STAFF REPORT: 02-12-2020 MEETING APPLICATION NUMBER: 20-6618 ADDRESS: 1448 LONGFELLOW HISTORIC DISTRICT: BOSTON EDISON APPLICANT: JAMES HALL, JAY-BILT CONSTRUCTION COMPANY DATE OF COMPLETE APPLICATION: 01/17/2020 DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 1/30/20

SCOPE: DEMOLITION OF GARAGE (WORK DONE WITHOUT PERMIT), ERECTION OF NEW GARAGE

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Constructed in 1917, the Neo-Georgian house has a symmetrical façade with grouped wood, double-hung windows. All of the front elevation windows have a six-over-one sash, with the exception of the small mulled casements over the front entry. The arched roof on the projecting covered front entry porch and large shed dormer are unifying central elements to the front elevation. Crescent moons on the flat paneled shutters are possibly original to the house and offer a unique detail to the otherwise straight-forward masonry exterior which displays a running bond pattern and brick soldier courses above the first floor window openings. The house has a minimal amount of stucco to accent certain areas on the house, such as the shed dormer and the small room projection on the east elevation.



House & Garage. The date of this photo is 1980, six years after the district's designation.

This is the only image available of the intact garage.





Current photo - taken by HDC staff on January 30, 2020

The original frame garage had a hip roof and possibly a stucco exterior finish, which staff identified from the below photos. The photo on the left is an expanded image from the 1980 site photo from the HDC arcives; the image on the right was taken by the applicant the summer of 2019.



PROPOSAL

In July 2019, the applicant submitted a proposal to pour a new concrete pad and driveway, which included a notation saying the garage would be remodeled. HDC staff granted a COA for the new pad and driveway; no approval for garage repairs was granted as the application didn't include specifications on how the repairs would be completed.

Per the applicant's narrative, the garage crumbled when the contractor removed the existing concrete slab. The contractor didn't return to pour the pad and driveway so she hired a new contractor to complete the concrete work. As the garage was demolished without a permit or HDC review, its demolition is before the Commission

at this time.

The applicant is also applying for approval for the construction of a new 18'-0" wide x 20'-0" deep garage. It will be located in the same location as the previous garage, however the materials and design will be different.

- Roof: Reverse gable, Asphalt shingles: Onyx Black
- Siding: Vinyl siding; Double 4-inch woodgrain, Color: Sandtone
- Door: Single 16'-0" x 7'-0" overhead door, panel design but no glass, steel construction

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- No structural analysis of the previous garage was completed, so staff has to rely on the submitted photographs to ascertain its condition prior to demolition. While the concrete pad did show multiple cracks and likely warranted replacement, and the front and rear elevation doors were missing, the garage did not appear to be leaning, the exterior roof and interior ceiling looked intact, as did the wood lath on the east interior wall. Only a structural analysis could confirm the structure was in such dilapidated condition to substantiate the claim that it crumbled when work was done to the concrete pad.
- The original structure was a standard garage design for the early 20th century and echoed the house through the exterior stucco walls. It also would have had two door openings on the front elevation. They were removed, and a single, overhead door installed before local historic district designation.
- The garage had door openings on the front and rear walls, offering one direction travel through the garage.
- The proposed structure is minimally detailed, with the overhead door being the main design feature for the front elevation. The alley wall is proposed to be a solid wall.
- Side note: An alteration to the house's shed dormer is evident when comparing the current façade against the 1980 image. In 1980 clapboard siding returned into stucco walls. At some point in time (maybe during one of the two painting projects listed below?), the side walls were reduced, and stucco replaced the clapboard siding. There are no written approvals for the painting projects in the HDC file so the scope of work for the two projects are not known. The existing conditions are appropriately designed and would not have been identified by HDC if not for the earlier image on file.

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ISSUES

- Vinyl siding, due to its materiality (plastic) and associated appearance: visible seams, limited widths and profiles, and limited colors, does not mimic wood siding and therefore, is not compatible with the historic materials on the house and not appropriate within a local historic district.
- The original garage retained much of its historic integrity, as only the doors were missing.

RECOMMENDATION

Garage Demolition

It is staff's opinion the demolition of the original garage, whose shape and materials were important aspects of its visual and historic character, contributed to the site's historical significance. Its demolition altered the

features and spaces that characterize the property, and the applicant did not submit the visual and physical evidence required to support a demolition proposal.

Therefore, staff recommends the Commission deny a COA for the demolition of the garage as it does not meet the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation, especially:

#2) The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided

#6) Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. When the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.

Erection of a New Garage

It is staff's opinion the new garage, as proposed, is a highly generic design that doesn't relate to the house or site. The massing and design of the original garage, namely the hip roof and stucco finish, are the defining features of the historic garage and should be emulated within the new design. As the demolished garage had a single overhead door opening, the proposal with a similar large door opening is in keeping with the historic structure.

Therefore, staff recommends the Commission issue a COA for the erection of a new garage as it meets the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation, especially:

6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial 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.

However, staff recommends the Commission issue the COA with the following conditions:

- The garage will have a hip roof; the dimensions of the garage will be modified as needed to accommodate this roof design.
- The exterior walls of the wood frame structure shall be faced with stucco. The stucco pattern will be a smooth texture with minimal aggregate. The color of the stucco should conform to Color System C; the color choice will be submitted to staff for approval.
- A revised site plan and construction drawings, including a catalog cut for the overhead door (and exterior lighting should it be planned), must be submitted to staff for final review.













To the Historic District Commission Projet review request

from Valerie Cazeneuve a/k/a Eve de Castro 1448 Longfellow, 48206 Detroit

evedecastro@hotmail.fr 313 329 97 93

PROJECT: BUILDING NEW GARAGE 1448 LONGFELLOW 48206

I am a French novelist and journalist (you can google me: Eve de Castro). I have been living 7 months in Paris and 5 months in Detroit since 2015. I lived first in Indian Village and opened the French café La Boheme on Kercheval/Parker, then in West Village. I moved to Boston Edison last fall. I came to Detroit to write about the early ages of the city, and it s founder Cadillac. It will be my next novel.

When I bought 1448 Lonfgellow in August 2015, there was a crumbling garage at the back of the house. The roof was badly damaged, the walls crumbling and the slab broken in many pieces.

I hired GARAGE R US, a cement and garage company (owner Artemio Sessions, he is in jail now) in 2018 to remodel the existing garage and install a new driveway. Artemio Sessions (a/k/a Temo for his clients) told me he had applied for permit. I didn't t know the regulations about permits in historical districts at that time. I trusted him when he said he was doing everything by the code. He told me he had applied and obtained the permit and started removing the existing slab. When he did so the garage crumbled. He removed the debris and...left without notice. Some weeks later he said he went into bankruptcy. I had already paid him \$8000. As many clients of his I never got my money back.

In July 2019 I hired POTOROCKA concrete (owner Lynn Potorocka) to do the driveway and JAY BUIIT (owner Jim Hall) to do the garage slab.

With the help of Brendan Cagney I applied for permit for the driveway and the garage slab (same footprints). After I got permit, POTOROCKA concrete did the driveway, and JAY Built (Jim Hall) did the garage slab in October 2019.

I aplogize for not applying in due time for the removal of the existing garage. I always do my best to respect regulations, but this mistake has been completely out of my control.

I now apply for permit to build a new garage on the new slab with JAY BUILT. Jim Hall will be representing me at the February meeting. I will be back to Detroit first week of March and I hope with the approval of the commission I will be able to build my new garage third week of March.

With many thanks in advance





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Historic District Commission

Attn: Brendan P. Cagney January 16th, 2020 Re; Property located at 1448 Longfellow

Scope of work: To build a new garage 18' x 20' reverse gable garage on existing concrete floor.Build to Michigan building code.

Rough lumber: To build with 2x4x8 precut walls with a reverse gable design, 2x 6 rafters 16" o/c,7/16th OSB plywood walls & roof with, a 16'x 7' overhead door. Install 2-2x12 header over door.

Siding: Will be my "Mastic Ovation panel .042 thickness, "Sandtone" color & cameo aluminum trim, & vinyl soffit siding in the front overhang.

Roofing: Roofing material will be by "Owen Corning" "Onyx Black"

"Description of old Garage"

I do not have any photos of the old garage, Home owner said it was ready to fall down when she purchased the home, and a tree next door fell onto the roof and that was it, just totally collapsed. The old garage was removed from site long before I was involved.

Thank You Jim Hall Jay-Bilt Construction Co. LLC

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SEC. 25-2-126. BOSTON-EDISON HISTORIC DISTRICT.

(A) A historic district, known as the Boston-Edison historic district, was established by a resolution of the Detroit City Council on April 2, 1974.

(B) The boundaries of the Boston-Edison historic district were established by a resolution of the Detroit City Council on April 2, 1974.

(C) As provided for in the Detroit City Council resolution dated April 2, 1974, the design treatment level of the Boston-Edison historic district is rehabilitation.

- (D) the elements of design shall be defined for the Boston-Edison historic district as follows:
- (1) <u>Height</u>. Virtually all of the houses in the district have two (2) full stories plus an attic or a finished third floor within the roof, which are generally called "two-and-a-half" (2¹/₂) story houses. Additions to existing buildings shall be related to the existing structure. New buildings shall meet the following standards:
 - (i) the eight (8) adjoining houses on the same block face, excluding any houses built since 1930, shall be used to determine an average height. If eight (8) houses are not available on the same block face, then one (1) or more houses as close as possible to being directly across the street from the proposed structure may be used. The height of the two (2) adjoining houses shall be added into the total twice, with a divisor of ten (10) used to determine the average. The main roof of any new building must have a height of at least eighty percent (80%) of the resulting average. In no case shall a new building be taller than the tallest roof height included in the calculation. In determining the height of existing buildings and proposed buildings, the highest point of the main roof shall be used, even where towers or other minor elements may be higher.
- (ii) the level of the eaves of the proposed new structure has as much or more significance for compatibility as the roof height. Therefore, an average eave or cornice height shall be determined by the same process as that described above. The proposed new structure shall have a height at the eaves or cornice of not less than ninety percent (90%) of the average determined from existing structures; and in no case shall the eaves or cornice of the proposed structure be lower than the lowest eave or cornice height used in the computation, nor higher than the highest eave or cornice.
- (2) <u>Proportion of buildings' front facade</u>. Proportion varies in the district, depending on the age, style, and location in a specific subdivision. Most houses are wider than tall, especially those on large or multiple lots east of the John C. Lodge freeway. With height being established by the standards above, proportion will be established by prohibiting any proposed building or addition from creating a front facade wider than the widest, or narrower than the narrowest, of those existing on the same block face.
- (3) <u>Proportion of openings within the facade</u>. Windows openings are virtually always taller than wide; however, several windows are sometimes grouped into a combination that is wider than tall. Window openings are always subdivided. The most common window type is double-hung with sashes that are generally further subdivided by muntins or leaded glass. Facades have approximately fifteen percent (15%) to thirty-five percent (35%) of their area glazed. Sun porches with a very high proportion of window openings subdivided by mullions and muntins are common.
- (4) <u>*Rhythm of solids to voids in front facades.*</u> In buildings derived from classical precedents, voids are usually arranged in a symmetrical and evenly-spaced manner within the facades.

In examples of other styles, particularly those of English medieval inspiration, voids are arranged with more freedom, but usually in a balanced composition.

- (5) <u>Rhythm of spacing of buildings on streets</u>. The spacing of the buildings is generally determined by the setback from side lot lines. There is a variance in the widths of subdivision lots from one block to another. The lots generally range from forty (40) feet to seventy-five (75) feet in width. The minimum spacing between houses is ten (10) feet and the maximum spacing between houses is approximately three hundred and twenty-five (325) feet, where several lots are combined. The typical spacing is ten (10) feet to fifteen (15) feet from side lot lines. In the case of very wide properties, two (2) conditions exist: the house is located in the center of the site with extensive side yard space, which only occurs with extremely large houses by district standards; or the house is located at the side of the wide site, which creates an extensive side yard on one (1) side of the house.
- (6) <u>Rhythm of entrance and/or porch projections</u>. In those examples derived from classical precedents, entrances and porches, if any, tend to be centered on the front facade. Other examples display more freedom with entrance and porch placement. Porches and permanently enclosed sun porches are often placed at the side and sometimes at the rear of the building.
- (7) <u>Relationship of materials</u>. The majority of houses are faced with brick, while many are partially or totally stucco. There are some stone buildings, sometimes combined with stucco; clapboard is rare, and is extremely rare as the sole material. Roofing includes slate, tile and asphalt shingles. Wood shingle roofs were once common and have generally been replaced with asphalt. Wood shake does not exist and there is no known evidence that it was ever used in the district. Stone trim is common. Wood is almost universally used for window frames and other functional trim and is used in many examples for all trim.
- (8) <u>Relationship of textures</u>. The most common relationship of textures in the district is that of a low-relief pattern of mortar joints in brick contrasted with the smooth surface of wood or stone trim. There are a few houses with rough or rusticated stone surfaces. The use of stucco or concrete, with or without half-timbering, as a contrast to brick surfaces, is not unusual. Tile, slate, or wood shingle roofs have particular textural values where they exist. Asphalt shingles generally have little textural interest, even in those types which purport to imitate some other variety.
- (9) <u>Relationship of colors</u>. Natural brick colors (such as red, yellow, brown, buff) predominate in wall surfaces. Natural stone colors also exist. Where stucco or concrete exists, it usually remains in its natural state, or is painted in a shade of cream. Roofs are in natural colors (tile and slate colors, natural and stained wood colors), and asphalt shingles are predominantly within this same dark color range. Paint colors often relate to style. The buildings derived from classical precedents, particularly those of neo-georgian style, generally have woodwork painted white, cream, or in the range of those colors including "putty"; doors and shutters are frequently dark green or black. Colors known to have been in use on similar buildings of this style in the eighteenth or early twentieth centuries may be considered for appropriateness. Buildings of medieval inspiration (notably neo-tudor) generally have painted woodwork and window frames of a dark brown or cream color. Half timbering is almost always stained dark brown. The original colors of any building, as determined by professional analysis, are always acceptable for a house, and may provide guidance for similar houses.
- (10) <u>Relationship of architectural details</u>. Architectural details generally relate to style. Neo-

georgian buildings display classic details, mostly in wood, and sometimes in stone. Porches, shutters, window frames, cornices, and dormer windows are commonly, although not always, treated. Details on "mediterranean" style or vernacular buildings including arched windows, door openings, and porches, are often done in stone, brick, tile, and sometimes in stucco. Buildings of medieval inspiration tend to have details in the form of carved wood or carved stone ornaments on window frames, door frames, and eaves. In general, the various styles are rich in architectural details.

- (11) <u>Relationship of roof shapes</u>. A variety of roof shapes exist in the district, depending on building style. Shallow hipped roofs with dormers, roofs with triangular gables, and steep hipped roofs predominate. A few gambrel roofs exist. Complex arrangements of the gabled and/or the hipped types, with subsidiary or transverse roofs, are not unusual. Dormers are common. Flat roofs are present only as subsidiary roofs on residential structures. Garage roofs generally reflect the style and pitch of the roof on the main house.
- (12) <u>Walls of continuity</u>. The major wall of continuity is created by the buildings, with their uniform setbacks within the blocks. New buildings should contribute to this wall of continuity. Minor walls of continuity are created where rows of trees have survived in sufficient numbers or new trees are planted in rows, and where hedges along front lot lines exist in numbers.
- (13)*Relationship of significant landscape features and surface treatments.* The typical treatment of individual properties is a flat or graded front lawn area in grass turf, often subdivided by a straight or curving walk leading to the front entrance. Materials for such walks are concrete, brick, stone, or combinations of those materials. Some front yards have rectangular raised earthwork terraces upon which the house stands. These unpaved terraces have sloping embankments or retaining walls which are made of brick, stone, or both, at the change of grade. Foundation plantings, often of a deciduous character, characteristic of the period 1900-1930, are present virtually without exception. Hedges between properties and along front property lines are not uncommon. It is characteristic for corner lots to have hedges or fencing at side lot lines along the sidewalk. There is a wide range in the type of fencing. Fencing within the public view was generally designed to compliment the style, design material, and date of the residence. Although the American elm was once the dominant tree, it is virtually extinct in the district. Replacement trees should be characteristic of the area and period. Plantings of new trees should be directed to "tree lawns" and medians. If American elm is planted, it should be disease resistant. Straight side driveways leading from the street to rear garages are the norm, although access to garages is also off the alley, especially in areas of the district that were developed earlier. On corner lots, garages and driveways often face the side streets. These driveways are paved in asphalt, concrete, or brick. Side lots are not uncommon for the larger properties in the district, and a number of these form a part of the original site plan for the residence. Such side lots are usually landscaped and are often fenced at or near the setback line. The width of tree lawns varies from block to block. Street pavements are now asphalt. Cut stone curbs still exist in areas of the district where they have not yet been replaced with concrete, primarily east of the John C. Lodge freeway. Public sidewalks are concrete. Some tree lawns/berms have been covered with concrete in parts of the district, which may represent encroachment on city property. The resulting wide sidewalks are not appropriate in the district. The ample one hundred and twenty-five (125) foot street right-of-ways of west boston boulevard and Chicago boulevard are ample, and each have two (2) narrow pavements divided by the large graded grassy median strips which are planted with evergreens and deciduous trees. The other east-west streets, Longfellow street and Edison Boulevard, are sixty-six (66) feet wide. The Detroit

Lighting Commission's ornamental poles ("o.p.") with cast iron bases (pattern #10 and cast iron panel pattern #16a) and wooden shafts are placed at regular intervals primarily on the medians on boston boulevard and Chicago boulevard, and on the tree lawns on other east-west streets. Lighting on the north-south side streets consists of steel poles, some of which are fluted, with either ornate pendants or simple cranes. There are historic upright poles along the periphery of Voight park. Concrete and brick entrance piers exist at woodward avenue and Longfellow Street. Alleys run east-west down the center of the blocks, with the exception of the north-south alleys behind the Woodward Avenue frontage.

- (14) <u>Relationship of open space to structures</u>. Open space in the district occurs in the form of vacant land, a city park, side lots, and grassy median strips in the boulevards. There are no houses facing Woodward Avenue. Ample open space is provided at Woodward Avenue and Boston Boulevard, creating a park-like entrance into the district. The John C. Lodge freeway is depressed and forms a visual and physical gap in the district. All houses have rear yards as well as front yards. Where an original or early arrangement of house and grounds included, and still includes, landscaped lots which form part of the landscaping plan for the residence, such landscaped lots are significant landscape features.
- (15) <u>Scale of facades and facade elements</u>. There is a variety in scale from block to block and style to style, the largest and most substantial houses being primarily those on the first two (2) blocks west of Woodward Avenue and on Boston Boulevard east of the John C. Lodge freeway. West of the John C. Lodge freeway and on Longfellow Street and Edison Boulevard, the houses are generally smaller in scale and are situated on smaller lots. The size and complexity of facade elements and details either accentuate or subdue the scale of the facades. Facade elements have been determined by what is appropriate for the style. Window sash are usually subdivided by muntins, which affect the apparent scale of the windows within the facades.
- (16) <u>Directional expression of front elevations</u>. Although many of the larger buildings are wider than tall, the expression is generally neutral.
- (17) <u>Rhythm of building setbacks</u>. Because of the existence of various subdivisions and related subdivision and deed restrictions, setbacks vary from area to area within the district, although they are generally consistent within each block or area. The varying designs of the houses, occasionally with slight setbacks in the facades, cause the houses to relate to the front setback line in different ways. This creates a slight variation in the setback line. Nevertheless, within each block or area, a wall of continuity is created.
- (18) <u>Relationship of lot coverage</u>. Lot coverage ranges from approximately forty percent (40%) to ten percent (10%) or less in the case of homes with large yards. Most homes are in the twenty-five percent (25%) to thirty-five percent (35%) range of lot coverage.
- (19) <u>Degree of complexity within the facade</u>. The degree of complexity has been determined by what is typical and appropriate for a given style. The buildings derived from classical precedents usually have simple, rectangular facades with varying amounts of ornamentation. Other styles, such as those of medieval inspiration, frequently have facades complicated by gables, bays, slight setbacks, and an occasional tower. In general, the smaller houses in the district are less complex.
- (20) <u>Orientation, vistas, overviews</u>. Most of the houses in the district have front entrances which are oriented toward the streets running east-west. The houses on Lasalle Boulevard, from Chicago Boulevard to Edison Boulevard, are orientated toward Lasalle. Garages are

frequently oriented either toward an alley and/or the front drive or toward a side street in the case of corner lots. Almost all garages are detached and are at the rear of the lot.

- (21) <u>Symmetrical or asymmetric appearance</u>. Neo-Georgian and other buildings derived from classical precedents are generally symmetrical. Buildings in other styles, including the neo-Tudor, are generally asymmetric, but balanced, compositions.
- (22) <u>General environmental character</u>. The Boston-Edison district, with its long straight streets, two (2) boulevards, large-to-moderate sized stately single-family homes, Voight park and Woodward avenue's open space, has an urban, substantial, low density residential character.