

SUPPLEMENTARY STAFF REPORT 06-14-2023 MEETING PREPARED BY: G. LANDSBERG
APPLICATION NUMBER: 23-8325 (TABLED AT 5-10-2023 MEETING, PENDING REVISIONS)
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, revisions 06-02-2023
DATE OF STAFF SITE VISITS: 04-19-2023, 04-20-2023, 05-04-2023, 05-05-2023, 06-02-2023

SCOPE: ERECT HOUSE AND GARAGE (REVISIONS TO APPLICATION #23-8325, TABLED 05-10-2023)



View of existing conditions at 2998 Iroquois, looking towards the southeast. Elm tree at center right. Staff photo, June 2, 2023.

BACKGROUND

The subject application was discussed by the Historic District Commission at the May 2023 Meeting. The original staff report recommended some revisions to the proposal to bring it in conformance with the Elements of Design. Members of the public, both during the Public Hearing and in writing, also objected to some features of the application. After discussion, and with the concurrence of the applicant, the Commission tabled the application pending the submission of formal revisions.

This brief supplementary staff report should be reviewed in tandem with the original staff report, and does not include all of the discussion necessary for the Commission to understand the entire project.

PROPOSAL REVISIONS

The architect has made the following *revisions* to the application in response to comments and direction from the Historic District Commission, per the applicant:

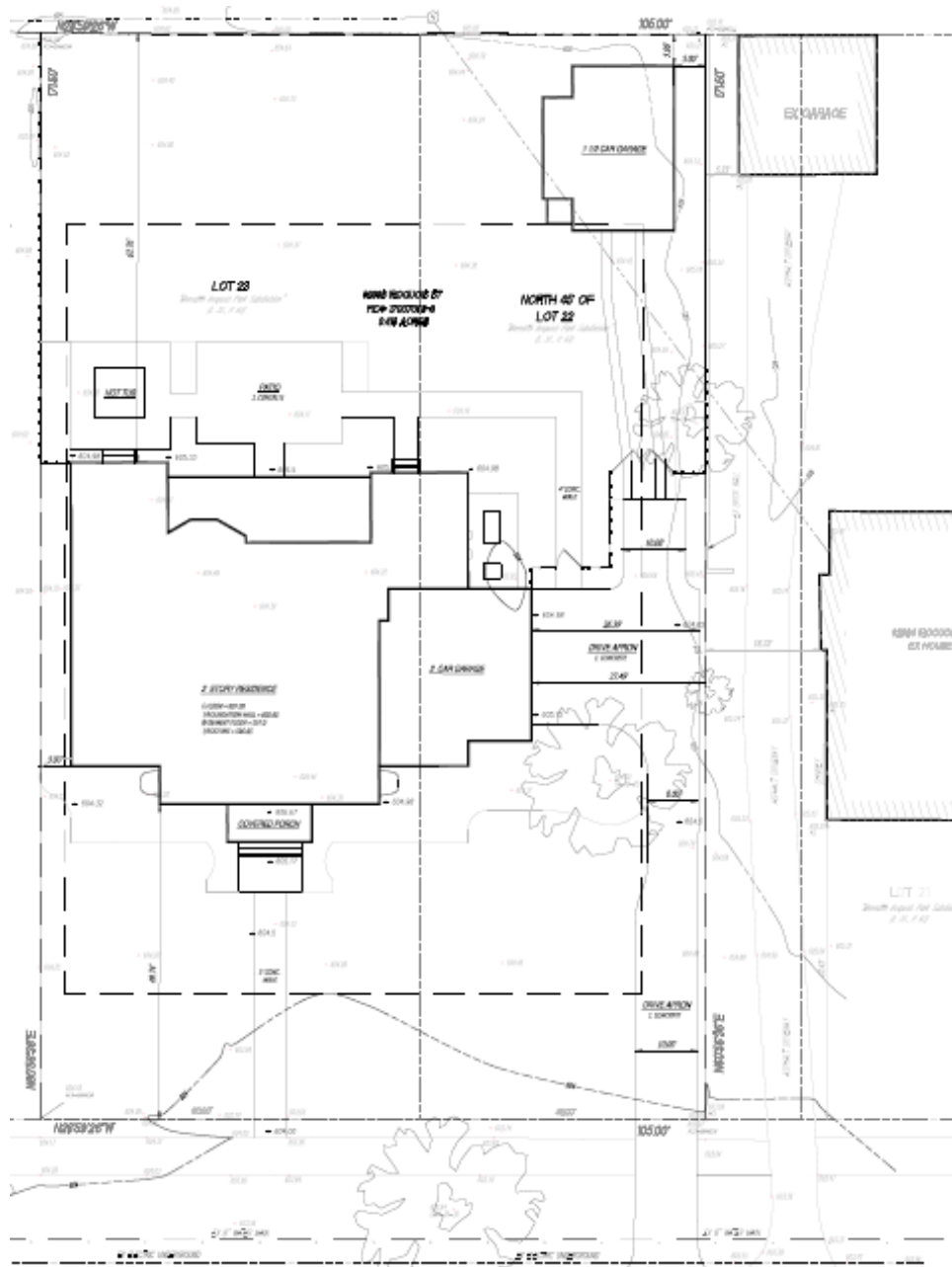
- *Existing Elm Tree: we are now proposing to keep this tree, made possible by shifting the footprint of the house back and pushing the drive closer to the property line.*
- *We evaluated reversing the house footprint but it would actually make the elm impossible to save (master bedroom would be on top of tree)*
- *Landscape Plan – we have added a complete landscape plan as well as updated our 3D renderings to include the landscape materials*
- *2-Car Attached Garage – we have removed one car bay and located it at the rear of the yard as a detached garage. Reducing the garage footprint also helped to save the elm tree.*
- *Removed walk from driveway to front porch – only walk from front porch straight to public sidewalk now*
- *Pushed side “wings” back – these are the single-story living areas on either side of the center two-story area. Pushing them back from 1’-4” to 6’-0” allowed us to locate the window wells on the sides as well as creating more relief to the front façade*
- *Changes to 2nd floor windows & added attic windows to gable ends*
- *Master suite front windows updated to have more of a sunroom character*
- *Materials:*
 - *Siding has been updated to a cedar lap siding (painted)*
 - *Color selections made for exterior painted finishes (paying attention to historic colors)*
 - *Railing & balustrade updated to a real wood material (previously PVC)*
 - *Overhead garage doors – color updated to a color match for historic black*



Front (east) and side (south) elevations. From revised materials.



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

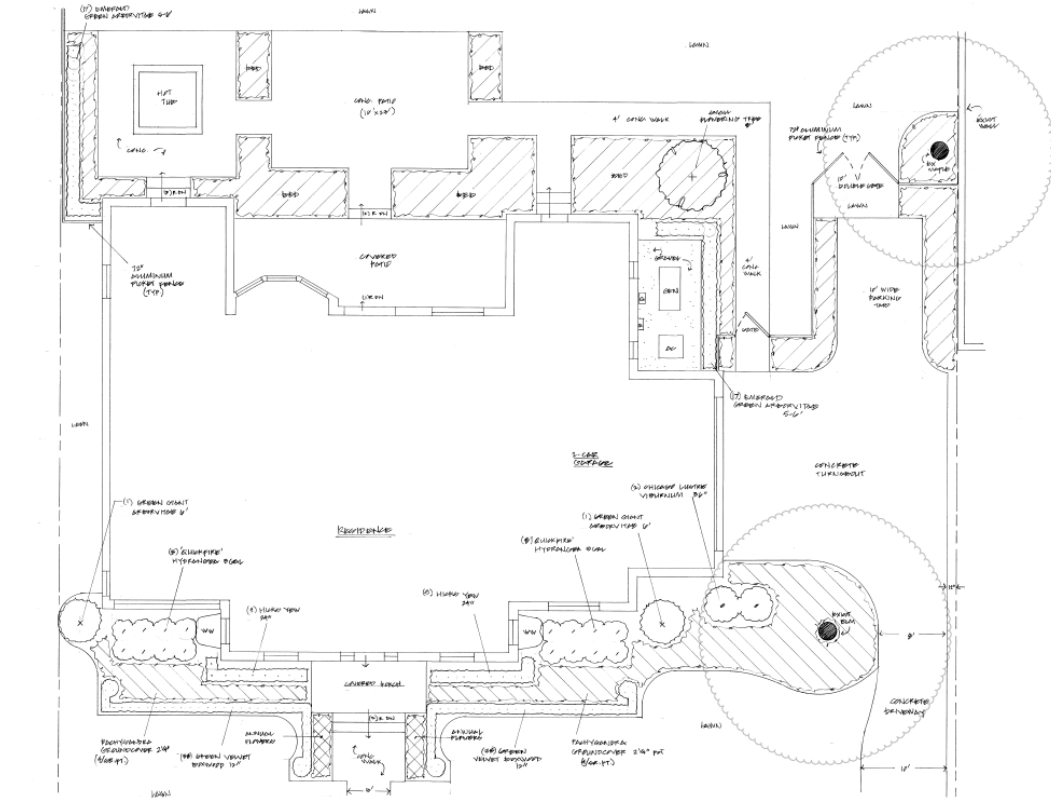


Survey/site plan. From revised materials.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

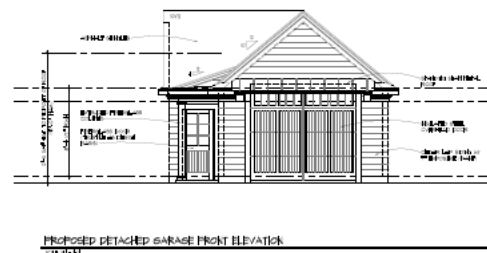
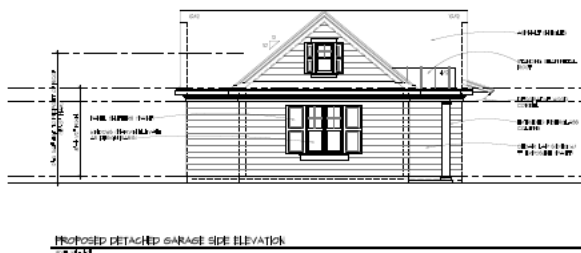
- Additional staff analysis in this report will be limited to the revisions, and whether those changes, in staff's opinion, make the project worthy of recommendation for a Certificate of Appropriateness based on the comprehensive analysis presented in the original May 2023 report. Staff concerns in the previous report, generally included the following points, which are discussed in subsequent paragraphs:
 - Landscape plan/preservation of the existing Elm tree
 - The use of artificial products, including cementitious siding, instead of true wood
 - Flanking subordinate masses/horizontality of main façade
 - Visibility of the three-car garage, color choices
- **Landscape plan.** A formal landscape design has now been submitted, which includes foundation plantings and a wide variety of ornamental specimens at all sides of the house. The elm tree, instead of being removed, has now been preserved and established as an anchoring element of a planting bed that

sweeps southward towards the relocated driveway. The façade now recedes slightly from the setback line. The driveway itself has been straightened and the extra path has been removed.



New landscape plan. Note prominence of preserved elm and robust foundation plantings. From revised materials.

- **Siding/trim materials.** Cedar wood siding (painted) is now proposed for all clapboard siding. Trim boards will be true wood. Paint will be C:4, Yellowish-White- per Color System C for Colonial Revival houses
- **Flanking masses.** The subordinate flanking masses have been substantially revised. Their gable ends have been reduced to hip roofs, and they now recede visually. Banks of vertically-oriented windows make these wings independent from the central mass, while nodding to nearby historic prototypes.
- **Garage.** The attached garage has been reduced from three doors to two doors, which are now proposed in a darker color. An additional small detached garage, constructed of cedar lap siding and sharing the vocabulary of the main house, is proposed for the rear of the lot. The net effect of these changes reduces the visual impact of the attached garage by incorporating an accessory building appropriate to neighborhood precedent.



New garage proposed for rear of lot, side and front elevations. From revised materials.

ISSUES

- In staff's opinion, the substantial revisions to the design address the concerns raised by staff and the Commission at the May 2023 Regular Meeting. Constructing a new house in a storied historic neighborhood is a challenging endeavor, and professional staff recognizes that no new construction could feasibly reproduce the scale, quality and craftsmanship of the historic houses in this district. However, it is a key principle of modern historic district administration that changes and new construction are anticipated and welcomed; this of course is the reason that the Historic District Commission exists. The Commission's task is to manage change, not to prevent it. The proposal employs high quality materials, conforms to the Elements of Design to a degree rarely seen in the Commission's many applications, and violates none of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards or National Park Service Guidelines that are the statutory basis of the Commission's reviews. There is no requirement in any of the Commission's standards of review that require a new house to be indistinguishable from its historic context or meet an extraordinarily high standard of verisimilitude with its context; quite the contrary, feasibility, reasonableness, and an allowance for modern design are well-understood approaches in the interpretation of the Standards, as enshrined in federal law and as practiced by architects and regulators in historic districts nationwide. Staff is therefore fully satisfied that the proposal is appropriate under the law and recommends for its approval.

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.