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4 April 2024

Katie Pereny, Secretary
Historic District Commission
City of Mackinac Island
P.O. Box 455
Mackinac Island, MI 49757

Re: NEW JAQUISS RESIDENCE
Design Review

Dear Ms. Pereny:

I have reviewed the new residence proposed at 6948 Main Street; find attached the Design Review for the project.

Should you have any questions, please contact me.

Sincerely,

RICHARD NEUMANN ARCHITECT

Rick Neumann

- c. Jim Murray, Plunkett Cooney
Dennis Dombroski, City of Mackinac Island
Gary Rentrop, Rentrop & Morrison



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DESIGN REVIEW

NEW JAQUISS RESIDENCE

6948 Market Street

Market and Main Historic District
Mackinac Island, Michigan

INTRODUCTION

I am writing this design review contrary to the step-by-step process required by Michigan's Local Historic Districts Act; that is, first approval by the HDC of a Notice to Proceed (to allow demolition), which then triggers a design review, and which if approved by the HDC, results in issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness (to allow new replacement construction).

The proposed project is the construction of a new residence following the demolition of a historic structure at 6948 Main Street. The property is not located in a historic district, but was determined to be significant to the history of Mackinac Island, and would likely have been part of a new Mission Historic District being considered to be designated.

This design review is based on City Code Sec. 10-161 "Design Review Standards and Guidelines", of Article V. "Historic District", of the City of Mackinac Island Ordinance No. 443, adopted October 21, 2009. The review standards are those of the Department of the Interior entitled "The United States Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation" and "Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings", as set forth in 36 CFR, part 67, as well as the factors set forth in City Code Sec. 10-161(b).

Materials submitted for Review consist of architectural drawings by Richard Clements Architect, A1.0, A1.1, A1.2, A2.1, and A2.2, dated 25 March 2024.

REVIEW

The Standards for review are the following:

Standard 1 - *"A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment."*

The new building would be a single family residence, as had been the historic purpose of the previous historic house originally and for many decades.

Standard 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 building shall be avoided."*

The character of the proposed new residence is a replication of the historic appearance of the front porch, and front approximately five feet of the historic house. Beyond five feet back from the front, the new house makes no effort to duplicate the historic appearance of the original house and subsequent historic additions. In particular, the proposed design would add a three story tower on the east side, set back from the front just over four feet, and on the west side it would add a new fireplace and chimney outside the exterior wall, set back six feet from the front, both of which never existed historically. The replicated historic character would largely be the front wall and front porch.

Replication is approximation, and is discouraged in historic environments as it detracts from authenticity, and cheapens truly original surrounding historic elements and structures.

Standard 3 - *"Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place and use. Changes that create a false sense of historic development such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken."*

This standard does not apply to the proposed project as the historic building would no longer exist to be changed.

Standard 4 - *"Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved."*

This standard does not apply to the proposed project as the historic resource would no longer exist to evolve over time.

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

The distinctive features of the historic house constituting the building front wall and front porch would be preserved in the sense that they would be replicated.

Standard 6 - *"Deteriorated historical 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. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence, or structures."*

This standard does not apply to the proposed project since all historical features would be gone.

Standard 7 - *“Chemical or physical treatments, such as sandblasting, that cause damage to historic materials shall not be used. The surface cleaning of structures, if appropriate, shall be undertaken using the gentlest means possible.”*

This standard does not apply to the proposed project.

Standard 8 - *“Significant archaeological resources shall be protected and preserved. If such resources must be disturbed, mitigation measures shall be undertaken.”*

It is possible significant archaeological resources exist on the property. The proposed project should monitor excavation work to provide reconnaissance level oversight, by engaging with the Mackinac State Historic Parks archaeological staff.

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 and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.”*

The demolition preceding new construction would destroy all historic materials that characterize the existing property. But the proposed new house design does differentiate the replicated front five feet of the house from the remaining 95% of the new residence by cladding the front with narrower horizontal siding to replicate the existing historic house, and wider horizontal siding on the rest of the new building. While of a larger massing than the replicated front five feet, the rest of the residence steps up in height in a way to be compatible with the historic streetscape.

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 essential form and integrity of the historic house would be lost. Related new construction would be all new construction, with the essential integrity of the historic property forever gone.

Standards Under Code Sec. 10-161(b)

In reviewing applications, the Commission shall also consider all of the following:

(1) - *“The historic or architectural value and significance of the resource and its relationship to the historic value of the surrounding area.”*

The replicated front five feet of the proposed new house would maintain some of the existing architectural value in appearance in relationship to the adjacent historic block-scape extending east and west from this property.

(2) - *"The relationship of any architectural features of the resource to the rest of the resource and to the surrounding area."*

As non-historical features of the historic house, the proposed tower and chimney of the new house would not have a historical relationship with the replicated front of the new structure, or the historic surrounding area, but would be characteristic features of many Mackinac Island buildings.

The design does attempt to relate the new replicated front with the un-replicated larger rear portion by matching the roof slope and use of materials and details.

(3) - *"The general compatibility of the design, arrangement, texture and materials proposed to be used."*

The design, arrangement, and materials of the proposed new house would be generally compatible with the character of Mackinac Island.

(4) - *"Other factors, such as aesthetic value, that the Commission finds relevant."*

Replicating the front five feet and front porch of the existing historic Red House would provide some aesthetic value relative to the adjoining historic properties, would provide some representation of the historic house once there.

CONCLUSION

Although applied as thoughtfully as possible in the discussion above, the Secretary of the Interior's Standards were promulgated and intended to be used to assess proposed changes to existing historic buildings, and so are not really suited to review new structures. And the City of Mackinac Island's "Design Guidelines For Work Within Historic Districts" does not include a needed chapter entitled "New Buildings in Historic Districts". But prevailing historic preservation thought advocates that new construction in a historic context should be built in a manner that protects the integrity of the historic setting within which it is located. And to be successful, new construction should be sited / located to fit into the streetscape; should be scaled (bulk and height) to be similar to neighbors; should be architecturally sympathetic (in terms of forms, shapes, rhythms, features, materials, and colors); and should be compatible, but not matching.

Based on these criteria, and the above discussion, the proposed new Jaquiss Residence at 6948 Main Street would meet the Standards for review.

END OF REVIEW