

STAFF REPORT: 04/09/2025 MEETING
ADDRESS: 3964 W. LAFAYETTE
APPLICATION NO: HDC2025-00087
HISTORIC DISTRICT: HUBBARD FARMS
APPLICANT: JAMIE PEREZ

PREPARED BY: J. ROSS

OWNER: MARC REED

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 03/25/2025

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 03/18/2025

SCOPE: ERECT CARRIAGE HOUSE

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The building located at 3964 W. Lafayette is a structural clay tile dwelling that was erected ca. 1915. The Spanish Colonial Revival style house 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. Windows are wood. 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. The rear yard is currently an open/vacant space.



3964 W. Lafayette. Current conditions. Photo by staff on 3/25/2025



3964 W. Lafayette. Current conditions of rear yard. Photo by staff on 3/25/2025



3964 W. Lafayette (outlined in yellow). Detroit Parcel Viewer



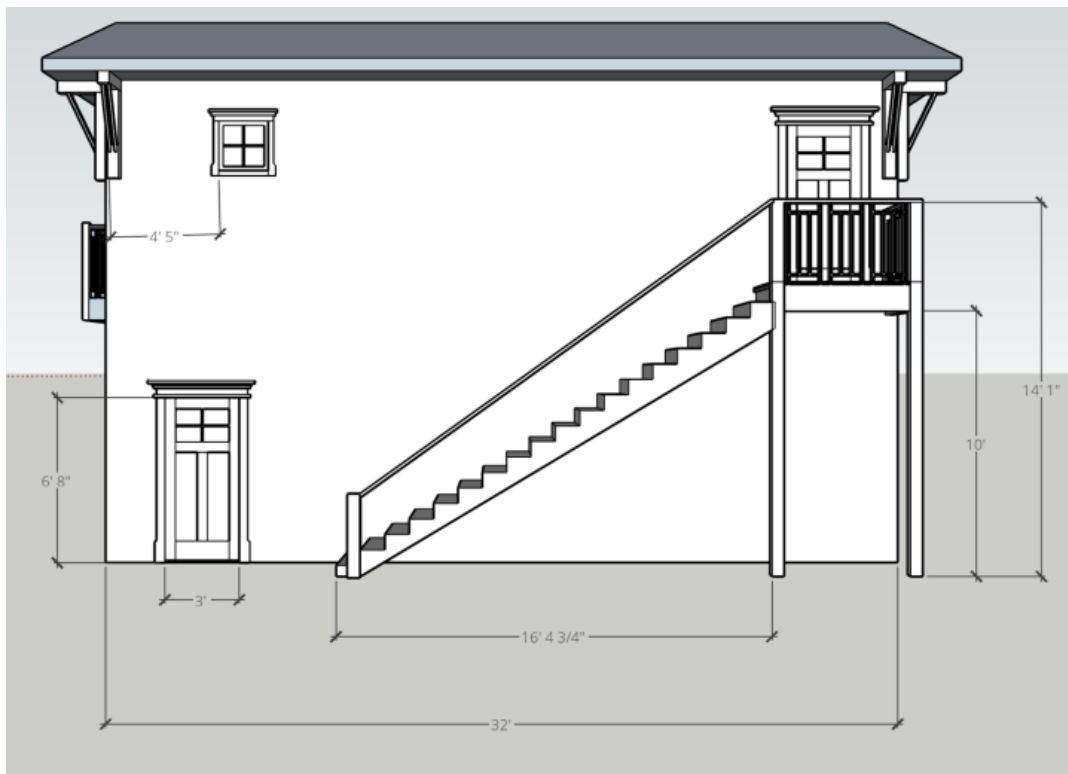
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1921. 3964 W. Lafayette (outlined in red). Note that the parcel included a one-story masonry garage at the time.



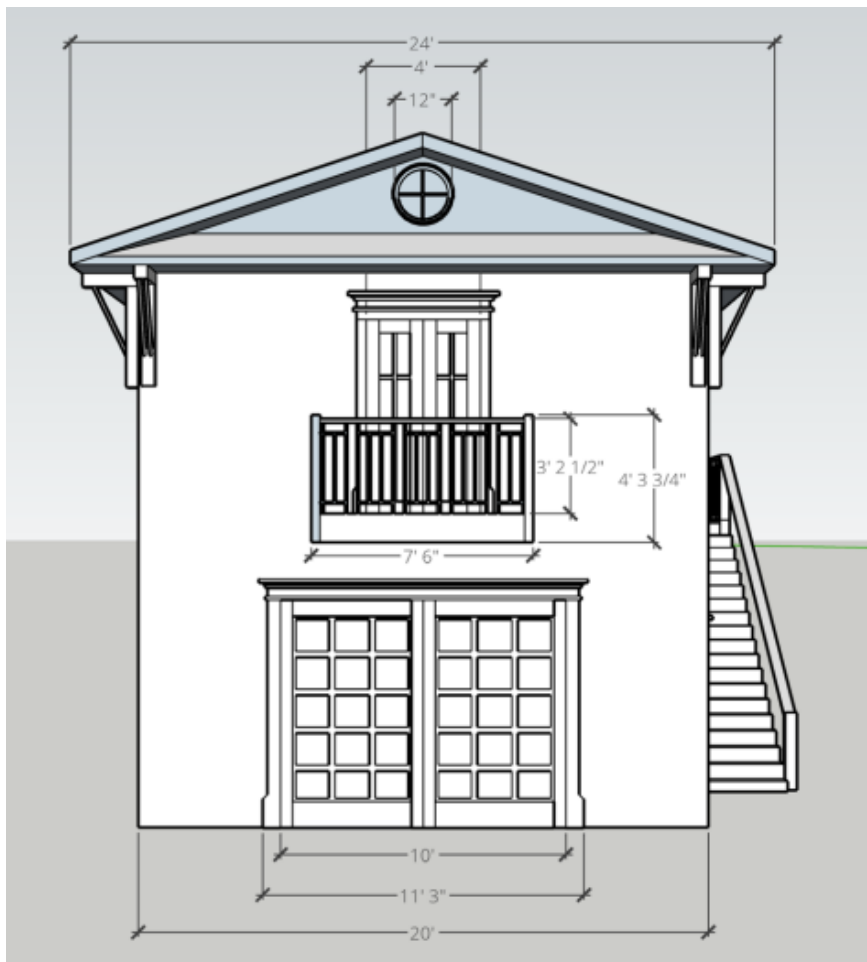
Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1971. 3964 W. Lafayette (outlined in red). Note that the one-story masonry garage was still extant

PROPOSAL

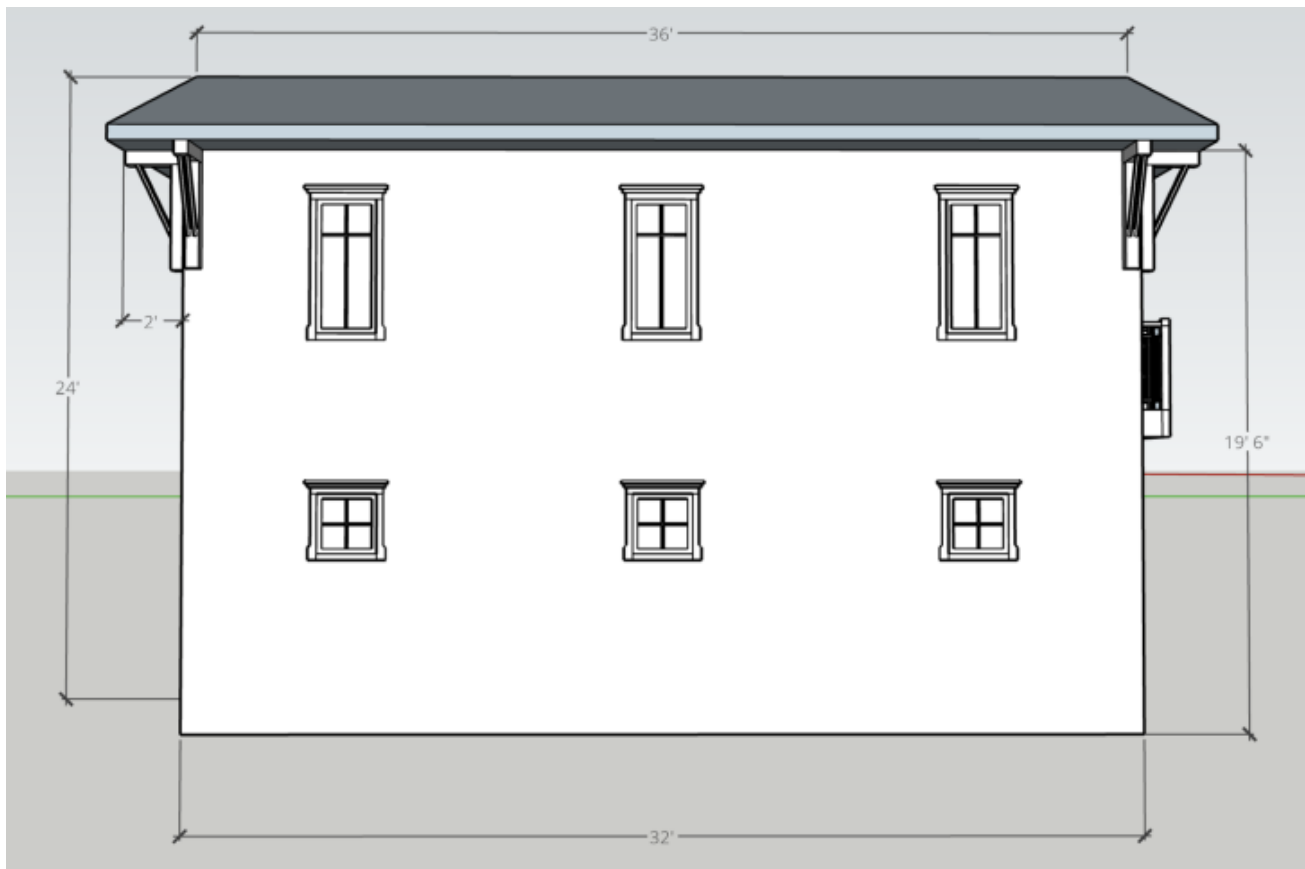
The applicant is seeking the Commission's approval to erect a two-story carriage house in the rear yard, per the submitted materials. The new building will be 24'-0" in height and will feature a gabled roof with deep, overhanging eaves. Exterior walls are proposed to be clad with lapped cement fiber siding and windows will be wood casement units with wood trim. The exterior doors will be wood. A wood balcony will be located at the building's south façade, second story, while a set of wood stairs leading to the second story will be located at the east wall. The building's front/primary façade (south façade) will face the house's rear wall. A paved area of stone, brick pavers, and concrete will be added. See the below and drawings and renderings which depict the proposed new carriage house building.



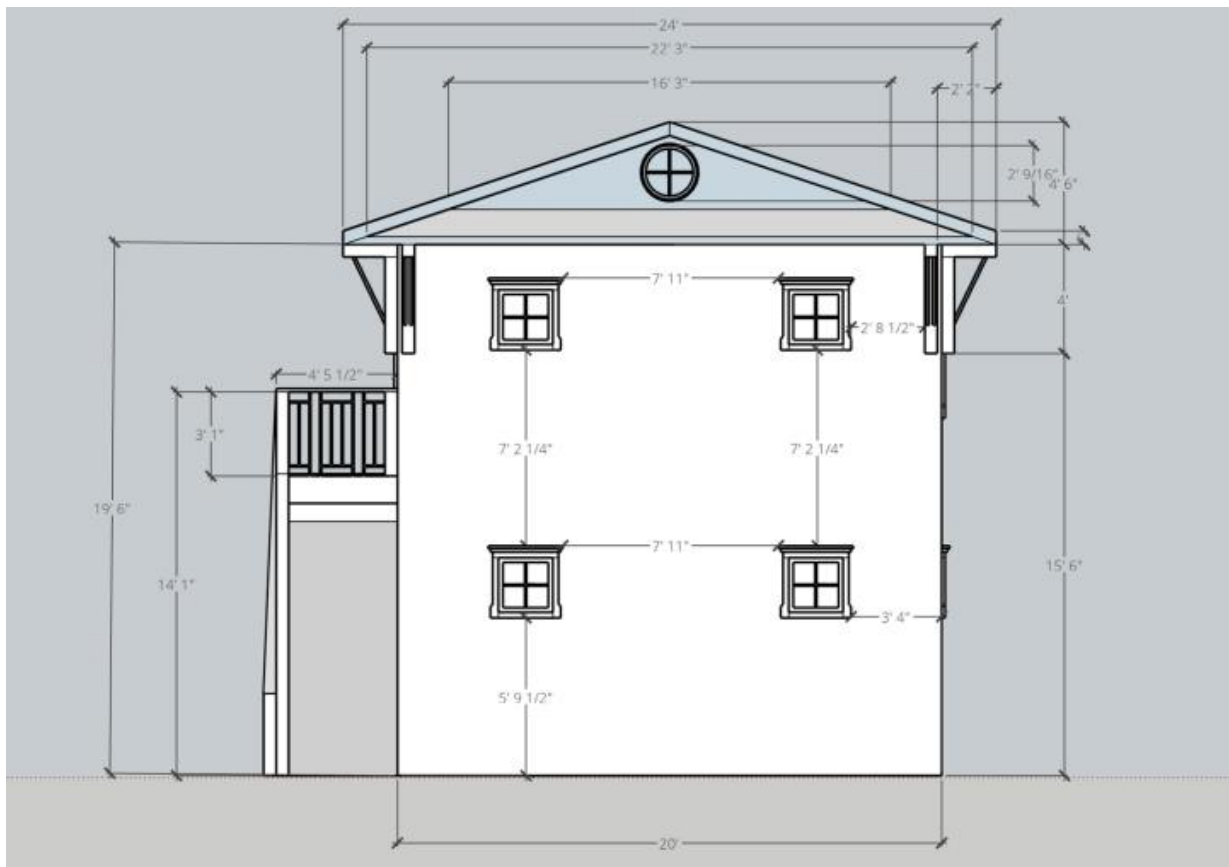
Proposed east (side) elevation



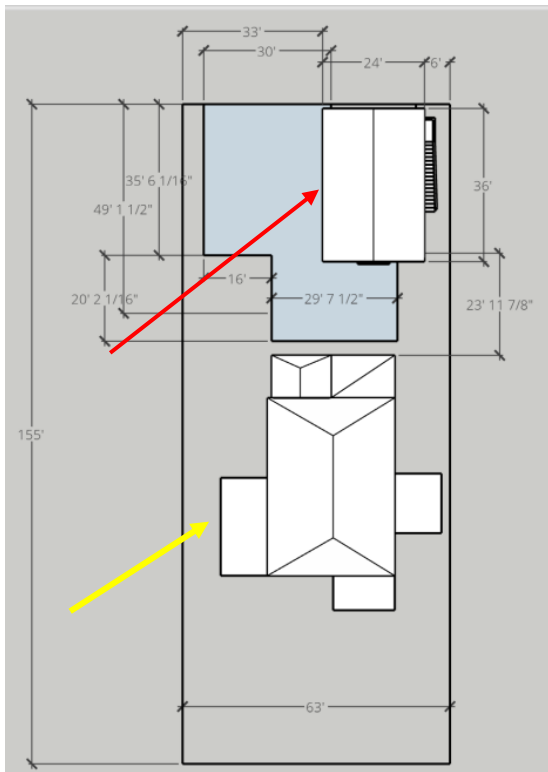
Proposed south (front) elevation



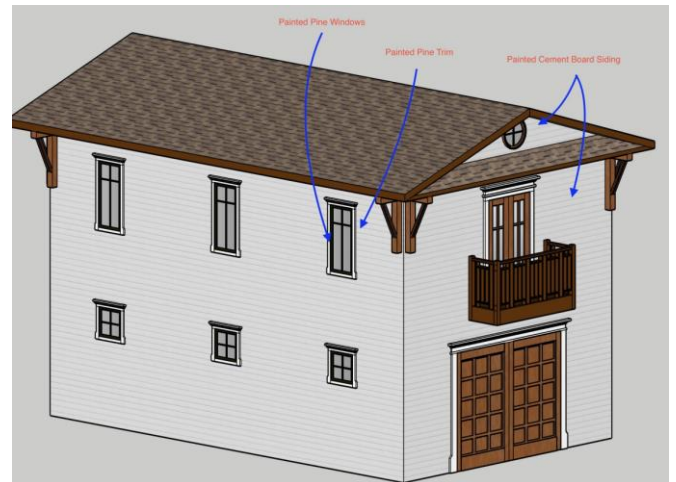
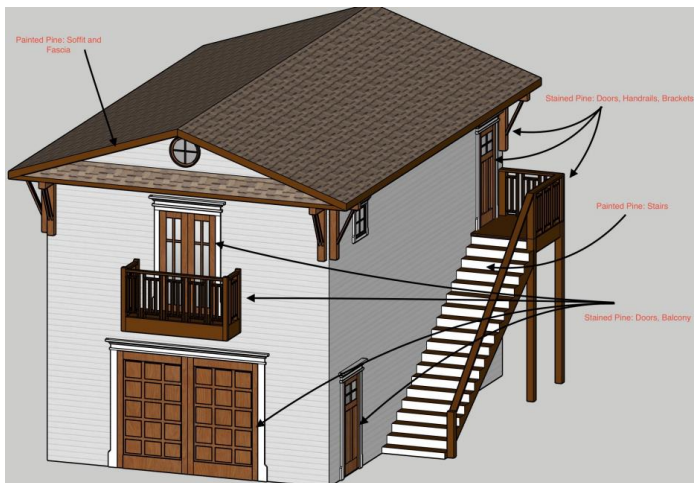
Proposed west (side) elevation



Proposed north (rear) elevation



Site plan, showing new carriage house (indicated by red arrow) and hardscape. The historic house (indicated by yellow arrow) is to the south of the new building.



3D renderings



South/front façade auto doors will be custom made to resemble these doors submitted by applicant

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Hubbard Farms Historic District was designated in 1993.
- Please see the below historic photo of the house, dated 1916



RESIDENCE DR. LEO HERBERT
ALVIN E. HARLEY, ARCHITECT

3694 W. Lafayette, 1916

- The applicant received the following COAs for work which he is undertaking to rehabilitate this long vacant property:
 - Staff issued COA in 7/2023 to 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; and repair window sash and paint black
 - Commission issued COA in 12/2023 to repair the west side enclosed porch wing
- A review of the above Sanborn Maps and below Google Streetview image from 2009 indicate that the property originally had a one-story, masonry garage, which was demolished sometime between 1971 and 2009. Staff is unsure if the garage was extant at the time the district was designated.



Google Streetview image of the backyard at 3964 W. Lafayette. Image dating from 2009. Note that the garage is no longer extant

- Note that the application does not include cutsheets which specifically depict the appearance of the new hardscape that is proposed for installation within the rear yard. Staff therefore recommends that the applicant provide that information for review and approval prior to the issuance of the project's permit.
- When assessing the appropriateness of the proposed carriage house design, the Commission must consider the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, National Park Service Guidelines, and the district's Elements of Design. While new construction must be compatible with the existing built environment of district, the new construction in this case is an auxiliary structure within 3964 W. Lafayette's parcel. Therefore, it is staff's opinion that building's appropriateness/compatibility should primarily be measured **according to its relationship with the property's main/historic house**. Staff therefore offers the following analysis re: the new building's compatibility with the existing house when taking the relevant Standards, Guidelines, and Elements of Design into consideration:
 - The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation which directly relate to new construction are Standard #9) *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment*

AND

- Standard #10) *New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*
- The National Park Service's "Guidelines on New Construction Within the Boundaries of Historic Properties" <https://www.nps.gov/subjects/taxincentives/new-construction-in-historic-properties.htm> also notes the following:

- *Related new construction – including buildings, driveways, parking lots, landscape improvements and other new features – must not alter the historic character of a property....*

Staff Assessment – The project conforms to this guideline. The new building will not significantly alter the property’s historic character. The new building will be sited at the location of the property’s original garage.

- *The location of new construction should be considered carefully in order to follow the setbacks of historic buildings and to avoid blocking their primary elevations. New construction should be placed away from or at the side or rear of historic buildings and must avoid obscuring, damaging, or destroying character-defining features of these buildings or the site.*

Staff Assessment – The project conforms to this guideline. The carriage house will be located to the rear of the lot and thus, will not block the historic house’s primary elevation. As the building is located at an intersection, its side and rear elevations are visible from the public right-of-way as well. However, because the carriage house will be located well to the rear of the historic house, it will not block the west/side elevation or the rear elevation when viewing the property from Hubbard Street.

- *Protecting the historic setting and context of a property, including the degree of open space and building density, must always be considered when planning new construction on an historic site. This entails identifying the formal or informal arrangements of buildings on the site, and whether they have a distinctive urban, suburban, or rural character. For example, a historic building traditionally surrounded by open space must not be crowded with dense development.*

Staff Assessment – The project conforms to this guideline. The building will be located within a residential setting in which it is common that parcels include a single primary dwelling and a detached secondary/auxiliary building to the rear of the lot. As depicted in the historic Sanborn Map, 3964 W. Lafayette originally included a detached garage to the rear of the historic house. The new carriage house will be sited in the same location as the original garage, thus maintaining the property’s original residential character and arrangement of buildings.

- *In properties with multiple historic buildings, the historic relationship between buildings must also be protected. Contributing buildings must not be isolated from one another by the insertion of new construction.*

Staff Assessment – The project conforms to this guideline. The carriage house will be located in rear northeast corner of the parcel, thus allowing for clear views of the historic house from both Hubbard and W. Lafayette Streets. Also, the rear walls of the adjacent houses will not be blocked by the carriage house when viewed from Hubbard Street due to its siting at the far south edge of the parcel. An alleyway to the rear/north of the 3964 W. Lafayette provides a buffer/allows for a clear siteline between the new carriage house and the properties to the north of 3964 W. Lafayette when facing north and northwest from Hubbard Street.

- *As with new additions, the massing, size, scale, and architectural features of new construction on the site of a historic building must be compatible with those of the historic building. When visible and in close proximity to historic buildings, the new construction must be **subordinate to these buildings**. New construction should also be distinct from the old and must not attempt to replicate historic buildings elsewhere on site and avoid creating a false sense of historic development* (emphasis by staff).

Staff Assessment – Recommend revisions to the project design. The applicant has noted that the carriage house will incorporate “...several key design elements” in an effort to ensure its compatibility with the Spanish Colonial Revival style historic house at 3964 W. Lafayette, such as the “...bracket details, exterior door and window trim, muntin patterns, the scale of the wooden casement windows, the selection of a hinged garage door, overhang depth, and the overall proportions of the building.” Also note that the exterior walls will be clad with lapped cement fiber siding (with a finish color to match the house) and the roof will be gabled with ocular windows within each end.

While staff does appreciate the project’s attention to detail, staff does recommend that the design be revised slightly to ensure that the new construction is distinctive from, compatible with, and subordinate to the property’s historic house as required by the Standards and Guidelines, especially since it will be highly visible from Hubbard Street. Specifically, since the applicant is seeking to incorporate design elements which do have a strong association with the Spanish Colonial Revival, such as the decorative wood trim details and the coffered wood garage doors, staff recommends that **all other elements be muted/simple stated** so that the building does not create a false sense of history and that it does not compete with/is subordinate to the house’s design. The proposed use of lapped wood cement fiber siding conforms to this requirement as it is different from the historic house’s cladding, but will be finished with a color which matches the stucco. Also, per the district’s Elements of Design (7) *Relationship of materials* “...many wood frame buildings are clad in clapboard.” However, the incorporation of triangular brackets, a detail which is typically associated with the Arts and Crafts style, is not compatible with the property’s historic house style, in staff’s opinion. Also, the gabled roof form with ocular windows at the gable ends is not compatible with the house’s design and the Spanish Colonial Revival elements which the applicant proposes to incorporate in the carriage house’s design. Rather, staff recommends that the carriage house have a simple hipped roof (consistent with the historic house’s roof) and that the proposed overhanging eaves be open/lack brackets, to indicate that it is distinctively new construction.

- Finally, note the new building will house two stories and will measure 24’-0” in height to the ridge line. The applicant noted that the height of the carriage house will be lower than that of the historic house as it is “approximately 33’-0”-high. Note that staff is unsure if the stated 33’ dimension is referring to the height of the house at its ridge line or eaves. Staff therefore recommends that the applicant submit a section drawing of the historic house which indicates the exact heights at the eaves and ridge line to staff for review and approval prior to the permit’s issuance so that staff can confirm that the height differential between the historic house and new carriage house is appropriate.

ISSUES

- In staff's opinion, the carriage house's design should be slightly revised so that it is distinctive from, subordinate to, and compatible with the historic house at 3964 W. Lafayette.
- The exact height of the property's existing historic house at the roof ridge line and eaves is unknown
- The application does not include cutsheets which specifically depict the appearance of the new hardscape that is proposed for installation within the rear yard

RECOMMENDATION(S)

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

Recommendation 1 of 1, Certificate of Appropriateness: Erect a new carriage house and install new hardscape

Staff recommends that the proposed work will be appropriate according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Hubbard Farms Historic District's Elements of Design, with the condition that:

- The carriage house shall have a simple hipped roof (to match the house), with open, overhanging eaves which lack brackets, to indicate that it is distinctively new construction. The revised design shall be submitted shall be submitted to staff for review and approval prior to the permit's issuance
- The applicant shall submit a section drawing of the historic house which indicates its exact heights at the eaves and ridge line to staff for review and approval prior to the permit's issuance
- The applicant shall provide cutsheets which specifically depict the appearance of the new hardscape that is proposed for installation within the rear yard to HDC staff for review and approval prior to the issuance of the project's permit.