

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Staff Report

ADDRESS: 216 N State Street, Application Number HDC21-035

DISTRICT: Old Fourth Ward 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:	Draprop Corp	Katie Vohwinkle/Oxford Companies
Address:		Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Phone:		(734) 548-6927

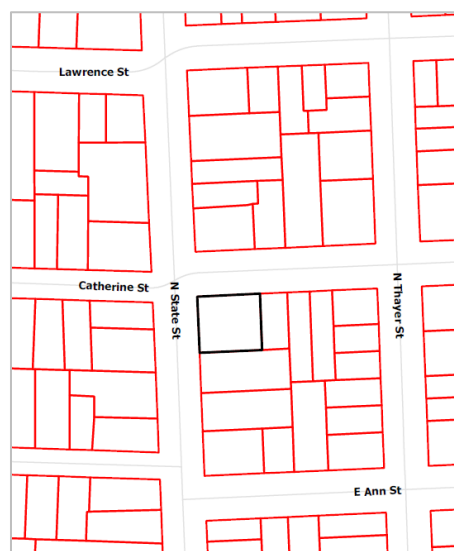
BACKGROUND: This large two-story house is listed in the 1868 City Directory as 16 N. State, the home of Steven Webster, of Miller & Webster bank (established 1855). Its exact construction date is unknown. It features 2 ½ stories, a mansard roof clad in tin shingles with exposed eave brackets, a stone 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 readily apparent.

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).

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

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks an HDC determination on the status of their detached garage as contributing or noncontributing. They also seek to demolish and rebuild the garage, though no drawings are included with this application.

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.

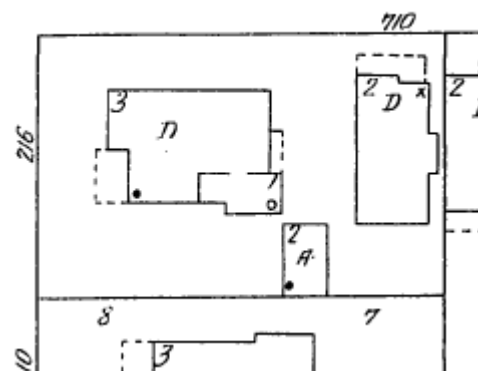
Non-Contributing Resources. A non-contributing (non-historic) resource is one that does not add to the historic architectural qualities or historic association of a district because it was not present during the period of significance, does not relate to the documented significance, or due to alteration,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

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. As a result of a city rental housing inspection in November of 2020, a structural engineering report was requested for the garage (attached as part of the application). Since that report was received, Rental Housing and the Building Official have expressed concerns about the safety of the structure.
2. The applicant has requested to demolish and rebuild the structure, based on the structural engineering report. Since plans have not been submitted, the application is incomplete for that work. The applicant requested that the application still appear before the HDC in an effort to keep the proposal moving forward, and stated:

We need to get the approval to tear down the current structure and rebuild. It will be a replica of the existing structure no changes to size or style.

3. The garage is shown on the 1925 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map at right, which indicates a two-story automobile garage in the same footprint as the existing. It does not change on the 1931 or 1948 Sanborn. The garage was not present in 1916.



4. Visible exterior materials and forms of the garage believed to be from the period of significance (pre-1945) include:
 - The original footprint, four walls, and two stories
 - Narrow lap siding with corner boards
 - A slight overhang that protects the double leaf doors
 - Two single-sash window openings on the west elevation and one on the east that are boarded but retain their trim and sills.
 - Exposed rafter tails

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

- Wood double leaf doors that appear to be modern replacements

- The siding has been replaced with slightly wider siding in the second floor of the front elevation and on the lower four courses of the south elevation

In addition, there is a large concrete trough pushed up against the west elevation. Its age and purpose are unknown.

5. The post-1944 changes to the garage are minimal. The doors, if they are modern as they appear to be in the application photos, are in keeping with the style and period of the existing garage and use the historic opening size. 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 Old Fourth Ward Historic District.
6. The HDC must determine whether or not the garage is a contributing structure, and if it is, whether or not it is deteriorated beyond repair and if replacement with a replica is appropriate. Three motions are suggested below.

MOTIONS

(Note that the motions below are only suggestions. 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.)

Contributing Structure that is repairable:

I move that the single-car garage at 216 N State Street in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District be classified as a contributing structure because of its presence during the period of significance for the Old Fourth Ward Historic District and the historic integrity of its design, massing, characteristics and materials. Further, the garage must be repaired using matching materials in matching dimensions.

Contributing Structure that is deteriorated beyond repair:

I move that the single-car garage at 216 N State Street in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District be classified as a contributing structure because of its presence during the period of significance for the Old Fourth Ward Historic District and the historic integrity of its design, massing, characteristics and materials. Further, it is determined that the garage is deteriorated beyond repair and may be replaced with a replica garage using matching materials in matching dimensions located on the same footprint or shifted up to 3' to meet zoning requirements. Elevation drawings and details must be approved by staff and a majority of the officers of the HDC before staff may sign off on a building permit for the replica garage.

Noncontributing Structure:

I move that the single-car garage at 216 N State Street in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District be classified as a noncontributing structure because it does not retain historic integrity of its design, massing, characteristics and materials. The garage may be demolished and its site used for vehicular parking.

ATTACHMENTS: application, photographs with narrative

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



216 N State and garage (2019 courtesy google streetview)

