

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Staff Report

ADDRESS: 1223 Traver Street, Application Number HDC21-031

DISTRICT: Broadway Historic District

REPORT DATE: March 11, 2021

REPORT PREPARED BY: Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE: Monday March 8, 2021

OWNER

APPLICANT

Name: Mitch Gerczak and Tami Stevenson

Same

Address: 1223 Traver Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48105

Phone: (734) 730-1842

BACKGROUND: The c.1840s Jacob Armstrong House is a 1.5 story Greek Revival in the rare hen and chicks form. It may have been moved from another site on Traver. It was first owned by Jacob Armstrong who moved to Ann Arbor from New York. Armstrong, his sons and grandsons all worked as carpenters in Ann Arbor.

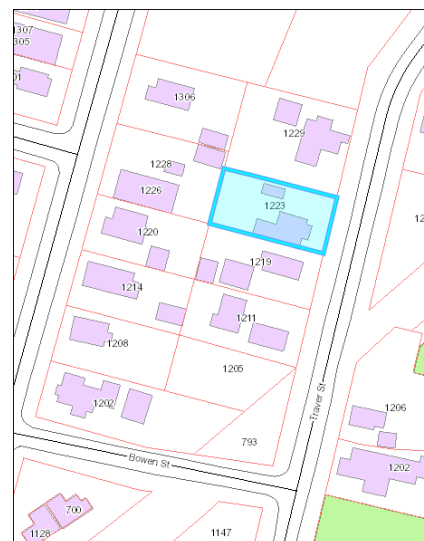
LOCATION: The site is on the west side of Traver Street, north of Bowen and south of Pear Street.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks an HDC determination on the status of their detached garage as contributing or noncontributing.

APPLICABLE DEFINITIONS:

The State Historic Preservation Office and Secretary of the Interior provide definitions for historic and non-historic resources:

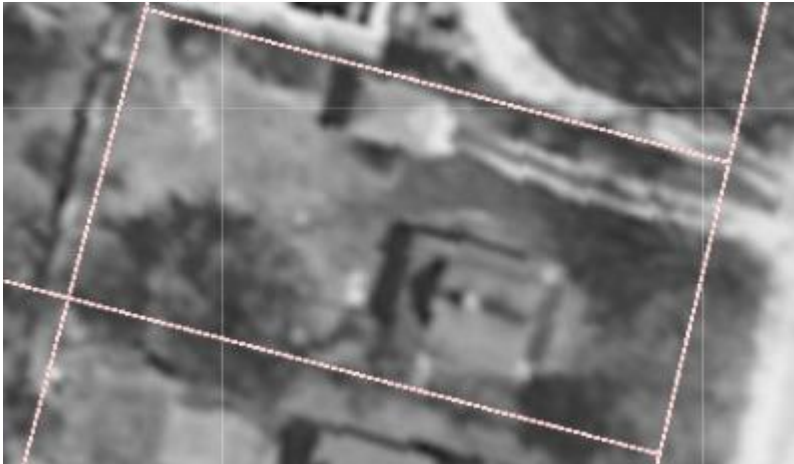
Contributing Resources. A contributing (historic) resource, is one that adds to the historic association, historic architectural quality, or archaeological values for which a property is significant because it was present during the period of significance, relates directly to the documented significance, and possesses historic integrity.



Non-Contributing Resources. A non-contributing (non-historic) resource is one that does not add to the historic architectural qualities or historic association of a district because it was not present during the period of significance, does not relate to the documented significance, or due to alteration, additions, and other changes it no longer possesses historic integrity.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. The owners of this property are exploring options for future accessory building expansion, such as adding a new structure or expanding the existing single-car garage. They seek an HDC determination on whether or not the existing single-car garage is a contributing structure. Staff's opinion that the garage is contributing has been shared with the applicants.
2. Sanborn maps through 1947 do not include this portion of Traver. 1947 aerial photography (below) shows a structure of the same size, with the same hipped roof, and in the same location as the existing garage. Staff concludes that the garage in the photos is the existing one.



3. Visible exterior materials and forms of the garage believed to be from the period of significance (pre-1945) include:
 - The original footprint and four walls
 - Wood Dutch lap siding with corner boards
 - A low-slope hipped roof
 - Four-over-four windows, one each on the south and north elevations
 - A wood person door with two tall vertical panels

Visible exterior non-historic (post-1944) materials and forms include:

- A modern roll-up garage door that replaced the original double-leaf doors (shown in an application photo) in the 1980s, per applicant
 - A floodlight fixture on the south elevation
 - A roof supported by posts off the back of the structure for covered storage
4. The post-1944 changes to the garage are minimal. The garage door may easily be removed and replaced with replicas of the original doors based on existing

documentation. *The Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* say that it is appropriate to replace a non-historic or missing garage door with a new door in keeping with the style and period of the existing garage, using the historic opening size. The floodlight and rear roof are unobtrusive and easily removable and reversible.

5. It should be noted that the Secretary of the Interior's Standard number four says that "Changes to a property that have acquired historic significance in their own right will be retained and preserved". While this garage is roughly 80-90 years younger than the house, it contributes to the historic character of the property as an example of historic changes made throughout the neighborhood during the start of the automobile era. It has acquired significance in its own right.
6. The application states that a determination made in an application at 316 Second Street sets a precedent for this one. Since no two structures in a historic district are alike, applications are considered individually and entirely on their own merits.

To clarify 316 Second Street, that application was very different from 1223 Traver. The original garage had been expanded from 18' to 40' deep, the original rear wall of the structure was completely gone, original openings had been enlarged, and other modifications had been made.

7. Staff believes that this building was present during the period of significance and possesses historic integrity. It adds to the historic architectural quality of property and the Broadway Historic District.

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 single-car garage at 1223 Traver Street in the Broadway Historic District be classified as a contributing structure because of its presence during the period of significance for the Broadway Historic District and the historic integrity of its design, massing, characteristics and materials.

ATTACHMENTS: application, photographs with narrative

1223 Traver Street (2007 courtesy Google Streetview)



1223 Traver (2020 aerial photo)





HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

City Hall: 301 E. Huron St. Ann Arbor, MI 48104-6120

Mailing: P.O. Box 8647, Ann Arbor, MI 48107-8647

Phone: 734.794.6265 ext. 42608

jthacher@a2gov.org

Fax: 734.994.8460

APPLICATION MUST BE FILLED OUT COMPLETELY

OFFICE USE ONLY	
Permit Number	HDC# <u>21-031</u>
	BLDG#
DATE STAMP	
2/11/21	

PROPERTY LOCATION/OWNER INFORMATION

NAME OF PROPERTY OWNER Mitch Gerczak and Tami Stevenson		HISTORIC DISTRICT Broadway Historic District	
PROPERTY ADDRESS 1223 Traver Rd.		CITY ANN ARBOR	
ZIPCODE 48105	DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER (734) 730-1842	EMAIL ADDRESS tamara.gerczak@gmail.com	
PROPERTY OWNER'S ADDRESS (IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE)		CITY	STATE, ZIP

PROPERTY OWNER'S SIGNATURE

SIGN HERE	PRINT NAME Mitchell Gerczak	DATE 2021/02/10
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APPLICANT INFORMATION

NAME OF APPLICANT (IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE)			
ADDRESS OF APPLICANT			CITY
STATE	ZIPCODE	PHONE / CELL # ()	FAX No ()
EMAIL ADDRESS			

APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE (if different from Property Owner)

SIGN HERE	PRINT NAME X	DATE
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BUILDING USE - CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SINGLE FAMILY	<input type="checkbox"/> DUPLEX	<input type="checkbox"/> RENTAL	<input type="checkbox"/> MULTIPLE FAMILY	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> INSTITUTIONAL
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PROPOSED WORK

Describe in detail each proposed exterior alteration, improvement and/or repair (use additional paper, if necessary).

See attached

DESCRIBE CONDITIONS THAT JUSTIFY THE PROPOSED CHANGES:

See attached

For Further Assistance With Required Attachments, please visit www.a2gov.org/hdc



HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION APPLICATION

FEE CHART

DESCRIPTION	
STAFF REVIEW FEES	FEE
Application for Staff Approval	\$35.00
Work started without approvals	Additional \$50.00
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION FEES	
All other proposed work not listed below	\$100.00
Work started without approvals	Additional \$250.00
RESIDENTIAL – Single and 2-story Structure	
Addition: single story	\$300.00
Addition: taller than single story	\$550.00
New Structure - Accessory	\$100.00
New Structure – Principal	\$850.00
Replacement of single and 2-family window(s)	\$100 + \$25/window
COMMERCIAL – includes multi-family (3 or more unit) structures	
Additions	\$700.00
Replacement of multi-family and commercial window (s)	\$100 + \$50/window
Replacement of commercial storefront	\$250.00
DEMOLITION and RELOCATION	
Demolition of a contributing structure	\$1000.0
Demolition of a non-contributing structure	\$250.00
Relocation of a contributing structure	\$750.00
Relocation of a non-contributing structure	\$250.00

FOR COMMISSION REVIEWS:

- Application withdrawals made before public notice is published will qualify for a 50% refund of the application fee.
- Application withdrawals made after public notice is sent but before the public hearing will qualify for a 25% refund of the application fee.

INSTRUCTIONS FOR SUBMITTING APPLICATIONS

All HDC applications must be signed by the property owner and the applicant, if different, with the exception of staff approvals, which may be signed by only the applicant.

All completed HDC applications and their attachments may be submitted to Planning and Development Services by mail, in person (paper or digital), faxed, or via email to building@a2gov.org.

We accept CASH, CHECK, and all major credit cards. Checks should be made payable to “City of Ann Arbor”

HDC applications that are incomplete or not submitted with the required documentation or payment will not be processed or approved.

APPLICATION EXPIRATION

HDC applications expire three (3) years after the date of approval.

OFFICE USE ONLY

Date of Hearing:		
Action	<input type="checkbox"/> HDC COA	<input type="checkbox"/> HDC Denial
	<input type="checkbox"/> HDC NTP	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff COA
Staff Signature		
Comments		
Fee:	\$ _____	
Payment Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Check: # _____ <input type="checkbox"/> Cash <input type="checkbox"/> Credit Card	

Proposed Change

- 1) Applicants seek approval to have their 12' x 18' garage at 1223 Traver Rd. declared non-contributing.

Describe Conditions That Justify the Proposed Changes:

Historic Character of the Neighborhood Reasons

- 1) The front portion of the garage is not original. The original carriage doors of the garage were removed in 1980s, prior to the current owner's occupancy and the creation of the Broadway Historic District (Figure 1). The garage, therefore, no longer appears to contribute to the character of the district. Prior Historic District Commission approval to remove contributing structure because original garage doors were removed demonstrates precedence.¹
- 2) The garage is visible in aerial photos from 1947, though no record of a building permit or other photos could be found to ascertain the exact build-date of the garage (Figure 2). According to "Historic Ann Arbor: An Architectural Guide," the main house (1223 Traver Rd.) was built in 1851; there is no mention of the garage or any historical significance associated with the garage.
- 3) The main house is in the Greek Revival style known as "hen and chick." (Figure 3). There are no features of the garage that would indicate it to be in a Greek Revival style. The garage does not appear to be unique to any architectural time-period in Ann Arbor history, nor does it appear to have any relationship to the rest of the historic resource (1223 Traver Rd. main house) or its surroundings (Broadway Historic District).

Figure 1.



Original Carriage Doors 1223 Traver Rd.



Current Garage Door 1223 Traver Rd.

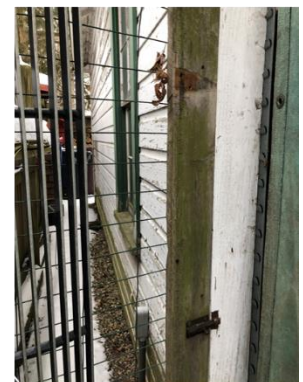
¹ Ann Arbor Historic District Commission. 316 Second Street, Application Number HDC17-224. Report Date: November 16, 2017. Application: The applicant seeks HDC approval to remove 14' x 40' garage. Staff findings: "The garage consists of a front, old(er) section with a low pitched roof and non-original tilt-swing door....If the front portion of the garage existed in its original footprint, demolition might not be appropriate...staff believes that the structure no longer contributes to the character of the district and that its removal is appropriate." HDC Action: Vote 5-0, Certificate of Appropriateness was Granted.

Figure 2.



1947 Aerial Photo of 1223 Traver Rd.

Figure 3.



Applicant's Home and Garage 1223 Traver Rd.