

## ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

### Staff Report

**ADDRESS:** 436 First Street, Application Number HDC22-1094

**DISTRICT:** Old West Side Historic District

**REPORT DATE:** August 11, 2022

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

**REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE:** August 8, 2022

	<b>OWNER</b>	<b>APPLICANT</b>
<b>Name:</b>	John Zemke	J Bradley Moore J Bradley Moore & Assoc.
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**BACKGROUND:** In 1860 the Bethlehem German Evangelical School was built here, at 76 South First Street (source: *The Ann Arbor Observer*, Grace Shackman, "Old West Side Story", August 2001). That building was vacant by 1920. The current house replaced the school in the 1920s. It is a 2 ½ story gable-fronter with exposed rater tails, shingle cladding on the upper floors, and narrow lap siding on the first floor. The full-width stone front porch features stone wing-walls and the stone "compass rose" that was the signature of a particular mason building porches at that time. The porch has a gable roof with exposed rater tails and square tapered columns. The one-story rear wing was built at the same time as the rest of the house.

**LOCATION:** The house is on the west side of South First, north of West Jefferson Street and south of West William Street.

**APPLICATION:** The applicant seeks HDC approval to construct a rear addition on top of and behind the existing rear wing and to replace the modern garage with a new two story garage.

#### **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.

Locating the attached exterior addition at the rear or on an in-conspicuous side of a historic building; and limiting its size and scale in relationship to the historic building.

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.

**District or Neighborhood Setting**

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

**Building Site**

*Recommended:* Identifying, retaining, and preserving buildings and their features as well as features of the site that are important in defining its overall historic character. Site features can include driveways, walkways, lighting, fencing, signs, benches, fountains, wells, terraces, canal systems, plants and trees, berms, and drainage or irrigation ditches; and archeological features that are important in defining the history of the site.

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

*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.

## **Windows**

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

### **From the City of Ann Arbor Design Guidelines:**

#### **Guidelines for All Additions**

*Appropriate:* Limiting the size and scale of the addition in relationship to the historic building so that it does not diminish or visually overpower the building or the district. The addition should exceed neither half of the original building's footprint nor half of the original building's total floor area.

*Not Appropriate:* Attaching an addition so that the character-defining features of the property are obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

Designing a new addition so that the size and scale in relation to the historic property are out of proportion.

Constructing an addition that significantly changes the proportion of built mass to open space on the individual site.

#### **Additions to Historic Residential Structures**

*Appropriate:* Placing new walls in a different plane from the historic structure, in a subordinate position to the historic fabric.

#### **All New Construction**

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

### **New Accessory Structures in Historic Residential Settings**

*Appropriate:* Retaining the historic relationship between buildings, landscape features, and open spaces.

Locating sheds and garages in the rear yard.

Using exterior wall and roof materials that are compatible with historic materials on the main structure and in the neighborhood.

Using a roof shape and pitch that replicates the shape and pitch of the roof of the main structure.

Using windows and doors that are compatible in proportion and style to the main structure and the neighborhood.

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

Locating a shed or garage in the front yard or in side yards in front of the main structure.

### **Residential Accessory Structures**

*Not Appropriate:* Introducing new structures or site features that are out of scale with the property or the district or are otherwise inappropriate.

### **STAFF FINDINGS:**

1. This single-family home has no post-1944 additions. The applicants seek to build a rear addition on top of an existing single-story rear wing, and to replace the existing post-1945 garage with a new two-story garage with room for two cars and an upstairs accessory dwelling unit. The home currently has a footprint of 899 square feet (SF), and the addition would add 205 SF for an increase of 23%. The total area is 1,574 SF and the addition would add 605 SF, for an increase of 36%.
2. *Addition.* The addition is proposed to add 10' behind the house on the first floor over a slab on grade and 20' on the second floor. It is 21' wide and the first and second story rear corners are inset 1'. Cladding on the addition is wood lap with a wider exposure than the original siding. Existing eave overhangs on the one-story rear wing will remain on the north and south sides to help delineate the original structure.
3. Windows are proposed to be clad wood. Three original windows on the north elevation are proposed to be moved off of the main house and onto the addition. Staff has concerns that moving these windows diminishes the character of the original house and believes they should remain in situ.
4. *Garage.* The new garage would replace one with a slightly larger footprint that was built well after the period of significance for the OWSHD. It would be 21' deep x 22' wide with a roll-up fiberglass or steel door. The second floor is accessed by exterior wood stairs on the south side. The 8/12 roof pitch matches the pitch of the roof of the house. There are two person doors; materials are not indicated but wood, steel, or fiberglass would be appropriate. The cladding materials are compatible with the house (wood siding and shakes) with a few modern materials used appropriately (vinyl soffets, James Hardie trim boards). The upstairs dwelling unit would be a 462 square foot studio.
5. The proposed work is compatible with the house and neighborhood but adequately distinguished so as not to be confused with the historic. Staff believes the work meets the standards and guidelines followed 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 view the site and share their observations at the meeting.)

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 436 S First Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to construct a rear addition on top of and behind the existing rear wing and to replace the modern garage with a new two story garage, as proposed. The proposed work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the surrounding resources and meets the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* for Additions and New Construction, 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 District/Neighborhood, Building Site, New Additions, and Windows.

**MOTION WORKSHEET**

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 436 S First 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, photos, drawings

436 S First Street (Survey photo, 2008)

