

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Staff Report

ADDRESS: 216 N State Street, Application Number HDC24-0007

DISTRICT: Old Fourth Ward Historic District

REPORT DATE: March 14, 2024

REPORT PREPARED BY: Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE: March 11, 2024

OWNER

Name: 216 N State, LLC

Address:

Phone: (734) 260-7215

APPLICANT

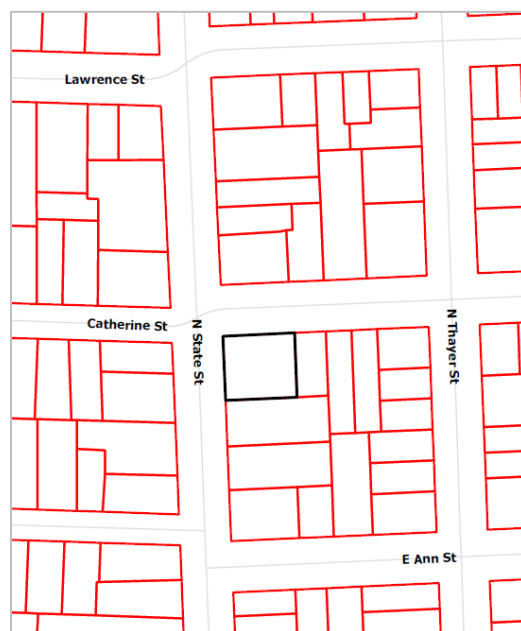
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BACKGROUND: This large two-story house is listed in the 1868 City Directory as 16 N. State, the home of Steven Webster, of Miller & Webster bank (established 1855). Its exact construction date is unknown. It features 2 ½ stories, a mansard roof clad in tin shingles with exposed eave brackets, a stone foundation and stone front porch with heavy columns. At some point several dormers were added or expanded on the roof. Though that work would not be considered appropriate today, the roof retains its uniqueness and character and the original form is very visible.

The HDC approved an application to replace the tin roof shingles with imitation single-width shakes (based on the presence of wood shakes beneath the tin) in 2018 (HDC18-221). In 2021, the HDC determined that the garage is a contributing structure and must be repaired using matching materials in matching dimensions to historic ones (HDC21-035).

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to construct three basement egress windows and wells (two on the south and one on the east elevations) by maintaining the width and increasing the depth of existing basement windows.

LOCATION: The site is on the east side of North State Street, at the southeast corner of Catherine Street.



APPLICABLE REGULATIONS:

From the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:

- (2) The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.
- (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.
- (10) New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property will be unimpaired.

From the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (other SOI Guidelines may also apply):

Building Site

Recommended: Designing new exterior additions to historic buildings or adjacent new construction which is compatible with the historic character of the site and which preserve the historic relationship between a building or buildings, landscape features, and open space.

Retaining the historic relationship between buildings, landscape features, and open space.

Identifying, retaining, and preserving buildings and their features as well as features of the site that are important in defining its overall historic character.

Not Recommended: Introducing new construction onto the building site which is visually incompatible in terms of size, scale, design, materials, color and texture or which destroys historic relationships on the site.

Removing or radically changing buildings and their features or site features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the building site so that, as a result, the character is diminished.

District or Neighborhood Setting

Not Recommended: Introducing new construction into historic districts that is visually incompatible or that destroys historic relationships within the setting.

Windows

Recommended: Designing and installing additional windows on rear or other non-character-defining elevations if required by the new use. New window openings may also be cut into exposed party walls. Such design should be compatible with the overall design of the building, but not duplicate the fenestration pattern and detailing of a character-defining elevation.

Not Recommended: Introducing a new design that is incompatible with the historic character of the building.

Health and Safety

Recommended: Identifying the historic building's character-defining spaces, features, and finishes so that code-required work will not result in their damage or loss.

Complying with health and safety codes, including seismic code requirements, in such a manner that character-defining spaces, features, and finishes are preserved.

Not Recommended: Altering, damaging, or destroying character-defining spaces, features, and finishes while making modifications to a building or site to comply with safety codes.

STAFF FINDINGS:

- 1) One proposed egress window is on the east side of the house next to the driveway and a paved walkway, approximately 20' from the public right of way. This window would have a bollard installed to keep vehicles from driving into the well. Two proposed egress windows are on the south side of the house between a boxed bay window and a one-story wing. All are existing 32" wide basement window openings that would be made deeper below grade, to 48" tall, with a new wood casement window. A wood timber well is shown slightly larger than the required clear area of 36" x 36".
- 2) The house's situation on a corner lot makes all of the basement windows visible from the street. There are eleven total basement windows on the house. Six face the street on this corner lot and one is at the front corner, making them inappropriate for enlargement. There is one other basement window on the east elevation, behind the side porch, that would be more appropriate for egress than the proposed window near the front of the house.
- 3) The location is appropriate for the south elevation windows. The design and materials are appropriate for all of the windows. The east elevation proposal is less appropriate because of its close proximity to the sidewalk and high visibility. Staff asks that the applicant address why the egress window can't be moved to the other basement window on this elevation since that location would meet the standards and guidelines used by the Historic District Commission.

MOTION

(Note that the motion is only a suggestion. The Review Committee, consisting of staff and at least two Commissioners, will meet with the applicant on site and share their observations at the meeting.)

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 216 North State Street, a contributing property in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District, to enlarge three existing basement window openings and install wood casement egress windows and wells on the east and south elevations, as proposed. The work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, materials, and relationship to the house and the surrounding area and meets *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation* and *Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, in particular standards 2, 9, and 10 and the guidelines for building site, windows, and health and safety, as well as the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines*.

MOTION WORKSHEET

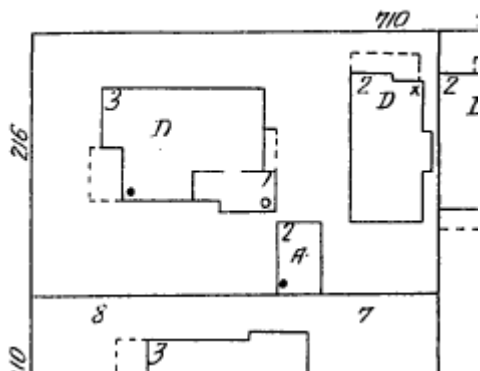
I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 216 North State Street in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District

___ Provided the following condition(S) is (ARE) met: 1) STATE CONDITION(s)

The work is generally compatible with the size, scale, massing, and materials and meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, standard(S) number(S) (*circle all that apply*): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

ATTACHMENTS: photos, drawings

216 N State, 1925 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map



216 N State, front/west elevation (2019 courtesy Google Street View)



216 N State north and east elevations and garage (2019 courtesy Google Street View)



216 N State south elevation, November 2020 (Courtesy Google Street View)

