



Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission  
Staff Report—Revised

HPC Meeting Date: 10/9/2017

Ald. Milele Coggs District: 6

Staff Reviewer: Tim Askin

PTS#114383 CCF#170829

**Property** 2019 N Palmer St  
Brewer's Hill HD

**Owner/Applicant** JOSEPH P SEDITA imflyboy75@gmail.com  
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2019 N PALMER ST  
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**Proposal** Applicant proposes a new two-car garage with upper level split for a peaked roof storage area and a roof top deck.

**Staff Comments**

The house on this property was constructed in c. 1870 in the Front Gabled style. Though research has been limited, it appears no garage has ever existed on site. While the neighboring 2021 N Palmer and 2017 N Palmer have garages in the alley, the rear of the 2019 N Palmer lot has only alley surface parking.

The proposal is to construct a 22' x 28' two-car garage with upper level split for a peaked roof storage area and an attached deck that extends into the yard. While two car garages are common to the area, the attached deck is not.

The proposal includes the following:

- Demolition of existing concrete retaining wall
- Excavation of yard to accommodate proposed garage dimensions
- New concrete retaining wall and slab will be poured.

Proposed garage features include the following:

- Eave detailing will follow the Spartan garage example provided by Staff
- Single painted steel 18' carriage house style garage door with either faux glass or removal of glass for security
- Lighting will be 17" gooseneck lamps
- 6-panel colonial revival style service door painted to match garage door
- Smooth LP siding with color matched to house
- Owens Corning Oakridge Dimensional shingles
- Single window facing alley centered in upper level storage area
- Decking and railing proposed to be constructed from natural Ipe hardwood, with high quality Trex Transcend brand material requested as a secondary option
- Railing design is basic rail and newel post. Applicant has been requested to submit a specific railing design for review.

City code requires that a garage take up no greater than 15% of the area of the site. After consulting Plan Exam, Staff confirmed that the maximum square footage for a garage at 2019 N Palmer is 566 SF. As proposed, the garage is 616 SF meaning the garage is 50 SF too large for the site.

Plan Exam also pointed to the issue of the sidewall height. As illustrated in the provided plans, the proposed garage sidewall appears to exceed the 10' sidewall

maximum. Having measured at scale, staff concluded the drawings illustrate an 11' 4.8" sidewall. Applicant believes them to be 9'-6". Revised drawings submitted after the first version of this report suggest a total wall height of about 8'6", although the specific dimension is not indicated.

In terms of historic quality, the guidelines for Brewer's Hill require that new construction be designed to "harmonize with the character of the district" citing scale, form, site location and materials.

The scale of the building should be compatible with surrounding buildings in overall height and bulk, expression of major divisions (foundation, body, and roof) and its individual components such as porches, overhangs, and fenestrations. The current proposal is disproportionate to its neighboring structures. The porch off the backside is far too large and would be an anomaly for the neighborhood. The roof peak is appropriately proportioned.

The form of the structure is disproportionate and as previously state, does not fit the surrounding context. The roof profile is inconsistent with the parent house and the surrounding buildings and the proposed structure of the garage is too large for the neighborhood.

The site location is appropriate and side setbacks meet the minimum requirement. Four feet is required from the alley and the setback from the house is variable at minimums of 3 ft. or 10 ft. based on whether the garage has a 1-hr. fire-rated interior wall finish. The plans appear to indicate compliance with the alley setback and the survey provided by the applicant indicates that there is sufficient room on the lot to meet both the required alley and house setbacks.

Most of the proposed materials are acceptable; however, staff recommends the rejection of Trex Transcend as a secondary decking material and the rejection of LP Smartside. Cementitious board siding is strongly preferred.

**Recommendation**

Recommend denial

**Conditions**

If HPC Approves, the following conditions are requested by Staff:

- A design proposal for the deck and stair railings must be submitted to staff
- Deck must not be visible from alley – the width should lie inside the dimensions of the proposed garage, not in line with it
- Generic cement board or hardy plank siding is preferred over LP
- Drawing indicates vinyl siding. This should be explicitly noted as not permitted. Commission should require that the language be removed from any plans submitted for permitting.
- ~~Pitch of garage should be higher (corrected in revised drawings)~~
- Decking and Railing should be natural lpe hardwood or other natural wood. Paint or opaque stain is required on all exposed wood including deck surface and all railings.
- Of the two proposed carriage style garage doors. Staff prefers the second door which is more rectilinear in detail
- The windows of the garage door should not be deleted – proposed use of faux glass for security is acceptable
- Applicant must specify service doors and windows for staff approval. Windows are to be all wood. Doors may not be flush, single panel, or 6-panel.
- Comply with all minimum setbacks.
- Expressly support the excess footprint of 50 sq. ft.

**Previous HPC Action**

**N/A**

**Previous Council Action**

**N/A**