

## ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

### Staff Report

**ADDRESS:** 913 W Liberty Street, Application Number HDC21-144

**DISTRICT:** Old West Side Historic District

**REPORT DATE:** June 10, 2021

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

**REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE:** Monday, June 7, 2021

#### OWNER

**Name:** Elizabeth Pettie  
Seth Pettie  
**Address:** 913 W Liberty Street  
Ann Arbor, MI 48103  
**Phone:**

#### APPLICANT

DTE Energy  
Rijvana Patel  
14270 Schaefer Hwy  
Detroit, MI 48227  
(313) 409-4034

**BACKGROUND:** This 1 ½ story craftsman features triple and quad three-over-one windows, a large shed dormer on the front, a full-width shed roof front porch, shingle cladding and a sculpted block basement. It first appears in city directories in 1028 as the home of Mrs. Roehm and Arthur Hagen.

**LOCATION:** The house is located on the south side of West Liberty Street, west of South Seventh and east of Eighth Street

**APPLICATION:** The applicant seeks HDC approval to install a gas meter on the west (side) elevation, 2' from the front corner of the house.

#### 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):**

**Mechanical Systems**

*Recommended:* Installing a completely new mechanical system if required for the new use so that it causes the least alteration possible to the building's floor plan, the exterior elevations, and the least damage to the historic building material.

**From the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines:**

**Mechanical Equipment**

*Appropriate:* Installing new air conditioning units and mechanical equipment in such a manner that historic materials and features are not damaged or obscured.

Using compatible screening around outdoor mechanical equipment such as vegetation and fencing.

Attaching mechanical equipment so historic fabric is not damaged or destroyed.

Installing mechanical equipment and wiring in locations on the roof, rear elevations, or in alleys, so they are not visible from the street.

Painting mechanical equipment to blend with the historic building.

*Not Appropriate:* Installing new mechanical equipment systems or wiring in locations that change or destroy character-defining features and materials.

**STAFF FINDINGS**

1. The application states that the meter cannot be moved back farther because it would require more than 10' of fuel line. It adds that visibility will be minimal due to existing foliage (shown in the third photo).
2. DTE is undergoing a construction project to move all gas meters in basements to exteriors of houses. In this work the damage to historic materials in meter installations is minimal – there is typically one penetration through the wall above the foundation, and the meters themselves can be mounted on small posts to avoid touching historic materials. A meter on or near the front of a house is visibly undesirable, however, and detracts from the historic integrity of the home. For this reason, staff may not approve new meters or other mechanical units on or near the fronts of buildings.

3. The application includes a photo of a post mounted meter. The post mount is appropriate because it does not touch historic materials the way a bracket (the alternative) installed on the house does.
4. The meter work is assumed to be necessary and post mounted meters appear to not destroy historic materials. The commission must weigh the proposal against the SOI standards, SOI guidelines, and Ann Arbor design guidelines. Questions to consider include:
  - a. Does the work cause the least alteration possible to the building's floor plan, the exterior elevations, and the least damage to the historic building material?
  - b. Does it damage, destroy or obscure historic materials or features?
  - c. Is there visual screening by vegetation or fencing?

**POSSIBLE MOTIONS:** (Note that the motion below is only a suggestion. The Review Committee, consisting of staff and at least two Commissioners, will meet with the applicant on site and then make a recommendation at the meeting.)

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 913 W Liberty Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to install a gas meter on the west (side) elevation, 2' from the front corner of the house, as shown in the application. As proposed, the work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, materials, and relationship to the building and the surrounding area and meets *The City of Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* for mechanical equipment, 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 mechanical systems.

## MOTION WORKSHEET

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 913 W Liberty Street in the Old West Side 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, drawing, photos

913 W Liberty Street (2008 Survey Photos)





# 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](mailto:jthacher@a2gov.org)

Fax: 734.994.8460

| OFFICE USE ONLY |             |
|-----------------|-------------|
| Permit Number   | HDC# _____  |
|                 | BLDG# _____ |
| DATE STAMP      |             |
|                 |             |

**APPLICATION MUST BE FILLED OUT COMPLETELY**

### PROPERTY LOCATION/OWNER INFORMATION

|  |                                    |   |
|--|------------------------------------|---|
| NAME OF PROPERTY OWNER<br><b>PETTIE ELIZABETH, PETTIE SETH &amp;</b> |                                    | HISTORIC DISTRICT<br><b>OLD WEST SIDE</b> |
| PROPERTY ADDRESS<br><b>913 W. Liberty St.</b>                        |                                    | CITY<br><b>ANN ARBOR</b>                  |
| ZIPCODE<br><b>48103</b>  | DAYTIME PHONE NUMBER<br><b>( )</b> | EMAIL ADDRESS                             |
| PROPERTY OWNER'S ADDRESS (IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE)                   |                                    | CITY STATE, ZIP                           |

### PROPERTY OWNER'S SIGNATURE

|                  |   |                              |
|------------------|---|------------------------------|
| <b>SIGN HERE</b> | <b>PRINT NAME</b> <b>Elizabeth Pettie</b> | <b>DATE</b> <b>3/15/2021</b> |
|------------------|---|------------------------------|

### APPLICANT INFORMATION

|   |         |   |                      |
|---|---------|---|----------------------|
| NAME OF APPLICANT (IF DIFFERENT FROM ABOVE)<br><b>DTE (Rijvana Patel)</b> |         |   |                      |
| ADDRESS OF APPLICANT  |         |   | CITY                 |
| STATE   | ZIPCODE | PHONE / CELL #<br><b>( 313 ) 409-4034</b> | FAX No<br><b>( )</b> |
| EMAIL ADDRESS   |         |   |                      |

### APPLICANT'S SIGNATURE (if different from Property Owner)

|                  |                            |             |
|------------------|----------------------------|-------------|
| <b>SIGN HERE</b> | <b>PRINT NAME</b> <b>X</b> | <b>DATE</b> |
|------------------|----------------------------|-------------|

### BUILDING USE – CHECK ALL THAT APPLY

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

### PROPOSED WORK

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

Relocate inside meter to outside. Install meter 2' South of the North building wall on the West side of home.

### DESCRIBE CONDITIONS THAT JUSTIFY THE PROPOSED CHANGES:

Unable to move further back to maintain less than 10' of fuel line. Meter visibility will be minimal due to existing foliage.

For Further Assistance With Required Attachments, please visit [www.a2gov.org/hdc](http://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](mailto:building@a2gov.org).

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

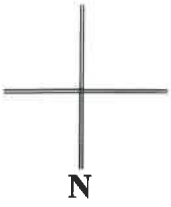
HDC applications that are incomplete or not submitted with the required documentation or payment will not be processed or approved.

## APPLICATION EXPIRATION

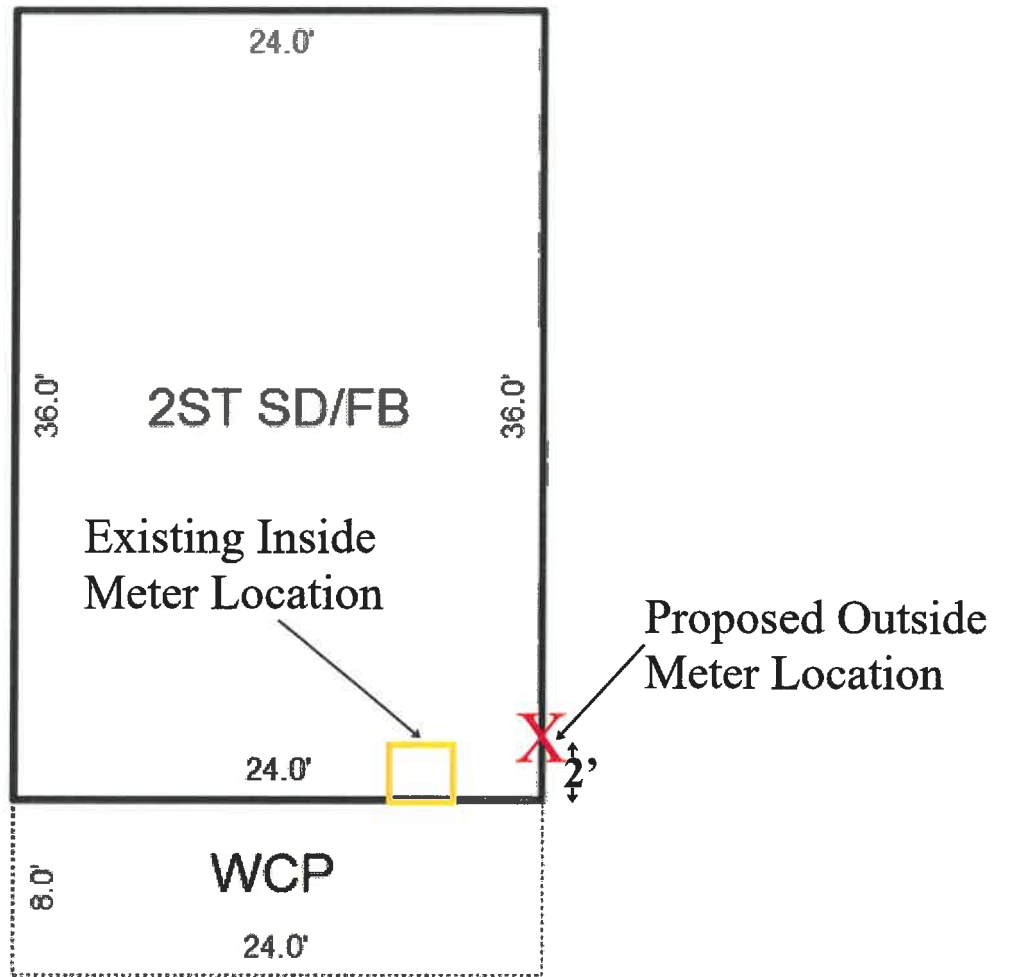
HDC applications expire three (3) years after the date of approval.

## 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: # _____<br><input type="checkbox"/> Cash<br><input type="checkbox"/> Credit Card |                                     |



913 W. Liberty St.



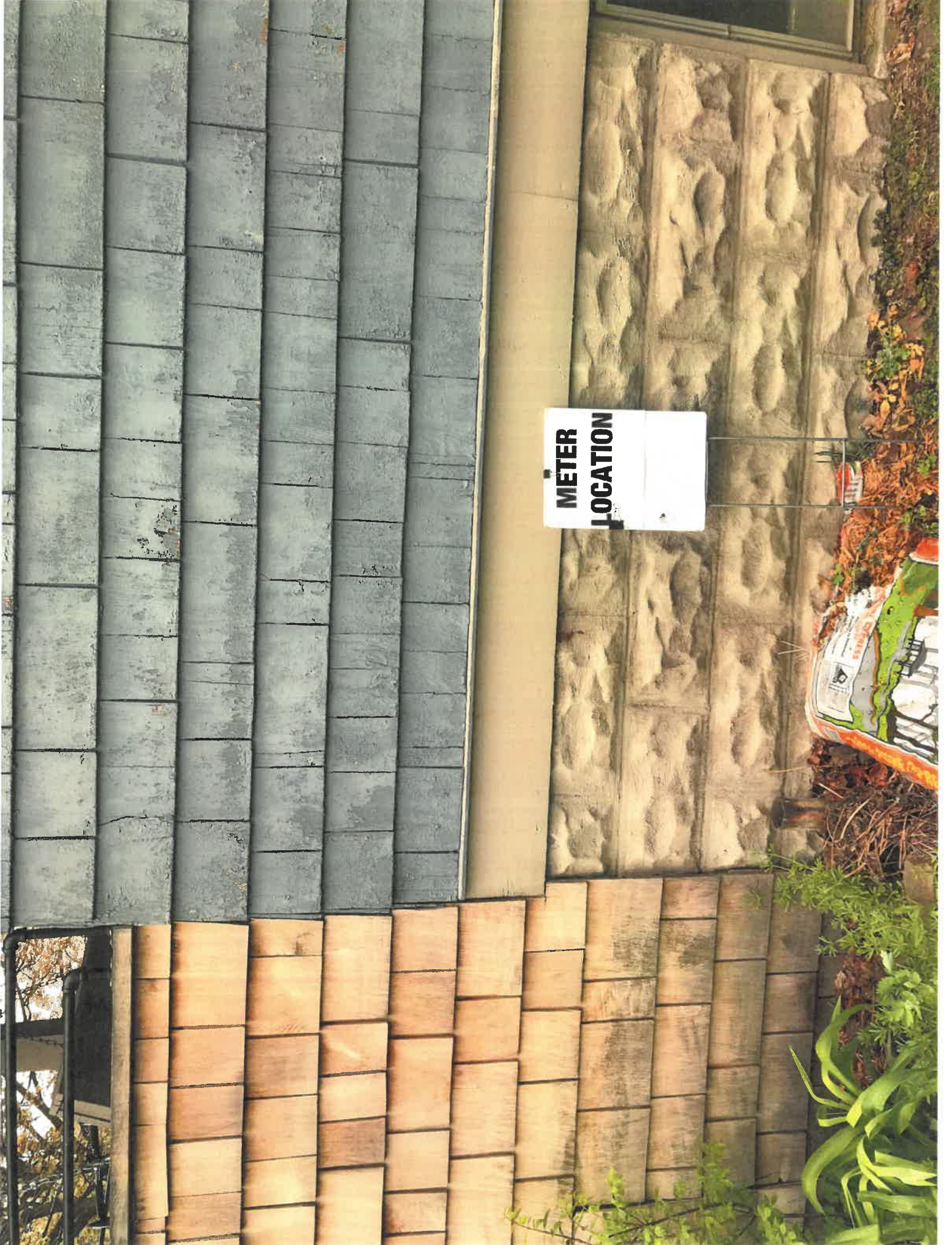
**Front of House**

913 W. Liberty

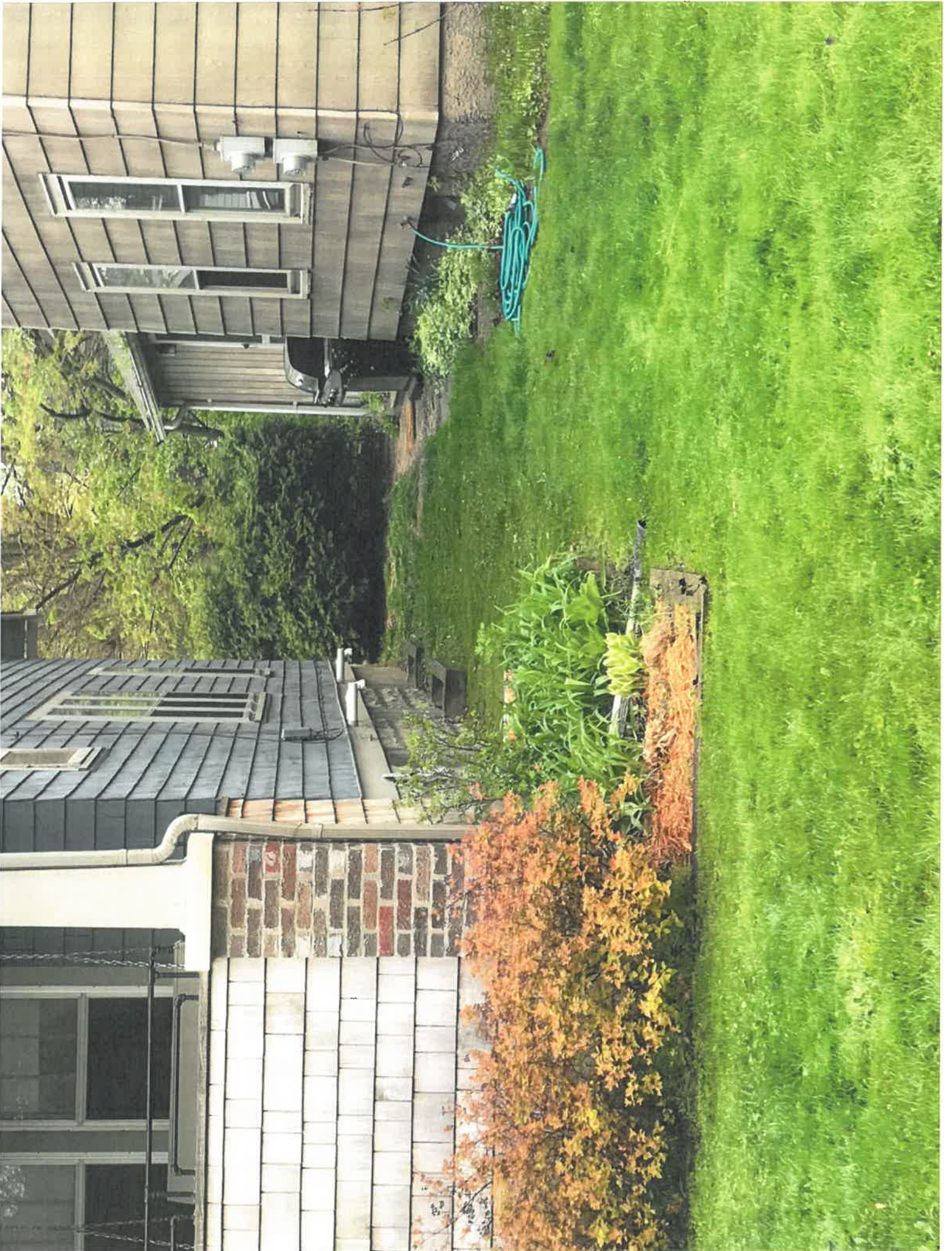




**METER  
LOCATION**











POST  
EXAMPLE