



# Milwaukee Historic Preservation Commission Staff Report

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 lpe 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.

Side setbacks appear to meet the minimum requirements. Required setbacks from the alley and the house are unclear. 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.

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".

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 roof peak is not steep enough, and the building is too wide to accommodate the necessary peak. The porch off the backside is far too large and would be an anomaly for the neighborhood.

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. Whether the construction meets the setbacks for the alley and the house is unclear.

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 railing 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
- Pitch of garage should be higher
- Decking and Railing should be natural Ipe hardwood
- 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
- HPC must also indicate, which, if any zoning variances it would support, when the applicant takes the garage to the Board of Zoning Appeals for further approvals
  - o Setback from house is 3 or 10 feet, depending on finishes. No site plan has been provided.
  - o Setback from alley. This may be in compliance, but no complete site plan has been provided.
  - o Excess footprint by 50 sq. ft.

**Previous HPC Action**

**N/A**

**Previous Council Action**

**N/A**