

STAFF REPORT: 2/8/2023 MEETING

PREPARED BY: J. ROSS

APPLICATION NUMBER: #23-

ADDRESS: 1310 LABROSSE

HISTORIC DISTRICT: CORKTOWN

APPLICANT: JOSH DIVERNO

OWNER: ARTURO QUIROZ

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 1/16/2023

DATE OF STAFF VISIT: 1/30/2022

SCOPE OF WORK: CONSTRUCT SECOND STORY ON APPROVED GARAGE

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The dwelling located at 1310 Labrosse was erected ca. 1900. The building includes a two-story, front-gabled original mass with side and rear-gabled, one-story additions to the rear. Windows are wood-sash units and the exterior walls are clad with cement fiber siding. The front elevation features a one-story, full-width, wood porch. The rear yard includes a non-historic gazebo and a shed.



1310 Labrosse, current appearance (staff photo, taken 1/30/2023)

PROPOSAL

The applicant attended the Commission’s May 11, 2022 regular meeting and presented a proposal to the Commission to erect a new garage with loft/storage above at the property’s rear yard. Specifically, per the submitted proposal, the new garage was to be built according to the following:

- The building shall have a footprint which measures 22’x24’ and shall be 21’ in height. The exterior walls will be clad with textured cement fiberboard, painted yellow to match the home. A steel overhead door (color white) will be located at the “front elevation” per the construction

drawing, while a single steel person door will be located at the rear elevation. A paired vinyl slider window will be located at the front elevation gable end.

The Commission approved the proposal with conditions. See the following link to the drawings that were submitted to the Commission in 2022 [Microsoft Outlook - Memo Style \(detroitmi.gov\)](https://www.detroitmi.gov/microsoft-outlook-memo-style).

With the current proposal, the applicant is seeking approval to modify the approved garage design by adding two shed-roof additions to the roof to expand the upper-level floor space. Specifically, per the current application materials, the new building will be erected per the below description:

- The building shall have a footprint which measures 25.6'x20' and shall be 19'-6" in height. The exterior walls will be clad with cement fiberboard (with a faux wood grain texture), painted yellow to match the home. The building will be topped with a front-gabled roof with 16'-0" long, shed-roof dormers at the east and west elevations' roof surfaces. A steel overhead door (color white) will be located at the "front elevation" per the construction drawing, while a single steel person door will be located at the rear elevation. Windows are 1/1, wood-sash units.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- A Sanborn Fire Insurance map from 1971 indicates that a garage had been extant in the rear yard, at the location of the proposed new garage. Currently, only a slab remains at this location. It is unclear to staff when the garage was demolished/if it was demolished prior to the district's designation



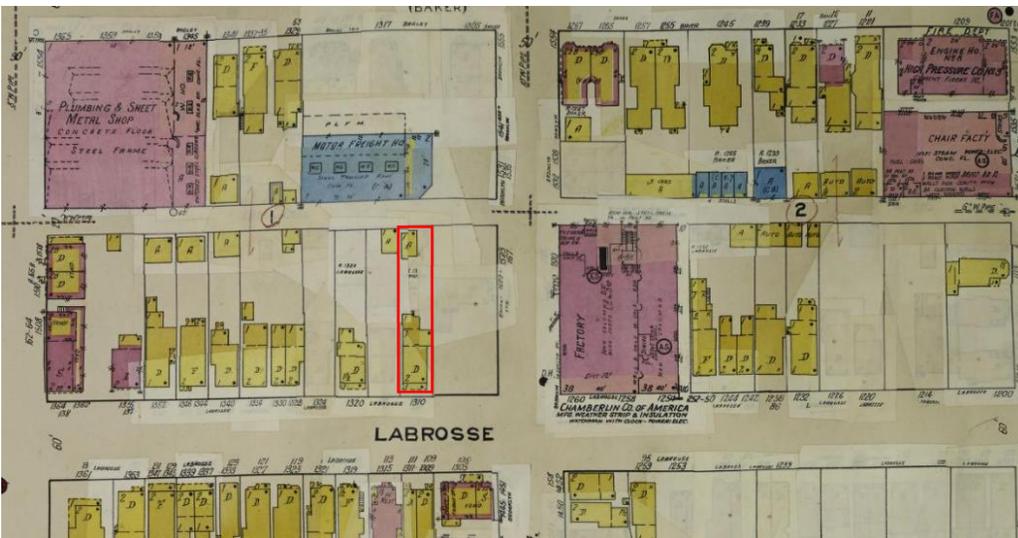
1310 Labrosse, Sanborn Map 1971

- The width of the new garage will be reduced by 2" vs the previously approved design. The depth of the new garage will increase by 1.6" vs the previously approved design. The height of the new design has been decreased by 1'-6".
- The new garage will be minimally visible from the public right of way due to the length of the home and the width of its rear additions, the close proximity of the home to the east of 1310

Labrosse (addressed as 1302 Labrosse), and the location of the 2-story home at 1511 Brooklyn (which largely blocks the view of 1310 Labrosse’s rear yard from Brooklyn) per the below aerial.



- The new garage will be located in roughly the same location as the existing concrete slab associated with the site’s former garage
- A review of historic Sanborn Maps indicate that a small, one-story garage was located in 1310 Labrosse’s rear yard as early as 1921. However, a review of Sanborn Maps of the wider neighborhood revealed that 1 ½-story and 2-story auxiliary buildings existed within rear yards in 1951 and earlier.



1310 Labrosse, Sanborn Map 1921 (revised in 1951)

- The roof form of the proposed new garage (gabled with full-depth shed-roof dormers) is not common within the neighborhood. However, as noted above, the building will not be readily visible from the public right of way as it is flanked by higher, recently constructed homes at 1511 Brooklyn and 1302 Labrosse. Also, it is noted that the height of the garage will be 1’-6” shorter than the height of the garage design that was approved by the Commission at the May 2022

meeting. It is staff's opinion that the proposed new garage design does not destroy historic materials that characterize the property and is generally compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features of the property's immediate surrounds despite the uncommon roof shape.

ISSUES

- Per the submission, the garage will be clad with textured cement fiberboard siding. It is staff's opinion that the proposed textured/faux wood-grain finish is incompatible with the neighborhood's historic character as wood grain is typically not visible on painted historic-age, lapped wood siding. Rather, such siding would display a smooth finish due to application of multiple layers of paint over time. Therefore, staff recommends that the siding display a smooth finish. Note that the applicant proposed that the garage be clad with textured cement fiberboard siding in their May 2022. The Commission did approve the previous garage design **but added a condition that it be clad with cement fiberboard siding with a smooth** per staff's recommendation.

RECOMMENDATION

Section 21-2-78, Determination of Historic District Commission

It is staff's opinion that the project generally conforms to the Elements of Design for the Corktown Historic District and meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work with the following conditions:

- The garage's cement fiber siding shall not display a textured/faux wood finish. Rather, the cement fiber siding shall have a smooth finish. Cement fiber siding with a textured/faux wood-grain finish is incompatible with the neighborhood's historic character as wood grain is typically not visible on painted historic-age, lapped wood siding. Rather, such siding would display a smooth finish due to application of multiple layers of paint over time.