

**STAFF REPORT:** 11/8/2023 REGULAR MEETING  
**APPLICATION NUMBER:** HDC2023-00091  
**VIOLATION NUMBER:** 790  
**ADDRESS:** 14833 STAHELIN  
**HISTORIC DISTRICT:** ROSEDALE PARK  
**APPLICANT/ PROPERTY OWNER:** TAMEKKA COLMAN  
**DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION:** 10/16/2023  
**DATE OF STAFF SITE VISITS:** 9/21/2023, 10/19/2023

**PREPARED BY:** D. RIEDEN

**SCOPE:** DEMOLISH GARAGE, ERECT GARAGE, ALTER DRIVEWAY/PAVING (WORK COMPLETED WITHOUT APPROVAL)

**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Built in 1928, the property at 14833 Stahelin is a 2 story, single-family residence facing east and sits south-central to the block. The gambrel asphalt shingled roof features a large, shed-roof dormer which is intersected with a front-facing gable. While the upper floor is clad in wood shake, the first floor is clad in red brick. A cat-slide roof highlights the arched front entrance with stone and brick detailing. Decorative metal comes in the upper sash of the double-hung, wood windows are featured in the front and side elevations. A pyramid-hipped, asphalt shingle roof garage once stood in the backyard, but was demolished without approval earlier this year. This wood-framed structure featured wood-shake siding and trim that matched and complemented the house. A modest concrete driveway, which led from this garage to the street, was removed and replaced with an expanded concrete driveway, again without approval this year. Aerial images reveal that a rear deck/porch was also recently constructed without approval but is not publicly visible. This application includes the construction of a new garage that extends outside of the footprint of the previous garage, the structure is under construction at the time of this report. There are no formerly listed Certificates of Appropriateness on file for this property.



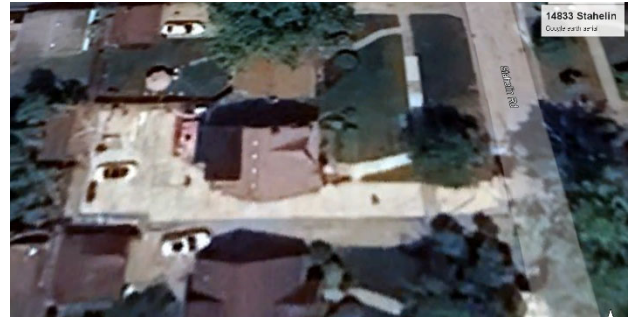
*Site Photo 1, by Staff October 10, 2023: (East) front elevation.*



*Designation photo 2007: (east) front elevation, showing existing garage in the backyard.*



*Aerial#1 of Parcel # 22083667, showing original garage and driveway behind the house.*



*Aerial#2 by Google Earth June 2023, showing original garage demolished existing driveway expanded along with new rear deck.*

## **PROPOSAL**

The applicant proposes to demolish the original garage, construct a new 40 ft. x 22 ft., four-car garage with new concrete footing/floor slab and install a wider, 11' driveway. The former garage and driveway were already removed without approval. Installation of the new driveway is complete, and the new garage is under construction.

### Demolition of Garage and Driveway (Work completed without approval)

- Demolish original garage and driveway, dispose of materials.

### Construction of New, Four-Car 40'x22' Garage (880 SF) (Work underway without approval):

- Pour concrete pad 40'x22' foundation.
- Build new 40' x 22' wood framed garage on new cement floor, with a side gable roof (height and pitch not shown in drawings).
- Roof materials are 3-dimensional asphalt black shingles with a ridge vent.
- Siding is "Pacific Blue" 8" vinyl siding.
- Install 18'x8' steel sectional garage door on south elevation, color white.
- Install a 36" x 80" service door on the south elevation, color white.
- Install 72" sliding glass door and two (2) double-hung, 24"x24" vinyl windows with no dividers, on the east (front) elevation and north elevations, trim color white.
- No exterior lighting.

### Install new driveway (work completed without approval):

- Install 11' 10" wide concrete driveway from the street to the new garage location.
- Install reflectors on the left side of the driveway

## **STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH**

- Rosedale Park Historic District was established in 2007. Its Elements of Design (Sec. 21-2-199) provide the following guidance for new construction and the landscape:
  - *"Height... Additions to existing buildings shall be related to the existing structure. Garages are generally one-story tall..."*
  - *"Relationship of materials. Masonry is the most significant material in the majority of houses in the Rosedale Park Historic District in the form of pressed or wire cut brick, often combined with wood, stone, and/or stucco. Wood is almost universally used for window frames, half-timbering, and other functional trim. Windows are commonly either of the metal casement or wooden sash*

*variety. Aluminum siding and aluminum canted windows on later buildings are sometimes original; vinyl siding and vinyl windows, where they exist, are replacements... Roofs on the majority of the houses in the Rosedale Park Historic District are asphalt shingled, while several original slate roofs still exist. Garages, where they are contemporary with the residential dwelling, often correspond in materials.”*

- *“Relationship of colors. Natural brick colors, such as red, yellow, brown or buff, dominate in wall surfaces. Natural stone colors also predominate: where stucco or concrete exists, it usually remains in its natural state, or is painted in a shade of cream. Roofs are in natural slate colors and asphalt shingles are predominantly within this same dark color range. Paint colors often relate to style...”*
- *“Roofs of houses built later in the period of development of the district, such as those of modern inspiration, tend to have significantly lower slopes.”*
- *“Relationship of significant landscape features and surface treatments...The typical treatment of individual residential properties is that of a dwelling erected on a flat or slightly graded front lawn. The front lawn area is generally covered with grass turf, subdivided by a straight or curving concrete or brick walk leading to the front entrance and a single-width side driveway leading to a garage. There is variety in the landscape treatment of individual properties...”*
- *“Relationship of open spaces to structures... All houses have ample rear yards as well as front yards. Wider lots in Rosedale Park permitted side drives with garages at the rear of the lots. Where dwellings are located on corner lots, garages face the side street. Garages, when original, often correspond in materials to the main body of the dwelling, but are of modest, one-story, simple box design with single- or double-doors...”*
- *“Relationship of lot coverages. The lot coverage for single-family dwellings ranges generally from 25 percent to 35 percent, including the garage, whether freestanding or attached.”*
- Staff offers the opinion that the publicly visible original garage, even though of modest scale and utilitarian use, conveys an era of design that illustrates a strong relationship with the house with complementary wood trim and matching siding materials as described by the Elements of Design and as reflected by its presence.  
at the time of historic designation. Staff believes that this structure is a contributing historic resource to the property despite its humble appearance.
- The applicant confirmed that no photo documentation is available for the original garage prior to demolition. He also verbally described that the new garage will be used for parking and storage of their vehicles and that no exterior lights will be installed on the new garage.
- Staff initially received an application for only the removal of the original garage and installation of the new driveway, but upon further engagement with the applicant, there appears to be additional work completed without approval, the installation of a rear deck, which is visible in Google Earth imagery and confirmed by the applicant. Staff, however, did not receive any further information from the applicant and so this work is not included in this application. (See aerial #1&2)
- Staff requested the following information from the applicant but did not receive this information at the time of this report:
  - Photos of the rear yard and all sides of the constructed garage. Please note that staff offered to take the photos on a site visit, but was told that the applicant would send us photos.
  - A narrative that describes the use of the garage.
  - Elevation drawings that shows the pitch and height of the roof and other dimensions.
  - Site plan that shows the back yard inclusive of any other paved areas or structures such as the backyard deck.
  - Documentation that shows the material, operation, design, and color of the following: windows, garage door, man door, siding material, roofing material and the reflectors installed in the driveway.

- According to Detroit Parcel Viewer, the 116'x50' (5,800SF) lot currently contains a 26'x42' (1,092SF) footprint for the house and 40'x22' (880SF) new garage, which is approximately 34% of lot coverage, which falls within the 25-35% range as described in the Elements of Design.
- Staff visited the site on September 21 and October 19, 2023 and observed that the applicant's newly built garage's size nearly takes up the width of the rear yard. The roof pitch and height are at a scale that closely matches or under the size of the neighbors' garage.
- While the height and roof pitch may be appropriate, it is staff's opinion that the proposed massing and scale for this garage are inappropriate as they do not meet the Elements of Design nor "relate to the main dwelling".
- Staff offers the opinion that the proposed garage does not share in *Relationship of Materials*, ie., the brick masonry, cedar shake siding, wood doors/windows of the house does not match with the vinyl siding and vinyl materials of the new garage. The proposed newly constructed garage with non-matching materials, conflicts with the Rosedale Park Historic District's Elements of Design by removing this relationship. Vinyl siding and windows are not an appropriate material for this historic district.
- Although site photos of the rear were not obtained by the completion of this report, staff observed that the rear yard appears to be nearly covered in concrete from aerial images (*See Aerial #2*). This and the garage leaves only 3' to 7' margin of grass around the garage but eliminates the backyard lawn.
- The Elements of Design describe the typical treatment of individual residential properties of dwellings in Rosedale Park Historic District is that of a pattern where the "All houses have ample rear yards as well as front yards." Staff has the opinion that this pattern of front and rear yard as expressed by the Elements of Design's Relationship of Open Space to Structures, is a distinctive, historic character-defining feature of the property. Both the large scale of the garage and the extensive removal of the rear lawn to expand the driveway to cover the remainder of the rear area between the house and the proposed garage introduces a new pattern in the historic landscape that is not appropriate to the Rosedale Park Historic District.



Site Photo 2, by Staff October 19, 2023 showing new garage and driveway.



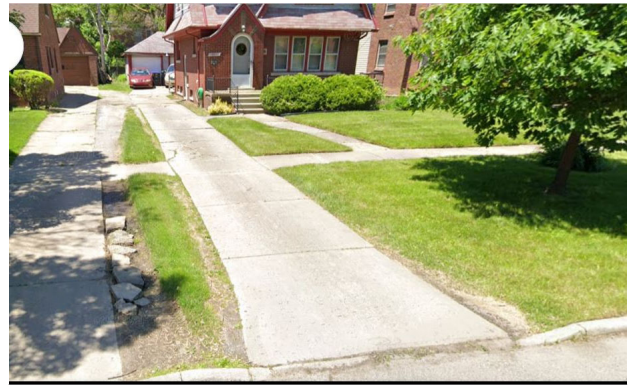
Site Photo 3, by Staff October 19, 2023 showing new garage at the rear.

## ISSUES

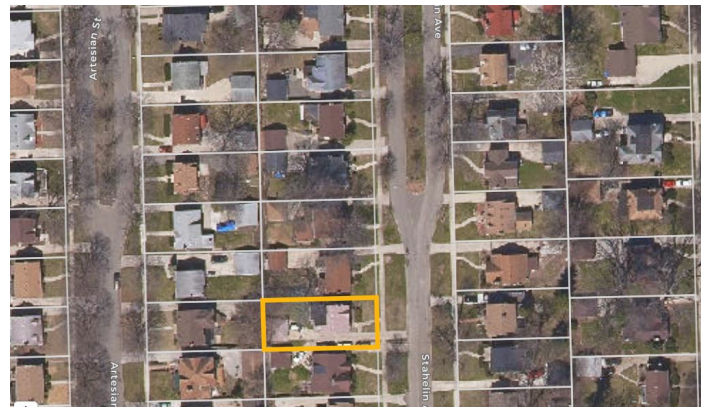
- The work in this application was completed without Historic District Commission (HDC) approval.
- No documentation establishing that the original condition of the original garage was beyond repair was submitted or available.
- Staff has not received information that shows the entirety of the backyard, where additional work may have occurred, such as the construction of a deck, but also the full construction of the garage and driveway are not yet seen or reviewed by Staff.
- It is staff's opinion that the original garage (demolished without approval) was a historic contributing building to the property as it was present at the time of designation, conveyed a strong material

relationship between the garage and the main house as shown in the wood trim and shake siding materials. Demolition of this garage and the replacement of this garage with the current proposed one, fails to preserve and retain the historic character of the property, and introduces a new, larger structure that lacks compatibility in terms of scale, massing, and material composition.

- Staff offers the opinion that the scale of the garage, particularly its width is demonstrably inappropriate because it does not relate with the house nor follows the Elements of Design, where *“Garages, when original, often correspond in materials to the main body of the dwelling, but are of modest, one-story, simple box design with single- or double-doors.”*
- Staff observed that the new driveway, constructed without approval, is approximately 2 feet wider than the original driveway, which overlays on top of the previously present green space between the house and the driveway, thus creating a continuous hard surface that nearly joins the neighbor’s driveway to the rear. Staff has the opinion that the width of the new driveway is not appropriate because it conflicts with the Elements of Design’s Relationship of Significant Landscape Features and Surface Treatments, *“The front lawn area is generally covered with grass turf, subdivided by a straight or curving concrete or brick walk leading to the front entrance and a single-width side driveway leading to a garage.”* (See site photo 4)
- A review of aerial images of the district revealed that most of the space within rear yards is typically dedicated to grass turf/landscaped open lawns with minimal hardscape intrusions to include walkways, patio, and narrow driveways. (See Aerial #3) When detached garages are present within the district, staff noted that parcels typically include a structure of a footprint/scale that is minimal in relationship to the home, leaving ample open green space in the rear yard. The current project will result in the erection of a large garage and expansion of the driveway that results in the near complete removal of the open lawn space within the rear yard. It is staff’s opinion that these conditions are incompatible with the house’s and the district’s historic character.
- Garages often correspond in materials/design with their associated dwelling. The proposed materiality of the garage (vinyl siding with vinyl windows) is not compatible with the house’s historic appearance and does not conform to the district’s Elements of Design.



Site Photo 4, by Google Street View June 2019, showing original driveway width and planting beds next to the house.



Aerial #3 of Rosedale Park HD, showing applicant’s location in the context of other resident’s back yards.

## RECOMMENDATION

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

#### Recommendation: Demolish Garage, Erect Garage, Alter Driveway/Paving (Work Completed Without Approval)

Staff finds that the demolition of the garage, construction of a new garage and expansion of the driveway does not meet the Secretary of Interior Standards for the following reasons:

- The work was completed without Historic District Commission (HDC) approval.
- No documentation establishing that the original condition of the original garage was beyond repair was submitted or available.
- The original garage was a contributing building that was present at the time of historic designation and exemplifies the modest, yet character-defining features that bore strong relationship to the main house, namely the wood trim and cedar shake siding.
- The new garage does not relate to the main house in design, scale or materiality, and conflicts with the Elements of Design. The proposed vinyl siding and vinyl windows are not historically appropriate materials as they do not conform to the District's Elements of Design.
- The expanded width of the driveway destroys the modest scale of the driveway, calling attention to itself and detracting from and altering the open lawn feature of the historic landscape. It also conflicts with the Elements of Design's Relationship of Significant Landscape Features and Surface Treatments,
- The removal of the rear open yard, which is a distinct, historic character defining feature of the Rosedale Park Historic District by introducing the construction of a large garage on top of expansion of the driveway alters the spatial organization and land pattern of the historic district.

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the above work items, as it do not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, specifically Standards:

*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.*

*5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.*

*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 will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*