

Mike & Lynn Borkenhagen
137 N. Prospect Avenue
Madison, WI 53726
April 6, 2015

Madison Landmarks Commission
City of Madison Planning Division
215 Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd., Room LL.100
Madison, WI 53701-2085

Madison Landmarks Commission,

My wife and I reside at 137 N. Prospect Avenue. There are two areas of the home in need of functional updates. First, the property currently has a 1.5 car garage and 1.5 car gravel parking pad located at the rear of the lot, accessed by an alley. The garage is in disrepair and the 1.5 + 1.5 configuration limits storage and accommodates only two vehicles within its 3-car footprint. Second, there is no paved route to the refuse and recycling pickup at the front of the property, requiring containers to be rolled through the yard. The purpose of our Landmarks Application is to correct these two issues by replacing the existing 1.5 car garage and 1.5 car parking pad with a historically appropriate and more functional 3-car garage and adding a paved walkway for refuse containers.

The existing concrete block garage has a leaking roof and overhead door opener in need of replacement. The garage does not appear to be original to the house and is not architecturally or historically significant. It does not contribute to the character of the property or district, and is not of unusual or uncommon design. The removal of the existing garage structure will not negatively affect the character or historic integrity of the residence.

The new garage will again be sited as far rearwards as zoning code allows to maintain a minimal view from the street. Though the garage's location limits its visual impact to the neighborhood, it will achieve an attractive and compatible appearance through the use of stucco, narrow gauge horizontal clapboards, casement windows, a hip roof, period appropriate fixtures and a color scheme that all complement the house. The garage project will be designed and managed by Eric Donovan of TDS Custom Construction, a contractor endorsed by the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation.

The proposed garage has been designed as unobtrusively as possible to store personal property and the necessary equipment to maintain the 1/4 acre lot. There are existing 3-car garages on both neighboring properties, and the property to the rear has a 10-car gravel parking pad. All properties surrounding the site are occupied by 3-story buildings, while the new garage height will remain less than the 15ft requirement. We have communicated our plans to each neighbor surrounding the garage and have received approval from all, including Gilmore House and Buell House.

The proposed walkway would be paved in a similar location to that shown in a 1920 photograph of the house, winding slightly closer to the lot line to accommodate existing trees. A 5' x 6' pad for refuse containers would be cited adjacent to the west side of the house, shielded from street view by existing bushes and trees. We've communicated the plan to neighbors surrounding the front yard and have received approval from all, including 135 N. Prospect Ave that shares the west lot line.

We're proud to live in Elliot House and the University Heights neighborhood, and are excited to begin a project that will update the functionality of the home while keeping its historical integrity. Please contact us at (608) 709-6161 if you have any questions or would like additional information.

Thank you,
Mike & Lynn Borkenhagen