

## ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

### Staff Report

**ADDRESS:** 217 North Fifth Avenue, Application Number HDC13-013

**DISTRICT:** Old Fourth Ward Historic District

**REPORT DATE:** February 7 for the February 14, 2013 HDC Meeting

**REPORT PREPARED BY:** Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

**REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE:** Monday, January 7, 2013

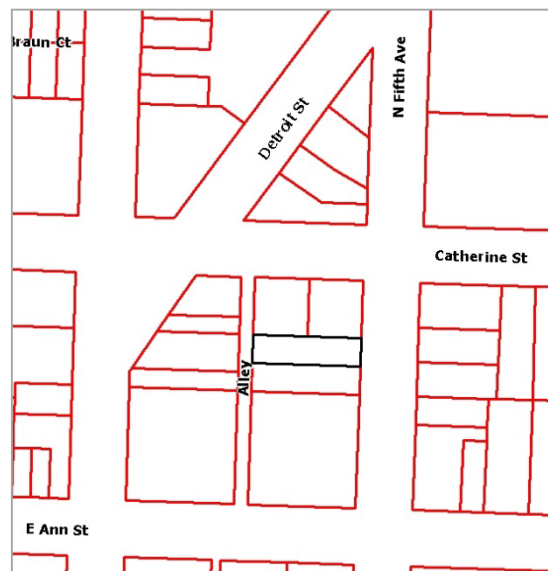
	<b>OWNER</b>	<b>APPLICANT</b>
<b>Name:</b>	Jon & Lisa Rye	Mitchell & Mouat Architects
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**BACKGROUND:** This brick two-story gable-fronter features shingles in the front and rear gables, a wood front porch, one-over-one double hung windows, and small columns flanking the recessed attic windows in each end gable. The house was first occupied in 1900 by John and Pauline Baumgardner. John was the manager of the Ann Arbor Stone Company at the same address, and had one of the city's few telephones installed in the house at that time. Baumgardner's Barn, a few lots down at 301 North Fifth Avenue (corner of Detroit, currently occupied by Jessica's Apothecary), was built in 1887 as part of John Baumgardner's Marble Works. The Baumgardners lived at 217 until 1913 or 1914, when the home was occupied by John Pfisterer, with Matilda C. Pfisterer, teacher at Christian Mack School, listed as a boarder. Matilda, and subsequently Emilie Pfisterer, occupied the house until 1966.

The 1908 and 1916 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps show a small one-story enclosure (room) off the back door. It is not shown on the 1925 Sanborn.

**LOCATION:** The house is located on North Fifth Avenue, north of East Ann Street and south of Catherine Street.

**APPLICATION:** The applicant seeks HDC approval to 1) eliminate the existing driveway, 2) construct a new two-car parking pad along the back alley, 3) install patio, path, and landscape areas in the back yard, 4) remove the brick chimney, 5) construct two dormers, one facing north and one south, 6) replace nine original and non-original windows, 7) construct a new basement egress window, 8) replace two rear wood doors, 9) replace a door with a window, 10) replace non-original front porch guardrail and install a new ceiling-mounted light fixture, 11) construct a new rear porch, 12) replace the roof with asphalt or cedar shingles, and 13) replace the aluminum gutters and downspouts with copper.



## 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 shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

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

#### New Additions

Recommended: Constructing a new addition so that there is the least possible loss of historic materials and so that character-defining features are not obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

Designing new additions in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new.

Considering the attached exterior addition both in terms of the new use and the appearance of other buildings in the historic district or neighborhood. Design for the new work may be contemporary or may reference design motifs from the historic building. In either case, it should always be clearly differentiated from the historic building and be compatible in terms of mass, materials, relationship of solids to voids, and color.

Not Recommended: Attaching a new addition so that the character-defining features of the historic building are obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

Designing a new addition so that its size and scale in relation to the historic building are out of proportion, thus diminishing the historic character.

#### Roofs

Recommended: Designing additions to roofs such as residential, office, or storage spaces; elevator housing; decks and terraces; or dormers or skylights when required by the new use so that they are inconspicuous from the public right-of-way and do not damage or obscure character-defining features.

Not Recommended: Changing the configuration of a roof by adding new features such as dormer windows, vents, or skylights so that the historic character is diminished.

## Entrances and Porches

*Recommended:* Designing and constructing a new entrance or porch when the historic entrance or porch is completely missing. It may be a restoration based on historical, pictorial, and physical documentation; or be a new design that is compatible with the historic character of the building.

*Not Recommended:* Introducing a new entrance or porch that is incompatible in size, scale, material and color.

## Wood

*Recommended:* Repairing wood features by patching, piecing-in, consolidating, or otherwise reinforcing the wood using recognized preservation methods.

*Not Recommended:* Removing a feature that is unreparable and not replacing it; or replacing it with a new feature that does not convey the same visual appearance.

## District or Neighborhood Setting

*Not Recommended:* Designing required new parking so that it is as unobtrusive as possible, thus minimizing the effect on the historic character of the setting. "Shared" parking should also be planned as that several businesses can utilize one parking area as opposed to introducing random, multiple lots.

Removing non-significant buildings, additions or landscape features which detract from the historic character of the setting.

## Windows

*Recommended:* Identifying, retaining, and preserving windows--and their functional and decorative features--that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building.

Protecting and maintaining the wood and architectural metal which comprise the window frame, sash, muntins, and surrounds through appropriate surface treatments such as cleaning, rust removal, limited paint removal, and re-application of protective coating systems.

*Not Recommended:* Removing or radically changing windows which are important in defining the historic character of the building so that, as a result, the character is diminished.

Changing the historic appearance of windows through the use of inappropriate designs, materials, finishes, or colors which noticeably change the sash, depth of reveal, and muntin configuration; the reflectivity and color of the glazing; or the appearance of the frame.

Replacing windows solely because of peeling paint, broken glass, stuck sash, and high air infiltration. These conditions, in themselves, are no indication that windows are beyond repair.

## From the City of Ann Arbor Design Guidelines:

### Guidelines for Residential Porches

Appropriate: Installing a new porch and entrance on secondary elevations may be appropriate if it does not diminish the building's architectural character and the design and materials are compatible with the building and the site.

Using replacement features that match the documented historic design. If no documentation exists, using a simple, plain design.

## **Doors**

Appropriate: Retaining, repairing and maintaining original doors, hardware, and trim, including transoms, sidelights, and surrounds.

Replacing original doors that are deteriorated beyond repair with a door that matches the existing exactly in design, size, proportions, profile, and material.

## **STAFF FINDINGS:**

1. This house has been used as a single-family rental for many years. The current owners, who are also building the house next door at 215 N Fifth Avenue, are restoring and refurbishing the house for their son's use. Please note that in addition to the items in this staff report that require HDC approval, there are numerous restoration activities included in the application letter narrating work to be performed.

### *Driveway and Parking*

2. The existing driveway off N Fifth Avenue is part gravel and part concrete. It used to lead to a garage at the rear of the site. According to Sanborn maps, several different storage and garage structures were located in the backyard over the decades, some of which appear to have been accessed from the alley, and later ones from the driveway. The current drive straddles the property line between the two buildings (which was moved a foot or two to accommodate the new house) and probably also encroached when the Bindery was located next door. Since this house was built before auto garages appeared in Ann Arbor, and the rear alley provides ready access, staff is in favor of locating parking spaces off the alley and removing the driveway.
3. The proposed parking area is limited in size and well defined, and allows maximum backyard space.

### *Patio, Paths, and Landscaping*

4. Returning this space to yard from its former use as a parking area is highly appropriate. The proposed backyard features and materials (such as stone in the patio and paths, cedar hedges, and lawn) are elegant and suitable to the setting. John Baumgardner, the stonemason and first owner of the house, would very likely approve.

### *Chimney*

5. The chimney is not currently in use for any kind of venting. Removing the chimney would provide added interior space that can be reconfigured to allow maximum use of the house without the need for an addition. The chimney is the same red brick used on the

house and, while staff considers it to be a character-defining feature, it is not unique or ornate.

### *Construct Two Dormers*

6. Matching dormers are proposed on both the north and south sides of the roof, at the center of the house. Construction of the south dormer would allow new interior stairs that meet code requirements to be added, replacing the current narrow, steep, low-ceilinged stairs. Both dormers would be clad in shingles to match those in the gables, and use single-ply membrane or metal roofing. Four double-hung, painted, wood windows would be installed in each dormer.
7. The application says the existing sagging roof rafters on either side of the new dormers will be replaced, but the drawing says they will be “new or sistered”. Sistering the rafters is more appropriate if it is possible, in order to keep original materials on the building.
8. Staff feels the design and size of the dormers, and their placement ten feet back from the front of the house, is appropriate for the size and style of the building. See especially the 3-D renderings at the back of the application attachments.

### *Replace Nine Windows, New Egress Window*

9. Windows A, B, C, and U (see keyed drawings) are basement hoppers. All are missing or substantially deteriorated. Replacements will be custom fabricated to resemble the originals, per application letter. Staff’s opinion is that these replacements are appropriate.
10. Basement Window T: Per the building official, egress is acceptable via the existing stair, unless a bedroom, family room, or similar space is being constructed. He said that for laundry, workout room, bathroom, or sauna uses, he would not require an additional egress window in this basement. This was confirmed by staff with the building official after this application was submitted. Staff’s opinion is that the egress window is too close to the front of the house, and should it be required for safety reasons at a future date, should be located where the center window is, on the north side of the house, in order to push it back from the sidewalk and street.
11. Window L, on the rear elevation, is not an original window. Its replacement with a compatible wood window is appropriate.
12. Windows I, M, P, and AA are original wood windows. No information on their condition has been submitted. The drawings say they will be “refurbished or new replacement painted wood window”, while the application letter says they will be wood clad. A window worksheet has been submitted for these windows, but the proposed replacement windows do not meet the criteria for sash face or profiles. The review committee will look at the windows and make a recommendation. If the Commission decides the windows are deteriorated beyond repair, a staff approval will be necessary for wood (not clad) replacement windows that meet the guidelines for window replacement.

### *Replace Two Rear Wood Doors*

13. No information has been submitted on the condition of the doors on the rear elevation. If the Commission determines that the doors are from the period of significance for the

district, they must be deteriorated beyond repair before replacement may be considered. If they are determined to have been installed after 1942, their replacement with wood doors is appropriate. The Review Committee will inspect the doors on their site visit.

#### *Replace a Door with a Window*

14. Since this house is well served with egress doors on the ground floor, and since the door opening on the south elevation will retain its original sill and proportions, staff feels it is appropriate to replace this door with a wood window in order to gain efficiencies and recapture space on the interior.

#### *Front Porch Guardrail; New Rear Porch*

15. The proposed front porch guardrail is at the historic height, and a more appropriate design than the current guardrail.
16. The proposed rear porch is simple in design and does not diminish the historic house's architectural character. The materials are the same as the front porch, and the design is compatible but less ornate, as befits a new feature of the house.

#### *Replace Roof and Gutters*

17. Replacing the roof with dark-colored asphalt shingles (which it has now) or cedar shakes (which it would have had historically), is appropriate. It is not known whether the house ever had copper gutters, but it is a material that was used on masonry buildings at the time the house was constructed.
18. Staff recommends approval of motions A, B, and C below. Staff recommends denial of motion D (egress window). Motion E will depend on the Review Committee's assessment of the condition of those doors and windows.

### **MOTIONS**

*Note that all motions are worded in the affirmative, and are only suggested.*

#### A) Driveway, Parking Area, Landscape Features, Roof, Gutters, Front and Rear Porch

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 217 North Fifth Avenue, a contributing property in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District, to remove a driveway; construct a parking area; install a patio, walkway, and landscape features; replace the roof and gutters; replace the front porch railing; and add a rear porch, as proposed. The work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, materials, and relationship to the house and the surrounding area and meets the *City of Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines*, and *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 New Additions, Entrances and Porches, and District or Neighborhood Setting.

#### B) Remove Chimney, Construct Two Dormers

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 217

North Fifth Avenue, a contributing property in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District, to remove the chimney and construct two shed-roof dormers, as proposed. The work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, materials, and relationship to the house and the surrounding area and meets the *City of Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines*, and *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 New Additions, Roofs, and District or Neighborhood Setting.

C) Replace Four Basement Hopper Windows, Window L, and Side Door

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 217 North Fifth Avenue, a contributing property in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District, to replace four basement hopper windows and one non-original window (Window L), on the condition that the windows are painted wood, not clad; and to replace the south side door with a window as submitted. As conditioned, the work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, materials, and relationship to the house and the surrounding area and meets the *City of Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines*, and *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 Windows and Wood.

D) Install a Basement Egress Window

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 217 North Fifth Avenue, a contributing property in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District, to construct a new basement egress window on the south elevation, as proposed. The work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, materials, and relationship to the house and the surrounding area and meets the *City of Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines*, and *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 Windows.

E) Replace Windows I, M, P, and AA, and Two Rear Doors

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 217 North Fifth Avenue, a contributing property in the Old Fourth Ward Historic District, to replace windows I, M, P, and AA, and two rear wood doors, on the condition that the applicant applies for and receives a staff approval for appropriate wood windows, not clad windows, that meet the *City of Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* before permits are issued. The work as conditioned is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, materials, and relationship to the house and the surrounding area and meets the *City of Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines*, and *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 Windows and Wood.

## MOTION WORKSHEET

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 217 North Fifth Avenue 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:** application, photos, drawings

217 North Fifth Avenue (1999 Assessor's photo)

