment of individual properties is a flat or slightly graded shallow front lawn area in grass turf subdivided by a straight concrete walk leading to the front entrance and a concrete walk along the side of the building; there are very few driveways, none being original...Black wrought iron fencing is occasionally used for front yard fencing; modern chain-link fences predominate in the district. They are frequently used along the rear property line, such as along Gibson, sometimes with other types of fencing along the sides and front. Stockade and wood board fencing is used occasionally along rear and side lot lines...”
- “Relationship of open space to structures. Large amounts of open space have been created by demolition of structures. Both the northern and southern boundaries of the district are surrounded by open fields. Ample side yards have been created where previously there would have been houses, primarily on Lincoln. Most properties have shallow rear yards, with the primary exception of those fronting on Selden and the larger apartment buildings, which have no yards except where vacant land around them has been created due to demolition. There are a few garages along the rear lot lines...In the visual sense, the large areas of open space do not read as having function but seem to demand appropriate new infill construction.”

- Staff has the opinion that the proposal follows the Elements of Design for Woodbridge Farm Historic District, as shown above, and properly utilizes the HDC color guide, which staff offers the opinion that Color System B offers color selections that are historically appropriate and closely matches the trim and door color of the main house.
- The 1921 Sanborn map (see attached), shows that the alley was once lined with a series of garages that filled the width of each property. It is staff’s opinion that the proposed length of the garage is appropriate and approximately matches the footprint of the historic garage that once occupied the site.
- Staff offers the opinion that the pitch and height of the roof, design, scope, and materials of the garage are appropriate and closely aligns with the Elements of Design.
- Because the fence is not historic, nor a contributing feature to the historic landscape, staff offers the opinion that its removal is appropriate. (See site photo 4)



1921 Sanborn, vol 2, 115, showing former garage line-up along the rear alley of Lincoln Ave. Red box indicates current property.



Site Photo 4, by Google Street view October 2007 showing rear lot and former garage sites.

- Staff noticed that a storage container sits on the property immediately south of the rear yard. The opening of this container connects to the rear yard of this property. Note that the applicant owns this property and the two empty lots immediately south of this site. Staff received confirmation from the applicant that item is not part of this application. However, long term use of this container on this site would be considered a violation, ie., work completed without approval. (See Site Photo 3.) The applicant stated the following:
“Yes, something is going to happen with the container eventually, but its final purpose is TBD. It is functioning as a shed right now and is accessed from the property where the house is. A local church uses that back corner area to hand out food weekly as well.”

ISSUES

- Staff has no issues with the proposal.

RECOMMENDATION

Section 21-2-78, Determination of Historic District Commission

Recommendation: Erect Three-Car Garage, Remove Fence

It is staff’s opinion that the proposed erection of the three-car garage and removal of the fence is appropriate. Staff therefore recommends the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as proposed because it meets the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and the Woodbridge Farm Historic District Elements of Design.