

**ADDRESS: 3964 W. LAFAYETTE**

**APPLICATION NO: #23-8475**

**HISTORIC DISTRICT: HUBBARD FARMS**

**APPLICANT/OWNER: JAMIE PEREZ**

**DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 7/18/2023**

**DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 7/10/2023**

**SCOPE: DEMOLISH WING, CONSTUCT NEW WING**

**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The building located 3964 W. Lafayette is structural clay tile dwelling that was erected ca. 1915. The home features a two-story, hipped-roof central/main mass with a projecting, two-story, hipped-roof wing at the rear. Arched and shed-roof dormers and a prominent stucco clad chimney top the building's main roof. The roof's deep, overhanging eaves include wood beadboard soffits and decorative jigsawn wood rafter tails. A shed-roof wing is located at the west side while a shed-roof porte cochere is at the building's facade elevation. The west side wing and the east side porte cochere both display decorative jigsawn wood rafter tails within their eaves and distinctive clay tile parapets which are clad with stucco. Stucco clads the building's exterior walls while red brick is present at the foundation and windowsills. Lapped wood siding is located within several window openings and a door opening at the front of the west wing. Historic double-hung and casement wood windows with wood trim/brickmould remain at all facades, although some have been covered with plywood. Also, a small number of non-historic vinyl slider windows are visible. A review of files maintained by the HDC indicate that these non-historic windows were present at the time of designation. A partial width, brick and concrete porch with stone steps and historic-age iron railing is located at the building's primary facade. A 6'-0" high, metal chain-link fence encloses the property.







**3964 W. Lafayette, current appearance. Staff photos taken 7/13/2023**

**PROPOSAL**

Per the submitted proposal, the applicant is seeking the Commission’s approval to demolish the current west wing and replace it with a new shed-roof wing of “...the same footprint” (23’x11’). Specifically, per the submitted narrative and below graphics, the new addition shall be erected according to the following:

*“We will be framing the room with wood studs instead of block, which will greatly reduce the final load on the walls. This helps ensure longevity of the new construction, and allows us to insulate the walls to a greater extent. The sun-room-like character of the addition will be captured in the new design by including multiple six large 6-lite windows to mimic the style of the historic windows present on the home, as discussed above. The windows will be picture windows, and trimmed in a very minimalistic fashion from the exterior. The roof line of the addition will extend to create an 18” overhang, giving ample weather protection to the exterior walls. There will be a circular dormer added to the center of the addition’s roof to mimic those found on the main house roof. The roof of the addition will be the same product installed on the main roof of the home, which is the Timberline UHDZ Pewter Grey shingle. The siding will be a cement board siding that will be lapped to create a tight reveal found on historic homes throughout Hubbard farms and the Michigan as a whole.”*





- Per the previous point, the wing proposed for demolition has been extant as an enclosed space since at least 1921. See the below designation slide which demonstrates that the wing mirrors the appearance of the porte cohere and provides a distinct sense of symmetry when viewing the home's primary elevation from Lafayette Street. The wing also includes a number of distinctive architectural details which are associated with the Spanish Colonial style to include arched window openings, stucco cladding, and deep overhanging eaves with decorative jigsawn wood rafter tails at its roof. The wing also retains its original wood windows and trim (see below photos). For these reasons, the wing is a distinctive character-defining element of the building, in staff's opinion.



**3964 W. Lafayette, designation slide**











**3964 W. Lafayette, current appearance. Staff photos taken 7/13/2023**



- Per the applicant’s submitted narrative, HDC staff did issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for a number of exterior repair items in July 2023. Specifically, the following was approved per the staff COA dated 7/11/2023:
  - *Rehabilitate exterior including; repair rafter tails and soffit with in-kind materials and paint brown, replace gutter system with half-round bronze colored gutters, repair stucco and paint white, replace asphalt shingle roof with new asphalt shingle roof, repair window sash and paint black, per the submitted application materials*

The narrative submitted with the current application states that the repair of the existing historic wood windows, ***including the replacement of individual glass panes with insulated glass***, was approved under the 7/11/2023 staff approval/COA. However, please note the application materials submitted with the 7/11/2023 proposal did not indicate that the proposed window restoration included a retrofit of the historic sash with new insulated glass. Therefore, the 7/11/2023 COA does not allow for this treatment. Staff is concerned that it is not technically feasible to install new insulated glass panes/panes that are more than twice the thickness of the existing without damaging the historic sash which are currently proposed for repair.

- The current narrative also refers to the replacement of the existing “...vinyl windows with wooden windows that match closely with the originals in material and design. Original 6-lite windows of various sizes can be found on both floors. We will model the design of the windows set to replace the vinyl in the image of the original windows.” Please note that the 7/11/2023 COA ***does not*** include an approval of this work item as it was not included in the application materials. In order for staff to initiate a review of this item, the applicant must supply a detailed window schedule for this item which depicts the following for **each** window opening proposed for new fenestration:
  - Specific location within the building’s exterior walls
  - Dimensions of the rough window opening
  - Dimensions, material, operation, and light configuration for each new window to include the sash, casing, and brickmould/trim

The submission must also include dimensioned detail sketches (in elevation and section) or product specs/cutsheets to indicate typical dimensions, profile, detailing of the new windows and associated trim.

## ISSUES

- Per the narrative included with the current submission, the applicant is seeking to demolish the west wing because it “has fallen into a state of disrepair and presents a dangerous work environment in it’s condition.” His narrative further outlines the level of deterioration at the wing. While the wing appears to have some condition issues, it is staff’s opinion that the current application does not provide sufficient documentation that the current deteriorated conditions could not be successfully addressed via repair versus demolition. Please note that staff did reach out to the applicant via email and stated the following:
  - “In order to approve the removal of the wing, the Commission must be satisfied that it is deteriorated beyond repair. Staff therefore recommends that you provide additional information to support your statements around the wing's poor condition. Specifically, please feel free to provide additional narrative and photos of the interior and exterior of the wings, the existing windows and doors, etc. Also, you can provide a report from a licensed structural engineer or architect speaking to these conditions.”

Staff has yet to receive the above requested documentation as of the date of this report's completion.

- Per the Secretary of the Interior's (SOI) Standards, Standard # 6 "Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced." It is staff's opinion that the work does not meet SOI Standard #6 because it is not clear that the wing is deteriorated beyond repair.
- Also, SOI Standard #6 states that "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." Staff did review the submitted screenshots and finds that that design of the proposed new wing does not adequately match the existing, character-defining wing that is proposed for demolition in terms of detailing, materiality, and fenestration, and therefore does not meet the Standards. If the Commission agrees with the applicant that the wing is "beyond repair" and agrees with staff that it is a distinctive, character-defining feature of the home, then per this Standard it must be rebuilt to match the original.
- Please note that in re: to the proposed new addition, the current application only included a dimensioned current footprint and two, 3/D screenshot images of the proposed new addition which do not include dimensions and are not rendered within the context of the existing west elevation. Staff did request that the applicant submit the following so that the Commission might fully ascertain the appearance of the proposed addition within the context of the historic property and the wider historic district:
  - dimensioned drawings, in elevation, showing the existing and proposed conditions to include the entire west elevation of the home and all four sides of the existing wing and new addition. Please indicate the type and material of windows, doors, etc., the type of siding, and the type of roofing will be installed at the new addition. If you are building the windows yourself, please provide a detail drawing of the typical window unit to include the sash and casing/trim

Staff has yet to receive the requested information as of the date of this report's conclusion.

- The proposed work will result in the" removal of distinctive materials" and "alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize" the property and therefore does not conform to SOI Standard #2.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### **Section 21-2-78. Determination of the Historic District Commission – DENIAL**

The proposed project is not appropriate for the following reasons:

- The application does not include adequate graphic documentation of the proposed addition.
- The proposed work will result in the" removal of distinctive materials" and "alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize" the property
- The application does not adequately demonstrate that the distinctive, character-defining west wing which is proposed for demolition is deteriorated beyond repair
- The proposed new addition does not adequately replicate the distinctive, character-defining west wing that is proposed demolition

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the current proposal because the work does not conform to the district's Elements of Design and does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. In particular, SOI Standards#:

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.*



AND

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*