

STAFF REPORT 05-10-2023 MEETING

PREPARED BY: G. LANDSBERG

APPLICATION NUMBER: 23-8325

ADDRESS: 2998 IROQUOIS

HISTORIC DISTRICT: INDIAN VILLAGE

APPLICANT/OWNER: PAT & LANA MURPHY/MURPHY FAMILY TRUST

ARCHITECT: ROBERT G. CLARKE/CBI DESIGN PROFESSIONALS

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 04-11-2023

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISITS: 04-19-2023, 04-20-2023, 05-04-2023, 05-05-2023

SCOPE: ERECT HOUSE

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The project site is a vacant lot on the east side the 2900 block of Iroquois Street in northern Indian Village between Charlevoix and Goethe Streets. This mid-block parcel, according to city records, is 105 feet wide by approximately 172 feet deep. Currently the subject property is a mowed lawn, with one elm tree of substantial size in the southwest portion of the parcel adjacent to a neighboring house. Non-historic fencing closes off the alley and the park beyond.



View of existing conditions at 2998 Iroquois, looking towards the east. Staff photo, May 5, 2023.

To the south is 2984 Iroquois, an eclectic arts and crafts style home which was designed by architect Roland C. Gies for Robert T. Herdegan and built in 1917. This 2½ story single-family dwelling features exposed aggregate stucco walls with wood casement and double-hung windows. The roof is cross-gabled with a central hip and features cedar shingles laid in a dramatic and character-defining ornamental pattern that resembles hay thatching (this well-known roof was replaced at considerable expense in 1993, according to HDC files).

To the immediate north of the subject property is another vacant parcel, currently for sale. Two additional houses are present on this block running north, a circa 1960 two-level contemporary house, and a circa 1936 brick neo-federal house at the corner with Goethe. Both of the houses to the north are somewhat smaller in scale than the other historic houses in the remaining block context; the corner house has a recent rear addition. Across the street from the subject property, on the west side of this block, are a complete row of pre-war historic houses

of varying design consistent with the general fabric of the district, with an emphasis on versions of the Neo-Georgian or Colonial Revival style.

Notably, the property is somewhat open to public view from the east from Mollicone Park, and across a vacated alley.



Detroit parcel viewer, 2998 Iroquois outlined in yellow.



Reverse view to the west, showing context across the street. Proposal site in foreground (mowed area). The tree to the left is the elm. The tree at center right is the street tree beyond the public sidewalk. Staff photo, May 5, 2023.



Sanborn map of conditions circa 1951. Approximate extents of subject property outlined in red. The contemporary home built circa 1960 does not yet appear to the north. Frame houses with brick veneer depicted in yellow; homes with a brick structure in red.



View to the south, showing neighboring houses. Staff photo, April 20, 2023.



View to the north showing last two houses on block. Staff photo, April 20, 2023.

PROPOSAL

Per the submitted drawings and narrative, the applicant is proposing to erect a single-family dwelling in a contemporary Colonial Revival style, with an attached garage.

The main bulk of the house, facing west, is centered by a traditional classically-inspired core of 2½ stories with a gable-end roof. Flanking it are three distinct gable-roofed masses mirroring the roof slope of the core; one to the north and two to the south, the latter two stepping down to accommodate the mass of the attached garage. The height of the top roof line is proposed to be approximately 32½ feet from grade.

The exterior material is proposed to be cement fiberboard siding recreating a wood clapboard expression. Subdivided double-hung windows are arranged symmetrically across the façade, with an arch-top window below a small pediment incorporated into the eave line. The windows feature shutters. The columned, flat-roof porch, crowned with a balustrade, projects forward from the main setback line. Secondary gabled roof lines at the flanking masses reach the approximate mid-point of the top story. The south side of the home incorporates a three-car garage. The rear of the home, to the east, is more contemporary in character and expressed as a single-story, incorporating two gabled ends and additional columns.

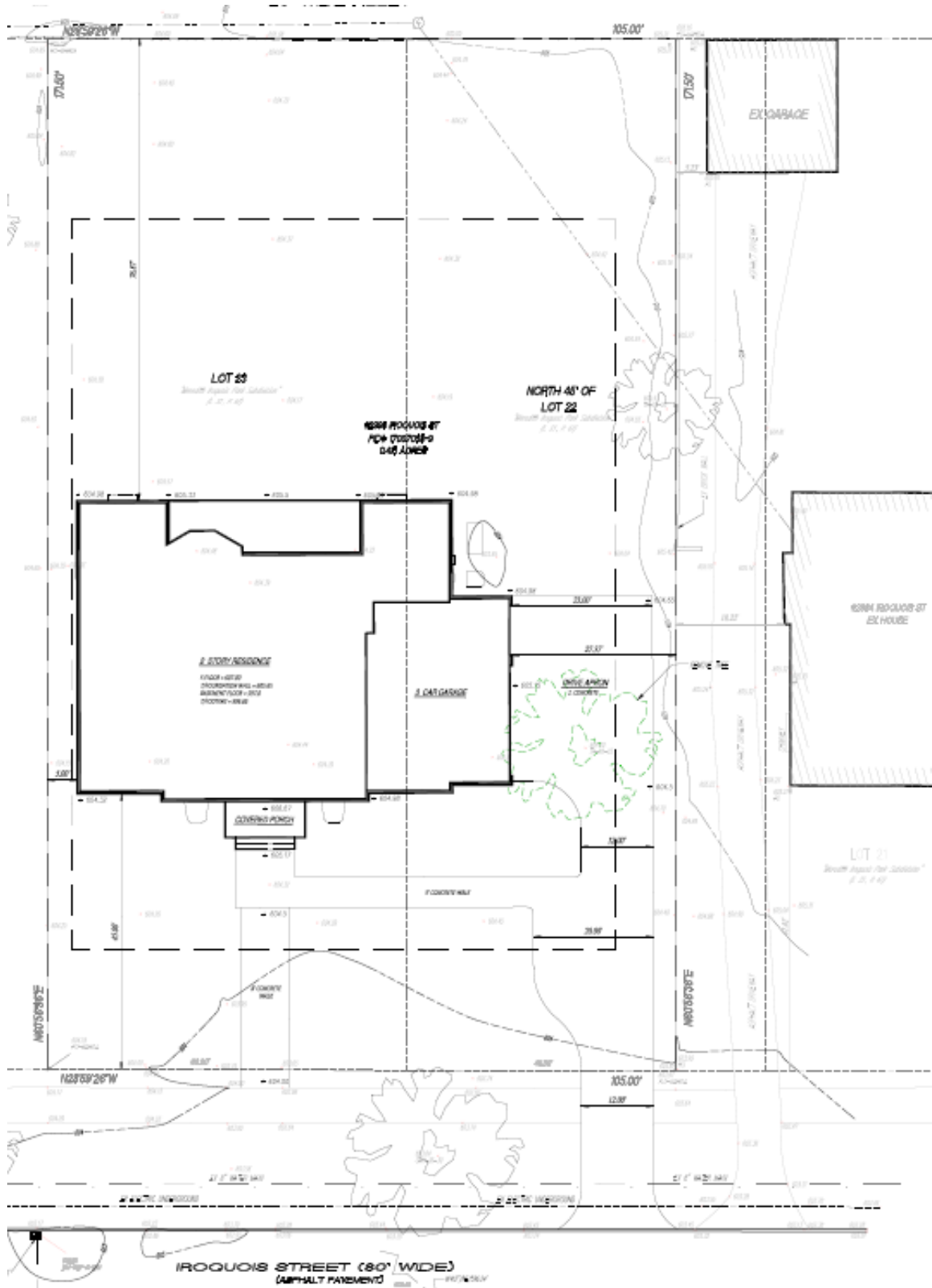
For the site, the applicant proposes a driveway of varying width leading to the south end garage, with a 5' concrete walk extending laterally to the front porch. An existing tree on site will be removed to accommodate the driveway apron. Another concrete walk, 8' in width, is proposed from the door to the street. Other than lawn areas, no additional landscaping is depicted.



Front (east) and side (south) elevations. Note projecting front porch. From submitted materials.



Renderings from NW (top) and SW (bottom). From submitted materials.



Survey/site plan. From submitted materials.



PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION

FINISH GRADE



Rear (west) and side (north) elevations. From submitted materials.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Indian Village Historic District is one of the city's oldest historic districts, established in 1970
- This particular property, despite being a vacant lot, has a notable history with respect to the early activities of Detroit's Historic District Commission. Staff believes the current members of the Commission may take interest in this historical context, which is unrelated to the current proposal. In the summer of 1977, an application for a new house (addressed as 3020 Iroquois, and centered across both vacant lots) was received for this property, which in turn prompted Mayor Coleman A. Young's first appointment of four Commissioners to create in reality the recently established Commission. Previously, decisions on applications in historic districts appear to have been handled by department staff under somewhat vague circumstances. Via a lawsuit filed by the Indian Village Association (IVA, now the HIVA) in 1977, the city finally seated a proper Commission and held the first public hearing of the Commission on February 7, 1978. In what appears to be the first ever substantive decision rendered by your body, the Commission voted two days later to issue a Denial for the proposal. The relevance to this current proposal is that the importance of the Elements of Design as design guidelines for new construction was firmly established (the Secretary of the Interior's Standards were not in force at this time). In testimony found in the Commission's records, the following excerpt from a statement made by Mr. Raymond Walsh, then President of the IVA, is notable:

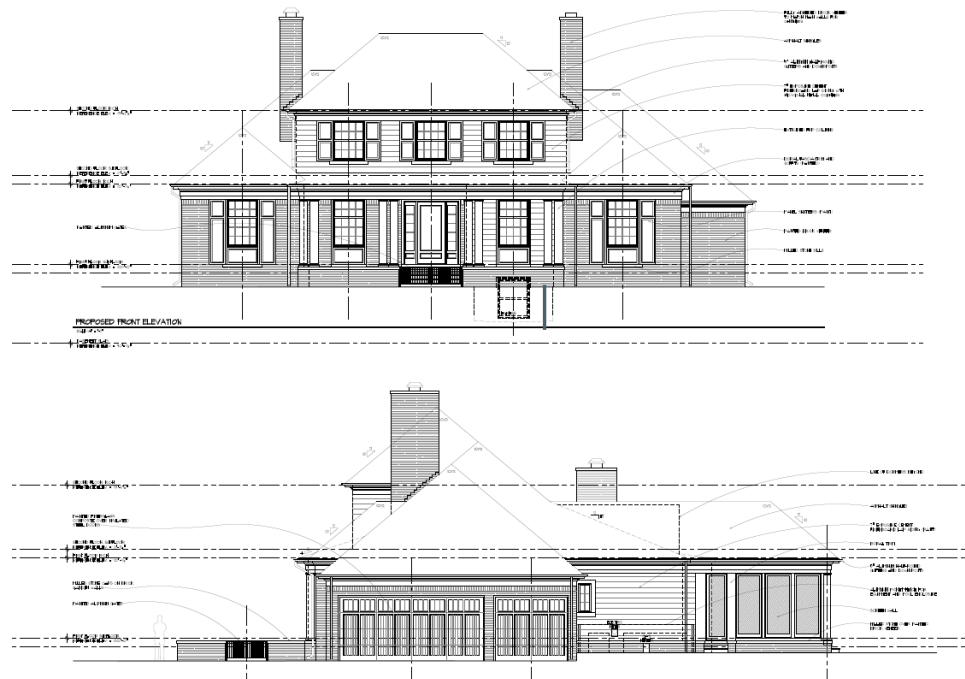
As the Indian Village Association sees the situation, the intention of the Ordinance and its restrictions, which are provided for the protection of historic districts is to provide for the creation of new construction which is compatible with the general character of the neighborhood. In any historic district, individual design features will exist in one or two examples which are not typical of the general character. If the use of the design element, which exists in one or two historical examples is permitted, using those examples as justification, there can be no control over the use of such singular features generally. This can lead to the creation of a design whose features do derive from various examples already existing, but whose totality is made up entirely of design elements atypical of the district.

- The Indian Village Elements of Design have been updated at least once subsequent to this long-ago episode, and among all of our district's Elements of Design these remain some of the most detailed and prescriptive in what new construction might be appropriate. Your body, under current rules, is required to use the Elements of Design in the context of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards. Given the prescriptive nature of these Elements, it is staff's recommendation that maximum conformance to the Elements in this review should be of particular concern to the Commission.
- Another historical footnote regarding new house construction in the district is worth reviewing by the Commission prior to analyzing the current application. Again, this is unrelated to the current proposal. In 1999, a new house was approved by your body on Seminole between Charlevoix and Goethe, a block to the west. This is the most recent new construction completed in the district. The as-built property has been criticized over the years for making certain gestures toward "contextuality" but otherwise detracting from the historic context as a derivative form clearly based on contemporary suburban prototypes. Staff assesses that it may have been conscientiously designed to "recede" in favor of the historic context, but in reality its stark expression, monotonous tone, and lack of stylistic distinction instead makes it more noticeable, in staff's opinion. The lack of foundation plantings (until quite recently) and other typical Indian Village landscaping (e.g., trees, hedges, planting beds) have further hindered its ability to age gracefully into the historic streetscape. Staff suggests that the Commission should take lessons from this less successful addition to the district in the context of the current review.



Most recent new house erected in the district, view to the west. Staff photo, May 4, 2023.

- Regarding the current proposal for 2998 Iroquois, staff met with the applicant team over the winter to discuss their preliminary proposal, shown below. Among other points, staff suggested that the proposal was too horizontal, and that a recessed porch was not consistent with the historic design elements selected. While expertly designed, the preliminary design (again, in staff’s opinion), did not fully conform to the Elements of Design, and expressed itself as a new house with traditional adornments, instead of a new house designed in the spirit of Indian Village homes.



Preliminary submission from this applicant. This is not the current design.

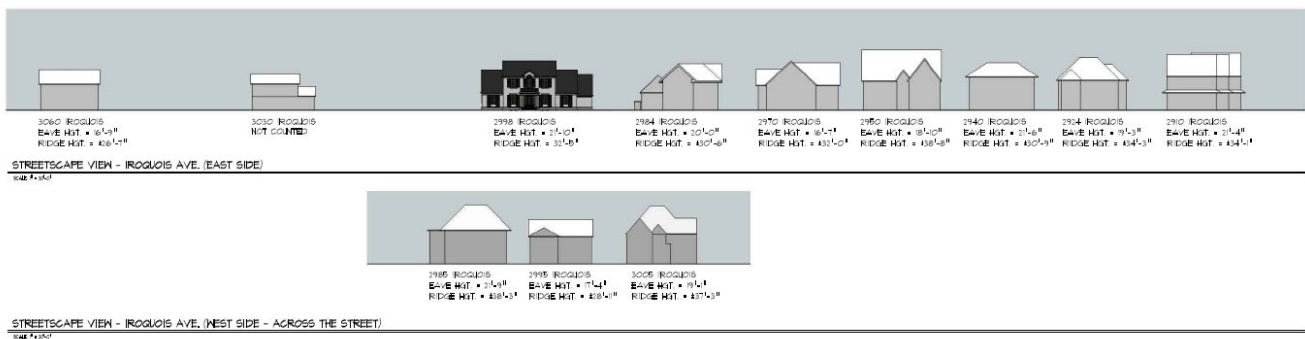
- The revised proposal for the Commission’s consideration addresses these issues, but may still need further revision to be in conformance with the Elements of Design. Note that the purposeful selection of a Colonial Revival design does, in staff’s opinion, require careful attention to the the major elements of this style (given the many prototypes in the district) than if a modern design had been proposed.
- Nearly all of the Elements of Design (as codified in Section 21-2-103 of the 2019 Detroit City Code) are relevant, given the particular character of the district’s building stock. However, it is still staff’s opinion that a proposal can be found to “conform” to the Elements, and satisfy the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards, without “checking every box.” Staff has responded individually to each of the Elements to offer a staff assessment concerning the current proposal. For each Element, the code language is presented in italics, followed by staff opinion with respect to the proposal.

- **Indian Village Element 1, Height:** *Virtually all of the houses in the district have two full stories plus attic or finished third floor within the roof. These are generally called 2½-story houses. Additions to existing buildings shall be related to the existing structure. New buildings shall meet the following standards:*

a. The eight adjoining houses on the same face, excluding any houses built since 1930, churches, schools and commercial structures, shall be used to determine an average height. If eight houses are not available on the same block face, then one or more houses as close as possible to being directly across the street from the proposed structure may be used. On East Jefferson Avenue, the five existing houses shall be used. The height of the two adjoining houses shall be added into the total twice, with a divisor of ten (seven on East Jefferson Avenue) used to determine the average. Any new building must have a height of the main roof of at least 80 percent of the resulting average. In no case shall a new building be taller than the tallest roof height included in the computation. In determining the height of existing structures and proposed structures, the highest point of the main roof shall be used, even where towers, cupolas, or other minor elements may be higher.

b. The level of the eaves of a proposed new structure having as much or more significance for compatibility as the room height, an average eave or cornice height shall be determined by the same process provided for in Subsection (c)(1)a of this section. The proposed new structure shall have a height at the eaves or cornice, of not less than 90 percent 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, or higher than the highest.

- **HDC Staff Assessment:** The proposal at 2998 Iroquois shows a top of roof height of approximately 32½ feet above grade. The architect has prepared a block elevation as part of the drawing set showing the proposed roof and eave height with respect to the neighboring homes, excepting the non-contributing 3030 Iroquois to the north. An excerpt is shown below. Staff assesses that this Element of Design has been satisfied.



Block length elevations showing roof heights, eaves, and massing. From submitted materials.

- **Indian Village Element 2, Proportion of buildings’ front facades:** *Proportion varies in the*

district, depending on age, style, and location in a specific subdivision. Height being established by the standards in Subsection (c)(1) of this section; proportion will be established by permitting no proposed building or addition to create a front façade wider or narrower than those existing on the same block..

- **HDC Staff Assessment:** The front façade of 2998 Iroquois, if considered to be limited to the “core” Colonial Revival mass, is assessed by staff as compatible with the historic context. However, the flanking subordinate masses to each side (the “dependencies”) are only slightly stepped back from the setback line of the main façade. If the subordinate masses are assessed as part of the “front façade” per this Element, the front would be wider than the other homes on the block. This “horizontalizing” effect may be lessened by adjustments to the prominent roofs of the subordinate masses, discussed below.

- ***Indian Village Element 3, Proportion of openings within the facades:*** *Window openings are virtually always taller than wide; several windows are sometimes grouped into a combination wider than tall. Window openings are always subdivided, the most common window type being guillotine sash, whose area are generally further subdivided by muntins. Façades have approximately 15 percent to 35 percent of their area glazed. Sunporches with a very high proportion of glass subdivided by mullions and muntins are common.*
- **HDC Staff Assessment:** The proposal at 2998 Iroquois has openings that are taller than wide, and features a arch-top window as a central design feature. These have ample precedent in the district and satisfy this Element. The flanking subordinate masses on Colonial Revival houses, discussed further below, are more typically designed as sunporches with multiple windows (i.e., a “high proportion of glass” per the ordinance language) in the district. Incorporating a single “punched” windows in these “dependencies” is somewhat atypical, and visually stretches the first story into a horizontal expression, as noted under Element 2 above.

- ***Indian Village Element 4, Rhythm of solids to voids in front facades:*** *In buildings derived from classical precedents, voids are usually arranged in a symmetrical and evenly spaced manner within the façade. In examples of other styles, especially those of Neo-Tudor and Victorian substyles, voids are arranged with more freedom, but usually is a balanced composition.*
- **HDC Staff Assessment:** The rhythm of solids to voids proposed for 2998 Iroquois is symmetrical and balanced, appropriate for a house of classical character and conceptually similar to many historic precedents in the district. The dependencies would benefit from greater void areas (i.e., more windows), for reasons discussed under other Elements above.

- ***Indian Village Element 5, Rhythm of spacing of buildings on streets:*** *The spacing of the buildings is generally determined by the setback from the side lot lines; these tend to be consistent, even though lot width may vary. Because of the existence of several subdivisions and their related subdivision and deed restrictions, the placement of buildings on lots varies from area to area in the district. In the case of very wide properties, two conditions exist. A very wide site may have a house placed centrally upon it, with extensive side yard space; this occurs only with extremely large houses by district standards. A more typical placement of houses of average size for the district is at the side of the wide site, placed normally in relation to one of the adjoining houses. The rest of the property is a side yard on the other side of the house, and the entrance is often oriented toward that side yard.*
- **HDC Staff Assessment:** The proposal at 2998 Iroquois is of sufficient width and bulk for its 100’ lot, and, as positioned in alignment with its neighbor to the south, continues the rhythm established by the historic houses on the block. Staff assesses that this Element has been satisfied.

- ***Indian Village Element 6, Rhythm of entrance and/or porch projections:*** *In those examples of classical inspiration, entrances and porches, if any, tend to be centered on the front façade. Other examples display more freedom with entrance and porch placement, with some having*

the main entrance at the side. Porches, often permanently enclosed sun porches, are often placed at the side of the building.

- **HDC Staff Assessment:** The proposal for 2998 Iroquois, a Colonial Revival design based on classical precedents, has a centered front porch projecting forward from the main façade/setback line, consistent with many neighborhood examples. A change from a recessed porch offered in the preliminary design was made at staff request. Staff assesses that this Element has been satisfied.

- **Indian Village Element 7, Relationship of materials:** *The majority of the buildings are faced with brick, while many are partially or totally stucco. There are some stone buildings; clapboard is rare, and almost never the sole material. Wood shingle is occasionally used as a wall covering, usually at the second floor level, and never as the sole material. Roofing includes slate, tile, and wooden and asphalt shingles. 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. Because of the existence of several subdivisions and their related deed restrictions, the exterior textures and materials may vary from block to block in the district.*

- **HDC Staff Assessment:** The proposal for 2998 Iroquois is almost exclusively of a cement fiberboard siding, a manufactured product meant to give the impression of clapboard. Boral trim (a polymer based product) is proposed in favor of traditional wood trim at the fascias. Artificial siding has a different texture and sheen than true wood, and weathers/wears differently over the years. When marked or scratched, it will take damage differently than wood. Its ability to be repainted over decades is not established, in staff's opinion. It is unlikely to age in ways similar to the true wood found on neighboring prototypes, limiting its ability to blend into the streetscape over subsequent decades. As a large home, the majority of wall surface on four elevations will be clad with this modern product. This siding profile dimensions/thickness of lapped fiber cement siding is typically too thin and does not adequately replicate a traditional lapped wood siding, which will result in an incompatible "flatness" when applied over the large wall surfaces. In some applications of these products, the lengths are shorter than traditional siding, requiring more (and more obvious) joints across the façade. In coming decades, inevitable partial repairs will be particularly noticeable, and unable to be executed with a wood "dutchman" as historic prototypes are. Larger repairs at some point decades hence may require the choice of an altogether different manufactured product if the current product becomes unavailable. Therefore, in staff's assessment, the proposed materials do not satisfy this Element. The clapboard should be of traditional wood for a primary structure in this district. Similarly all other traditionally wood elements, including window trim and the front door (as proposed), should be executed in wood.

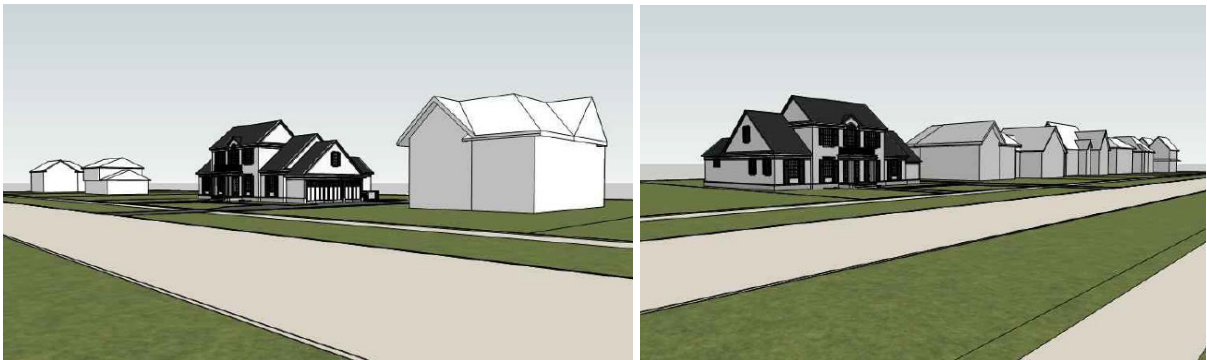
- **Indian Village Element 8, Relationship of textures:** *The most common relationship of textures in the district is that of the low-relief pattern of mortar joints in brick contrasted to the smooth surface of wood or stone trim. The use of stucco or concrete, with or without half-timbering, as a contrast 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.*



Examples of historic wood clapboard homes in Indian Village Historic District. Staff photos, May 4, 2023.

- **HDC Staff Assessment:** The proposal for 2998 Iroquois, in staff's opinion, does not satisfy this Element due to the use of a cement fiberboard siding product, already discussed under Element #7 above. There are several wood-sided Colonial Revival houses in the district, in their entirety or at the primary facades. A siding exposure of 7" is also appropriate, as several different exposures are used on the various neighborhood prototypes. Revision to wood siding, instead of cement fiberboard siding, would satisfy this Element.
- **Indian Village Element 9, Relationship of colors:** *Natural brick colors (red, yellow, brown, buff) predominate in wall surfaces. Natural stone colors also exist. Where stucco or concrete exists, it is usually left in its natural state, or painted in a shade of cream. Roofs are in natural colors (tile and slate colors, wood colors) and asphalt shingles are predominantly within this same dark color range. Paint colors often relate to style. The classically inspired buildings, particularly Neo-Georgian, 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 buildings of this type in the 18th Century or early 19th Century on similar buildings may be considered for suitability. Buildings of Medieval inspiration (notably Neo-Tudor) generally have painted woodwork and window frames of dark brown or cream color. Half-timbering is almost always stained dark brown. Queen Anne or Late Victorian examples may have several paint colors on a single façade. These tend to be dark in tone and frequently of the earth tone family. The original colors of any house, as determined by professional analysis, are always acceptable for that house, and may provide suggestions for similar houses.*
- **HDC Staff Assessment:** The proposal for 2998 Iroquois is rendered in white tones, though no product selection is given. White (specifically, yellowish-white per Color System C) would be appropriate, though as a painted finish on wood; material and texture are discussed separately above under Elements 7 and 8.

- **Indian Village Element 10, Relationship of architectural details:** *These generally relate to style. Neo-Georgian buildings display classic details, mostly in wood, and sometimes in stone. Areas commonly, but not always, treated are porches, shutters, window frames, cornices, and dormer windows. Details on Mediterranean style or vernacular buildings are often done in stone, brick, tile, and sometimes in stucco. They include arched windows, door openings, and porches. Buildings of Medieval inspiration tend to have details in the form of carved wood or carved stone ornament on window frames, door frames, and eaves. Queen Anne or Late Victorian style buildings tend to have details in wood, stone, or molded brick commonly embellishing cornices, window frames and door frames. In general, the various styles are rich in architectural details*
- **HDC Staff Assessment:** The proposal for 2998 Iroquois includes a variety of cement fiberboard, polymer-based, and PVC elements where wood details would traditionally occur. In the case of columns, the Commission has previously accepted PVC as economically feasible alternatives to hand-crafted wood columns for historic homes. However, staff assesses that the remainder of the trim could feasibly be, and should appropriately be executed in wood, consistent with the requirements and expectations for the historic homes. See also Element #7.
- **Indian Village Element 11, Relationship of roof shapes:** *Roofs with triangular gables and hip roofs predominate. A few examples of the gambrel-type roof exist. Complex arrangements of the gabled and/or hip types, with subsidiary roofs, are not unusual. Dormers are common. Flat roofs exist primarily on porches and sunrooms, and other minor elements; large hip roofs sometimes have relatively small flat sections in the center.*



- **HDC Staff Assessment:** The proposal for 2998 Iroquois has too many similarly gabled roof lines, in staff's opinion, especially within the limits of a classically-inspired design. Four different roofs "echo" each other at varying levels in a manner inconsistent with Neo-Georgian precedents. The resultant effect is somewhat of a mash-up between a Colonial Revival core and modern "ranch"-style book-ends. Historic Neo-Georgian houses with flanking "dependencies" (i.e., the subordinate masses to the main central mass, commonly sun rooms or sun porches) are typically flat-roofed, or low slope at most. The pronounced steep gables of the flanking masses in the proposal, in staff's opinion, do not meet this Element's requirements, as they create a horizontal effect that conflicts with the primacy of the central block and detract. The few examples of pitched roof subordinate masses in Indian Village are on much larger houses, and thereby do not conflict with the main mass. Although dormers are common in the district, and on Colonial Revival precedents, there are enough examples of houses without them for the proposed main roof design to be appropriate.



Rare examples of houses with “high-roof” subordinate dependencies in Indian Village Historic District. Two are very large houses and one is a non-contributing modern structure. Note that the gambrel house with the gambrel dependency has a flat-roofed sunroom on the opposite side (last photo). All high-roof subordinates are atypical and, in staff’s assessment, not applicable to the current case. Staff photos, May 4, 2023.



Examples of nearby Colonial Revival houses with flat or low slope roof “dependencies,” indicated by arrows. Note that such subordinate masses are typically designed as sunrooms with multiple windows, or open porches, and can be 1 or 2 stories in height. The top two examples are directly across from the project site. Others are within two blocks. Staff photos, May 5, 2023.

- **Indian Village Element 12, Walls of continuity:** 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. Where gaslights are sufficiently numerous, and where trees in rows have survived in sufficient numbers, minor walls of continuity are created. Fences across side lots contribute to the major wall of continuity where placed at the front yard setback line.
- **HDC Staff Assessment:** The proposal for 2998 Iroquois carries the wall of continuity created by the adjacent historic homes and satisfies this Element.
- **Indian Village Element 13, Relationship of significant landscape features and surface treatments:** The typical treatment of individual properties is a flat front lawn area in grass turf, often subdivided by a walk leading to the front entrance, and sometimes with a walk at the side leading to the rear. Materials for such walks are concrete, brick, or 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 brick and/or stone retaining walls at the change of grade. Foundation plantings, often of a deciduous character, characteristic of the period 1895 to 1930, are present virtually without exception. Hedges between properties, and ornamental front yard fences or hedges are not uncommon. The American elm is virtually extinct in the district, though once the dominant tree. Replacement trees should be characteristic of the area and period, though only a disease-resistant American elm would be a practical choice. Plantings of new trees should be directed toward the restoration of the former straight-line rows of large trees on the front yards and tree lawns. Straight side driveways leading from the street to rear garages exist, but alley-facing garages are common, particularly in the southern portion of the district. Where alley-facing garages are

common, the lack of driveways lends a unity to the succession of front lawns. Driveway materials include concrete, brick and gravel. Side lots are not uncommon 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, often fenced at or near the setback line, and very occasionally contain paved areas such as a tennis court. The street right-of-way of 80 feet combined with a pavement width of between 24 and 29 feet creates wide tree lawns or berm areas, which adds to the generous ambience of the urban landscape of the district. Street pavements are now asphalt; cut stone curbs still exist in portions of the district. Alleys are frequently paved with brick, particularly where alley-facing garages are common. Fencing ranges widely in type; fencing in public view was generally designed to compliment the style, design material, and date of the residence.

- **HDC Staff Assessment:** The proposal for 2998 Iroquois is devoid of landscape elements, excepting a note that it will be “primarily lawn” in the applicant’s submitted narrative (letter). One existing tree is to be felled to accommodate the driveway. The proposed landscape is not adequate and this Element has not been satisfactorily met. Robust foundation plantings, and locations for new shade trees, including in the front yard to continue existing block patterns, should be added to the scope of work, at a minimum. Additional hedges, shrubs, and planting beds may be necessary to fully integrate the house into the historic context. Additionally, the northward “bump-out” of the driveway (just prior to the lateral walk) is inconsistent with existing driveways and should be eliminated.
- ***Indian Village Element 14, Relationship of open space to structures:*** *Open space in the district occurs in the form of vacant land, a City park, school yards for the Waldorf and Nichols Schools, and side lots. Where an original or early arrangement of a 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.*
- **HDC Staff Assessment:** This element does not apply to the subject parcel, as it is proposed to be developed with a house.
- ***Indian Village Element 15, Scale of facades and façade elements:*** *There is a variety in scale from block to block and style to style; most houses have a large and substantial appearance. The size and complexity of façade elements and details either accentuate or subdue the scale of the façades. Façade elements have been determined by what is appropriate for the style. Large wings at the front are atypical, while small wings at the side, usually in the form of sunrooms and sunporches, are common. Window sashes are usually subdivided by muntins, which affect the apparent scale of the windows within the façades.*
- **HDC Staff Assessment:** The proposal for 2998 Iroquois has a façade derived from Colonial Revival features and includes adequate elements. The house has a large and substantial appearance. However, as discussed above, the flanking subordinate wings or “dependencies” are problematic due to their design integration with the 1st story main façade (introducing a horizontal effect) and the prominence of their gabled roofs. Modifying these elements into multi-windowed, flat-roofed sun rooms, would address this deficiency.
- ***Indian Village Element 16, Directional expression of front elevations:*** *In general, the expression of direction is neutral.*
- **HDC Staff Assessment:** The proposal for 2998 Iroquois has a strong vertical expression in the main 2½ story core but is counterbalanced by the horizontality introduced by the flanking masses, to a degree that neutrality is not achieved. As discussed under other Elements above, revision of the large subordinate gable roofs would help address this deficiency.
- ***Indian Village Element 17, Rhythm of building setbacks:*** *Because of the existence of various subdivisions and their related subdivision and deed restrictions, setbacks vary from area to area within the district, though they are consistent within each block or area. The varying designs of the houses, occasionally with slight setbacks in the façades, 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.

- **HDC Staff Assessment:** The proposal for 2998 Iroquois shows a 45’ setback from the property line, which is depicted as consistent with the neighboring properties, thus satisfying this Element.
 - ***Indian Village Element 18, Relationship of lot coverage:*** *Lot coverage ranges from 50 percent to 12 percent or less in the case of homes with large yards. Most homes are in the 20 percent to 30 percent range of lot coverage..*
 - **HDC Staff Assessment:** The proposal for 2998 Iroquois is for a large footprint house on a large, but typical, 100’ wide Indian Village parcel. This Element is satisfied.
 - ***Indian Village Element 19, Degree of complexity within the façade:*** *The degree of complexity has been determined by what is typical and appropriate for a given style. The classically inspired buildings usually have simple, rectangular façades with varying amounts of ornamentation. Other styles, such as Queen Anne and those of Medieval inspiration, frequently have façades complicated by gables, bays, slight setbacks, porches, and occasionally, turrets.*
 - **HDC Staff Assessment:** The proposal for 2998 Iroquois, as a classically inspired Colonial Revival design, incorporates a rectangular main façade with satisfactory complexity within the façade elements.
 - ***Indian Village Element 20, Orientation, vistas, overviews:*** *While most of the buildings are oriented toward the street, it is not unusual for an entrance to face the side, especially in the case of a landscaped side lot or corner house. The street façade in these cases is well coordinated with the rest of the street façades. Garages are frequently oriented either toward an alley or a side street; almost all garages are detached and at the rear of the lot. In those few cases where pre-1930 houses have attached garages, they are at the rear and are entered from the side or rear. The doors of such attached garages are generally not visible from the street.*
 - **HDC Staff Assessment:** The proposal for 2998 Iroquois features a 3-car attached garage which has high visibility from the sidewalk. The proposed garage doors are high quality insulated steel and of a traditional design. Staff assesses that while an attached garage is reasonably appropriate for a new construction house, additional design work is necessary to limit visibility. Permanent landscape elements, including hedges, may be an acceptable approach.
 - ***Indian Village Element 21, Symmetric or asymmetric appearance:*** *Neo-Georgian and other classically inspired buildings are generally symmetrical. Other styles, including the Neo-Tudor, are generally asymmetrical, but balanced compositions.*
 - **HDC Staff Assessment:** On balance, the home has an acceptable symmetry that is anchored by the Colonial Revival core.
 - ***Indian Village Element 22, General environmental character:*** *The Indian Village Historic District, with its long, straight streets, its hierarchy of walls of continuity (lamps, trees, buildings) and its large, dignified homes, has an urban, substantial, low density residential character..*
 - **HDC Staff Assessment:** The proposal for 2998 Iroquois is for a substantial modern home based on Colonial Revival precedents, and is clearly based in Indian Village prototypes. The composition and features, though falling short of certain prescribed elements above, is dignified. Additional elements, including trees, are necessary to fully realize the “hierarchy of walls” established in this Element.
- As noted above, the applicant has selected to propose a house in a Colonial Revival style. As a contextual choice, this could hardly be argued as inappropriate in a neighborhood filled with such homes. However, the choice of a distinct historic style, as opposed to a contemporary style that might otherwise meet the Elements of Design, does in staff’s opinion limit certain design options for the various building elements. Several Elements of Design analyzed above (e.g., 4, 6, 9, 10, 15, 19, and 21)

reference specific expectations for buildings of classical, Neo-Georgian, or Colonial Revival precedent, which would apply in this case.

- The choice of fiberglass windows, the Marvin Elevate line with simulated divided lites, is in staff's opinion appropriate as these are high quality windows which have the ability to reproduce historic profiles, and the home is of new construction. Wood windows would also be appropriate. Where no historic windows exist on historic houses, the Commission has previously approved high-quality aluminum-clad or fiberglass windows, along with wood, under NPS guidelines. As opposed to the clapboard siding, requiring modern wood windows, in staff's opinion, would not markedly change the appropriateness of the proposal, as any feasible new/replacement windows are now factory-manufactured products with certain design limitations. This is a different analysis than the replacement of historic wood windows on a historic house.
- Staff has no issues with the design for the rear, which features a more contemporary arrangement of traditional elements. Additional shade trees should be considered for the backyard.

ISSUES

- Consistent with the analysis given above, staff identifies these deficiencies with the proposal:
 - The flanking subordinate masses, both in the design of a single punched window and very prominent and repeatedly gabled roof lines, suggest a horizontality that is inconsistent with Neo-Georgian precedents described in the Elements of Design. Revision to these areas, while retaining bulk and floor area, could include incorporating banks of windows similar to many existing sun rooms in the neighborhood, flat roofs, and increased setback from the principal façade. Should the interior 2nd story space be needed, a 1-story mass could be raised to 2-stories, with a flat roof.
 - The proposed primary exterior material, cement fiberboard siding, merely mimics a historically appropriate material (i.e., wood) and finish (i.e., paint) which is otherwise still feasible and available. Although the use of certain modern products like cementitious siding has found staff recommendation for accessory structures (e.g., garages) and even primary structures in other historic districts, in staff's opinion such artificial siding is inconsistent with the traditional materials *used in traditional ways* which are a hallmark of this particular district, especially when used in a key neighborhood style like Colonial Revival. Traditional wood siding should be specified for areas of clapboard and the majority of trim elements, including window frames, fascias, soffits, and other ornamental features, excepting only the porch columns.
 - The visibility of the attached garage doors should be reduced, while still allowing the mass of the garage to contribute to the bulk of the home. They should be finished in a dark color selected from Color System C, to further reduce their visual impact.
 - The landscape proposal is insufficient, and should be revised to include foundation plantings, trees, and other ornamental specimens consistent with nearby properties. Tree canopy and robust plantings are a key design element in staff's opinion, and will help the new property integrate into the historic context as the plantings grow in. The driveway should not be widened to 20' and should remain 12' forward (west) of the setback line.
- In the opinion of staff, the above issues should be resolved before a finding of appropriateness is made. Staff has offered, consistent with recent precedent, an approval recommendation with several substantial conditions subject to additional staff-level review and approval. If the Commission happens to agree with staff's issues, but wishes to review a revised design subject to another public hearing, the body should issue a Denial instead, with the issues outlined above (or as otherwise identified by the Commission during your review) stated as reasons for the Denial. A third option may be to issue a COA subject to final approval by an ad-hoc Committee, composed of one or more licensed architects from the Commission's membership, with authority to approve a final design consistent with any changes requested by your body.

RECOMMENDATION

Section 21-2-73, Issuance of Certificate of Appropriateness

Staff recommends that the proposal should qualify for a Certificate of Appropriateness, as it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and the Indian Village Historic District's Elements of Design, contingent on staff review and approval of changes satisfying these conditions:

- Traditional wood siding, with traditional detailing and paint, shall be used in areas of clapboard siding
- Painted wood shall be used in all areas for trim, including but not limited to shutters, window frames, fascias, and soffits, excepting only the porch columns. The front door and side lights shall be wood.
- Painted elements, to include the wood clapboard, shall be per Color System C for Colonial Revival houses
- The roof shapes of the flanking masses shall be revised to be flat or low-slope, and not duplicating the gable of the primary mass. Such revision may create a two-story subordinate structure out of one of the flanking masses.
- The flanking masses shall be revised to break or recede visually from the primary Colonial Revival façade, possibly with increased setback and groupings of vertically-oriented windows similar to sun rooms that flank historic prototypes
- A formal landscape design shall be submitted, to include foundation plantings and at least two shade trees and other ornamental specimens at the front and/or sides of the house. The driveway shall be straightened and consistently 12' wide to eliminate the 20' wide bump-out west of the 5' concrete walk.