

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**Staff Report****ADDRESS:** 814 W Liberty Street, Application Number HDC23-0035**DISTRICT:** Old West Side Historic District**REPORT DATE:** April 13, 2023**REPORT PREPARED BY:** Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator**REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE:** Monday, April 10, 2023

	OWNERS	APPLICANT
Name:	Nolan & Nicole Sandberg	Same
Address:	814 W Liberty St Ann Arbor, MI 48103	
Phone:	(616) 791-7226	

BACKGROUND: This one-and-three-quarter-story gable fronter first appears in the 1894 Polk City Directory. It features wide board trim beneath the eaves, a full width front porch with hipped roof, wood lap siding, one-over-one windows, a cut stone foundation, and a shallow first floor bump-out at the back of the west elevation.

On June 14, 2020 the HDC approved HDC20-079, an application to enclose a rear porch, at this address.

LOCATION: The property is located on the north side of West Liberty, one house east of the intersection with South Seventh Street.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to remove the brick chimney.

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.
- (5) Distinctive materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
- (6) Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture, and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

- (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.

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

Roofs

Recommended: Retaining and maintaining original historic roofing materials, roof shape, dormers, cupolas, chimneys, and built-in or decorative gutters and downspouts.

Identifying, retaining, and preserving roofs—and their functional and decorative features—that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building. This includes the roof-shape, such as cupolas, cresting, chimneys, and weathervanes; and roofing material such as slate, wood, clay tile, and metal, as well as its size, color, and patterning.

From the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines (other Ann Arbor guidelines may also apply):

Roofs

Appropriate: Retaining and maintaining original historic roofing materials, roof shape, dormers, cupolas, chimneys, and built-in or decorative gutters and downspouts.

Designing and constructing a new feature when the historic feature is completely missing, such as a chimney or cupola with an accurate restoration using historical, pictorial, and physical documentation.

Not Appropriate: Removing or altering historic roof features such as chimneys, dormers, cupolas, lightning rods, built-in or decorative gutters.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. The chimney is centered on the roof ridge, approximately 2/3 of the way from the front of the house toward the back. It is typical of houses this age: red brick with a stone cap and liner.
2. The homeowner states on the electronic application:

“We will be removing all portions of the chimney on the interior and exterior of the house. The chimney is not in use and has not been used for several years and is in disrepair. The current chimney runs through our kitchen. We would like to remove it to have more space and better flow in the kitchen. It will also add a small amount of living space to one second floor bedroom. To avoid any structural instability, we have been advised to remove the full chimney, including the exterior, rather than merely a portion. We will be repairing the roof with the same material to match existing aesthetic. Interior spaces will also be repaired to match existing architecture and materials.”

3. Staff's opinion is that while the chimney is in need of repair and finding additional interior space is a challenge in many old homes, it is nevertheless a character defining feature of the house since there is no evidence that it was installed after 1944. As such, its removal would not meet Standards 1, 5 or 6 or the *SOI Guidelines* for roofs or *the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* for roofs.

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 then make a recommendation at the meeting.)

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 814 West Liberty, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to remove the brick chimney, 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* for Roofs, and *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, in particular standards 2, 5, 6 and 9 the guidelines for Roofs.

MOTION WORKSHEET

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 814 West Liberty 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, materials details



814 W Liberty,
May 2008 survey photo