

COA # 2010-COA-283 (HMP)	INDIANAPOLIS HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT	Hearing Date AUG. 4, 2010
		NEW CASE
1826 N ALABAMA STREET HERRON-MORTON PLACE		
Applicant: 1826, LLC mailing address: 1335 N Central Ave Unit 1 Indianapolis, IN 46202		Center Twp. Council District 15 Doris Minton-McNeill
Owner: same		
CASE		
IHPC COA: 2010-COA-283 (HMP)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demolish historic accessory structure • Construct a 3-car garage
STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval of a Certificate of Authorization		
STAFF COMMENTS		

Background of the Accessory Building

The accessory structure is believed to have been built after the construction of the c.1890 house because it does not appear on the 1898 Sanborn Map. It does appear on the 1914 Sanborn Map. Although it appears barn-like in both its design and location, there is no apparent evidence of any vehicle doors. The 1914 Sanborn Map identifies the building as having two dwelling units. It is very possible that this building has always been used as residential space and not as an accessory structure to the main house. The structure is in poor condition and currently under repair orders from Health and Hospital. This structure contains a full basement, which is in significant disrepair.

Background of the Redevelopment of the Property

In 2006, the applicant acquired the property after negotiating with the owner, who at the time, was ordered by a Health and Hospital judge to either sell the property or come into compliance with orders that had been placed on the property. The structure was in extremely poor condition. It seems reasonable to say that the condition was so poor, that an argument for demolition would have been compelling. The applicant was able to negotiate the sale of the property after several failed attempts with the owner, and quickly got started on the restoration and conversion of the primary structure into 3 high-end townhouses with the idea that the existing accessory structure would be converted into garage space for the units. The purchase price was around \$45,000. By the end of 2006, the envelope of the primary structure was complete, but the interior work had been put on hold after the applicant and the applicant’s real estate agent quickly realized that the market was beginning to take a drastic downturn. By this point, \$200, 000 of unfinanced cash had been invested into the property. The building has been “mothballed” since early 2007 and has technically remained off the market since the original listing ran out, however, a for-sale sign has remained posted on the property with no inquiries. The applicant incurs \$200 a month in holding costs.

In 2006, the IHPC approved the applicant’s plan to convert the existing accessory structure into a 5-car garage. This conversion included the rehabilitation of the historic structure into a 3-car bay with a new attached 2-car garage addition to the north end of the structure. The work was never completed. The estimated cost of that project was \$65,000, largely due to the amount of structural repair required to reinforce and fill in the large basement under the structure and stabilize the foundation. As part of the rehabilitation of that structure, very little of the original historic material on the structure would remain since much of the

material had previously been removed and since the conversion of the structure into a garage would result in a lot of the remaining material to be removed and replaced with garage and pedestrian doors.

Health and Hospital Orders

Orders to repair the accessory structure continue to be enforced. The orders to repair originate from the previous owner, however, the applicant has continued to wait to make repairs due to the uncertainty of how to proceed with the structures redevelopment. The applicant has indicated that if demolition of the structure was denied, the structure could be repaired to comply with the pending orders for approximately \$5,000. This would not make the structure usable, only in compliance with the pending repair orders. The applicant is scheduled to return to court on August 12, 2010.

Demolition

The applicant applied to demolish the accessory structure with no plans for a new garage back in November 2009. The applicant withdrew the request in April of 2010 after failure to gain support from the HMP neighborhood association. The applicant believes the opposition to the project was due largely in part to the omission of a new garage structure proposal with the demolition request. However, the applicant believes that the condition of the structure on its own would warrant demolition. Staff agrees. The applicant has provided a structural engineers report demonstrating the structural issues and staff has seen the interior of the building and its poor condition. Although staff supported conversion of the structure into a garage back in '06 and recognizes that this structure has historic significance, staff has never completely dismissed the possibility of demolition. There are several facts about the structure that make demolition a reasonable request:

1. Repair or conversion of the structure would result in significant replacement of material, leaving little historic fabric left on the structure. This was the case with the '06 request, although the overall condition of the structure was slightly better than it is today. Structurally, the building is compromised (see structural engineers report attached).
2. The structure has previously been modified and contains alterations and removal of historic material on all four elevations of the structure, as well as the roof.
3. The interior of the structure has been gutted and no longer displays any evidence of it once being a three-unit apartment building.
4. Structurally, the framing has been compromised and the foundation of the structure is very deteriorated. The building sits on a basement, which is both a structurally and financially difficult undertaking to justify, especially since the structure is not the primary structure on the site.
5. Although the history of the structure is unique, the significance of the structure has been compromised by its modifications and deterioration. Furthermore, although the structure was built for housing and technically was a primary structure, it does not contribute to the general streetscape appearance.

Since April, the applicant has been exploring other options and has learned that converting the three-unit primary structure into affordable for-sale units would qualify them for government HOME funds for affordable housing. The applicant has applied for these dollars, however, in their review, it has been suggested that they include plans to provide garage space for the units to make them more marketable. Since the applicant can no longer afford to invest \$65,000 to convert the existing structure, the applicant has applied for an alternate option of demolishing the existing accessory structure and building a new 3-car garage in its place. This project is projected to be around \$30-\$32,000. The applicant believes that this will maybe make them break even on the project, but is still unlikely to result in a profit. However, they believe that it is important to provide parking and wish to make the project marketable so that they can be completed once and for all with the entire project after four years. If the HOME funds are granted, the applicant feels that the first unit could begin to be completed this winter (interiors of the three units are still unfinished).

Although, if the units are presold, then all three units might be able to ready along with the garages as early as this Spring.

Other Options Explored

Staff consulted with the applicant on the costs for all possible options including, demolition, reusing the building as a garage, restoring it and reusing it as housing, and simply repairing the structure to the minimum requirements of the health code for future use. Due to the amount of money invested in the project and the uncertain real estate climate, the applicant believes that reusing the structure would be a cost that would not be feasible for housing or as garage space (the applicant knows it would cost \$65,000-\$66,000 to reuse the structure as garages, and estimates it would cost around \$200,000 to convert back to housing). Mothballing the structure is a financially possible option, however, the applicant believes that although it would be stabilized, the structure not being usable would remain a liability on the property that potential buyers of the townhouses do not want to take on with their purchase. However, demolishing the structure and building a new usable garage in this case would improve the marketability of the three restored townhouses while still providing the necessary parking necessary. Staff believes that given the fact the applicant is responsible for saving the primary structure but has not had an opportunity in four years to recoup the cost invested, the option of demolition will allow the applicant to market the townhouses effectively while still having a chance to break even on this project.

New Garage

The proposed garage is to be constructed at the rear of the site off the alley. The garage doors would be located on the alley side. The structure is proposed to be fiber cement siding with steel overhead and pedestrian doors. The overall design is simple, but yet compatible with the restored primary structure. Staff is stipulating that the boxed soffits be changed to open eaves and the siding exposure should match the house. Staff is also stipulating that at least one window be added to both the north and south elevations.

Herron Morton Place Preservation Plan

The plan states that demolition could be considered if the building is beyond all feasible economic repair as determined by the Commission and/or consultants it wishes to employ. Staff believes that given the complexity of the overall project, restoration of this structure based on the facts we know about it could be considered a project that is not economically feasible. Given that this structure is part of multifamily primary structure project that was economically challenging to start, the difficulties in reusing this structure and even “saving” it for future use are compelling. Staff recommends that a Certificate of Authorization be granted due to the historic nature of the structure.

STAFF RECOMMENDED MOTION

COA #2010-COA-283 (HMP):

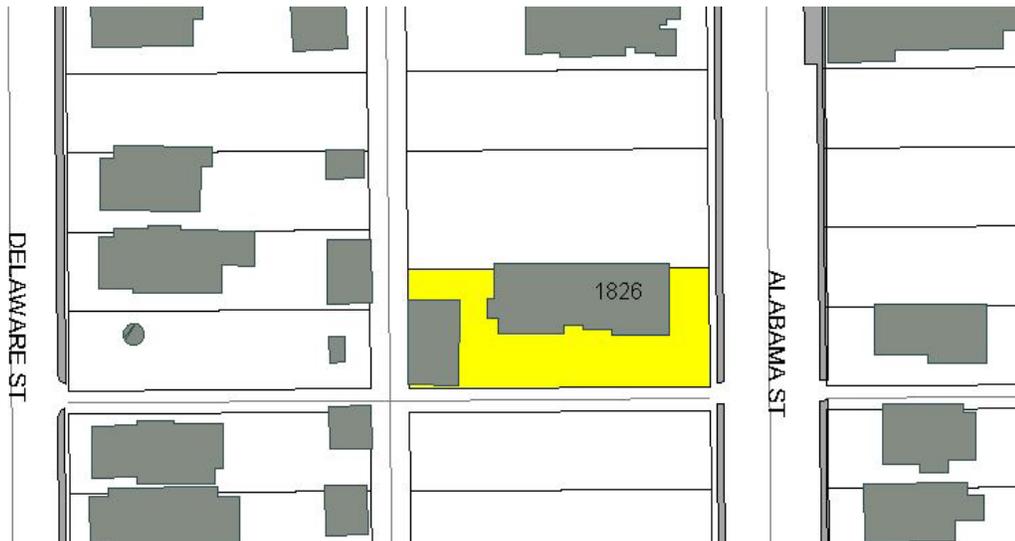
To approve a Certificate of Authorization for demolition of the historic accessory structure and construction of a 3-car garage all per submitted documentation and subject to the following stipulations:

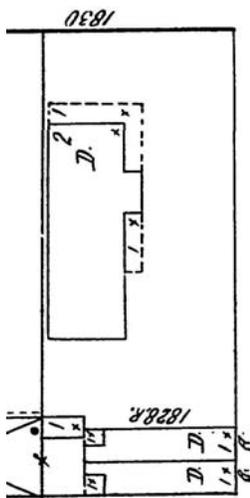
- 1) Construction must not commence prior to approval by IHPC staff of final construction drawings showing changes mentioned in staff’s report. *Approved: _____ Date: _____***
- 2) A pre-construction meeting between IHPC staff, the designer, the owner, and the contractor/construction manager must be held prior to commencement of construction showing changes mentioned in this report. *Approved: _____ Date: _____***
- 3) The construction site must be field-staked with no offsets and reviewed by IHPC staff prior to commencement of construction. *Approved: _____ Date: _____***
- 4) Siding/trim materials must be smooth wood free of major imperfections. No rough-sawn finishes are permitted. Siding exposure must match historic siding exposure on house.**

- 5) No boxed soffits are permitted. Final drawings are to show boxed soffits removed and open eaves in its place.
- 6) Work on exterior details must not commence prior to the approval by IHPC staff of each element. These may include, but are not limited to all finish material: doors, windows, foundations, exterior light fixtures, roof shingles, etc.
- 7) All windows and pedestrian doors must be wood and must be approved by IHPC staff prior to installation. *Approved* _____ *Date* _____
- 8) Roof shingle color must be approved prior to installation. *Approved* _____ *Date* _____
- 9) Any changes to the approved design must be approved by IHPC staff prior to starting work.

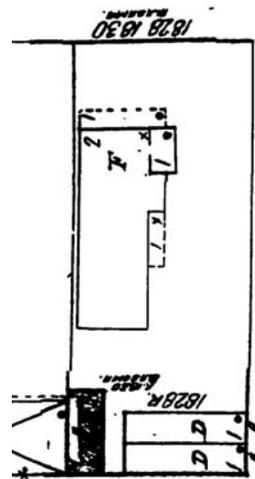
Note: Stipulations 1, 2, and 3 must be completed prior to the issuance of any building permits.

Staff Reviewer: Meg Purnsley

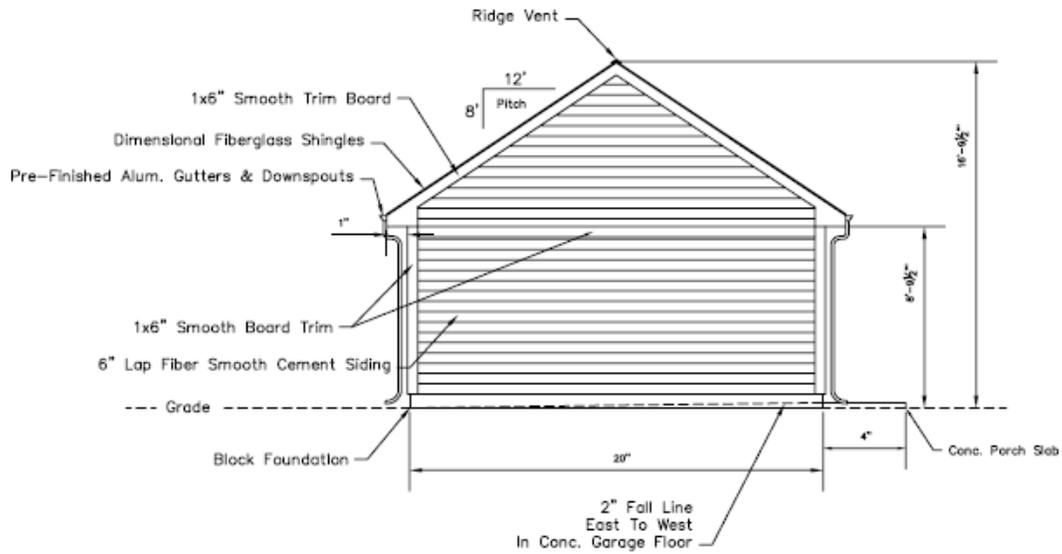




1914 Sanborn Map



1930's Sanborn Map



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Indianapolis, IN 46278
317-752-1469

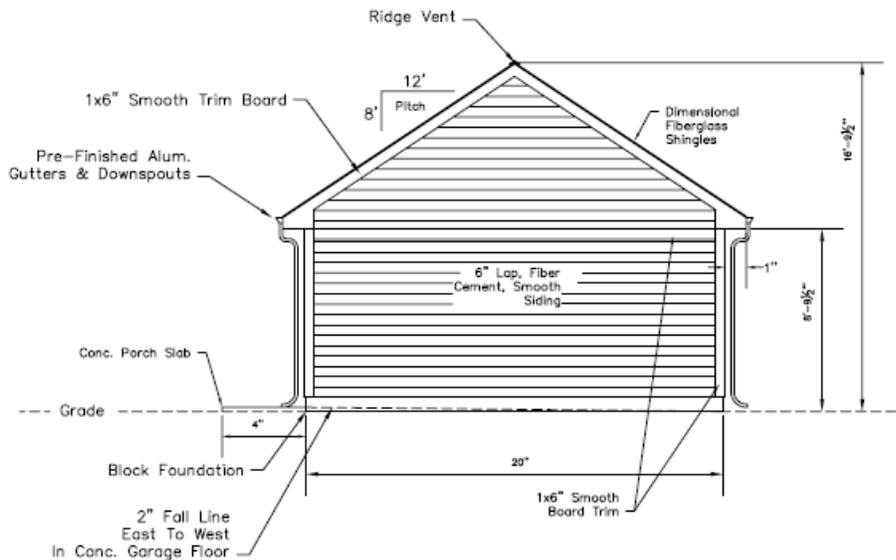


Project:
Garage: 1826 N. Alabama Street,
Indianapolis, IN, Lot 97 & S. 1/2 Lot 98
Allen & Roots Addition

Date:
6-3-2010

South Elevation
Scale: 1/4" = 1'- 0"

Sheet 4
of 9



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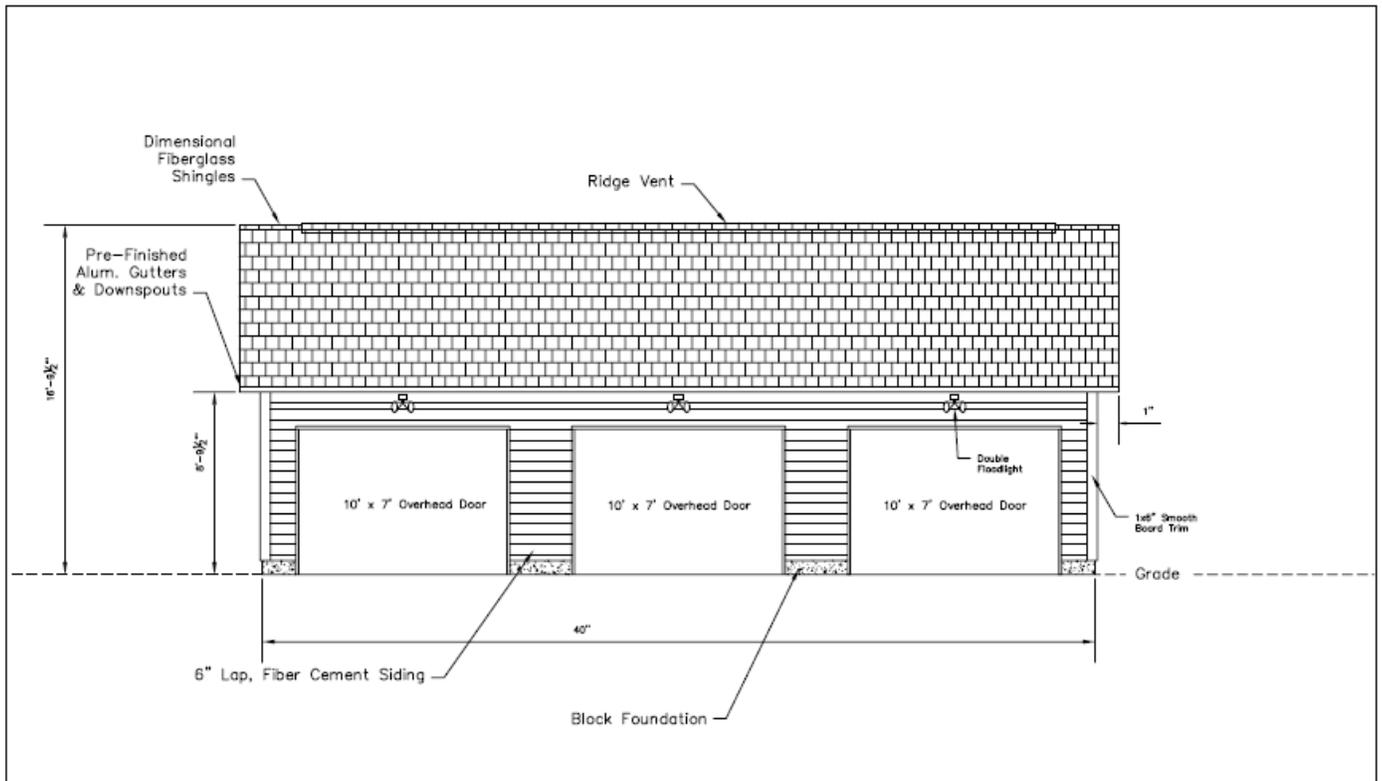


Project:
Garage: 1826 N. Alabama Street,
Indianapolis, IN, Lot 97 & S. 1/2 Lot 98
Allen & Roots Addition

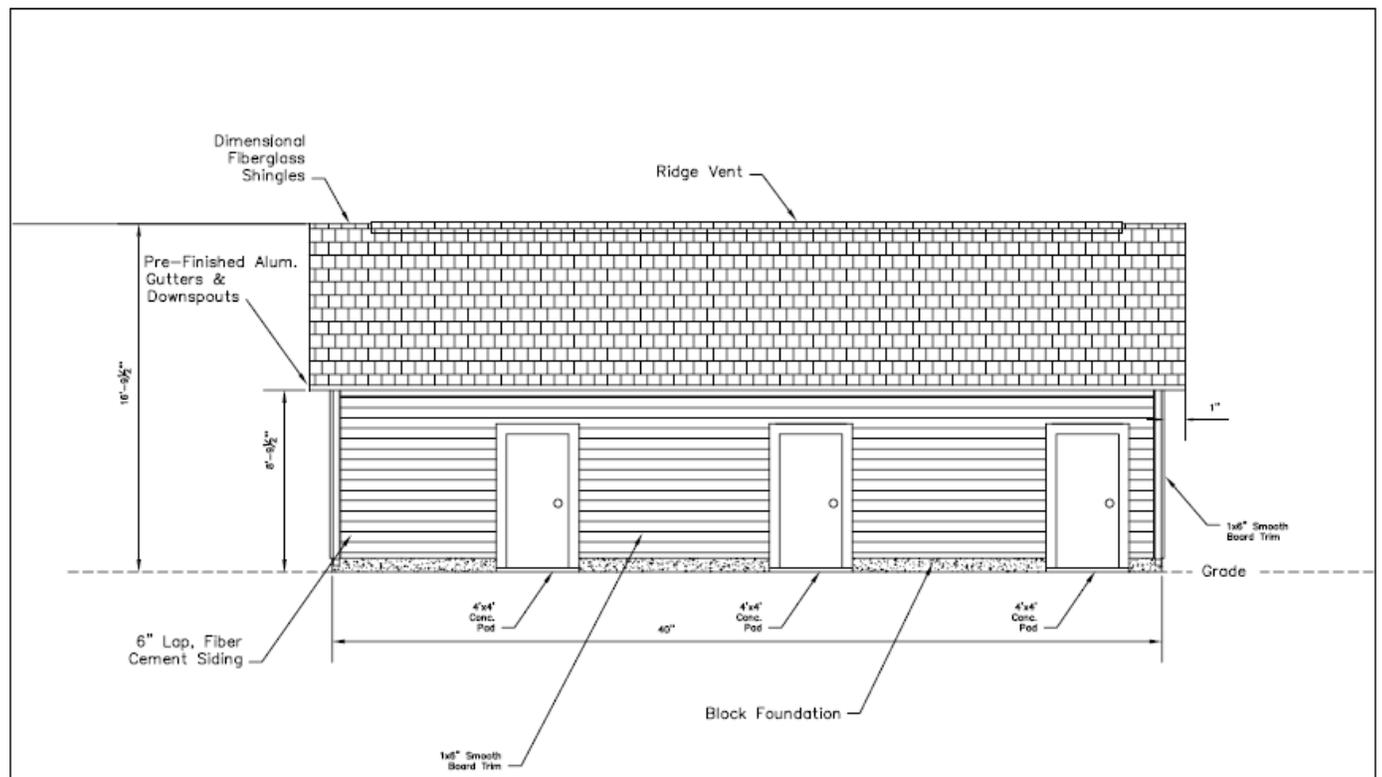
Date:
6-3-2010

North Elevation
Scale: 1/4" = 1'- 0"

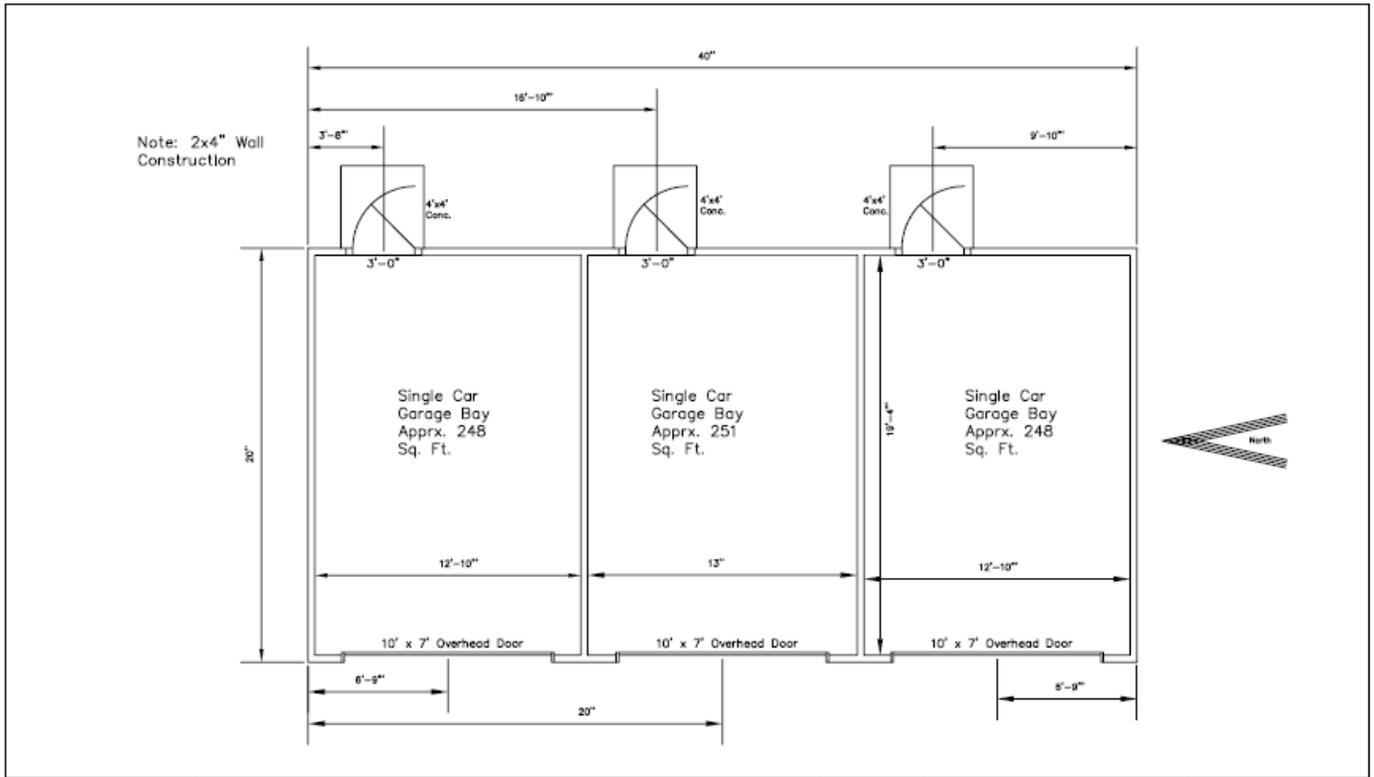
Sheet 5
of 9



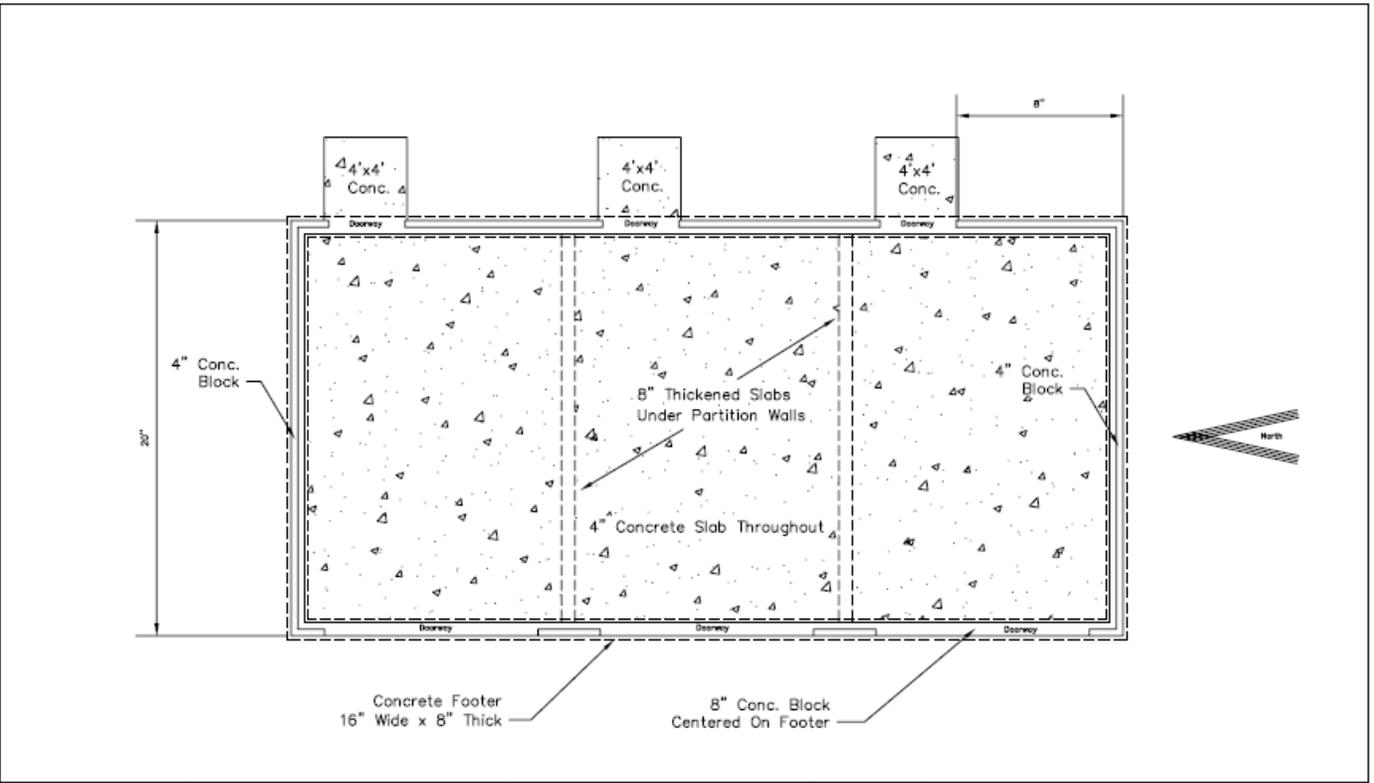
Drawn By: Darryl Gunyon darryl@greensitehomes.com	Green Site Homes, LLC 8530 Wilson Road, Indianapolis, IN 46278 317-752-1489	Project: Garage, 1826 N. Alabama St. Indianapolis, IN, Lot 97 & S. 1/2 Lot 98 Allen & Roots Addition	Date: 6-3-2010	West Elevation Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"	Sheet 7 of 9
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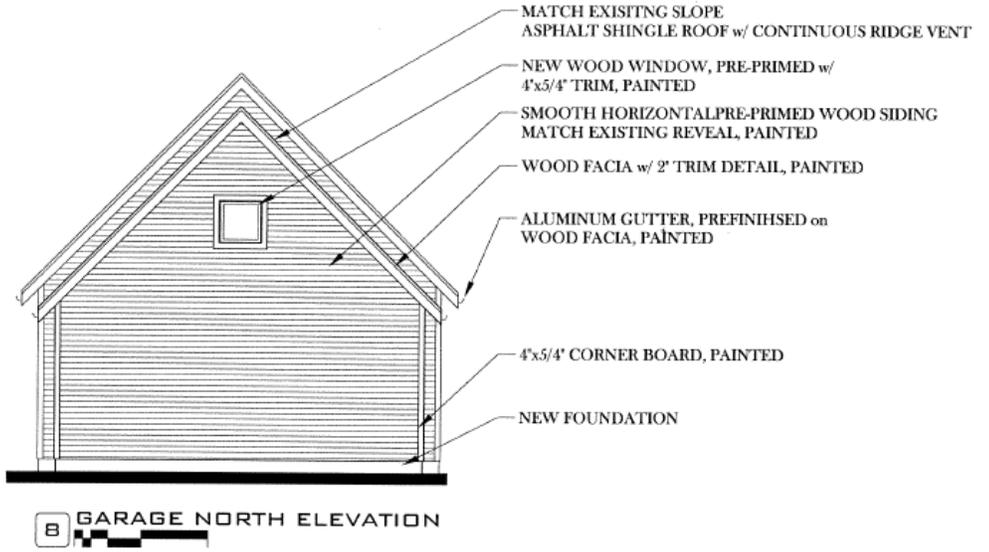
Drawn By: Darryl Gunyon darryl@greensitehomes.com	Green Site Homes, LLC 8530 Wilson Road, Indianapolis, IN 46278 317-752-1489	Project: Garage, 1826 N. Alabama St. Indianapolis, IN, Lot 97 & S. 1/2 Lot 98 Allen & Roots Addition	Date: 6-3-2010	East Elevation Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"	Sheet 6 of 9
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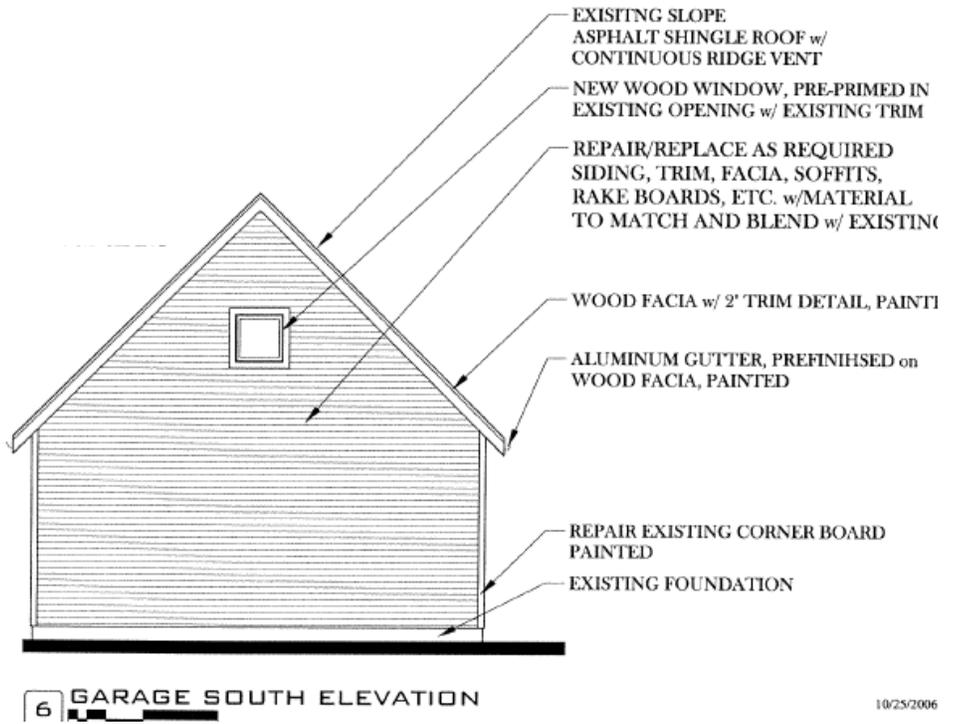
Drawn By: Darryl Gunyon darryl@greensitehomes.com	Green Site Homes, LLC 8530 Wilson Road, Indianapolis, IN 46278 317-752-1469	Project: Garage: 1826 N. Alabama St. Indianapolis, IN, Lot 97 & S. 1/2 Lot 98 Allen & Roots Addition	Date: 6-3-2010	Floor Plan Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"	Sheet 2 of 9
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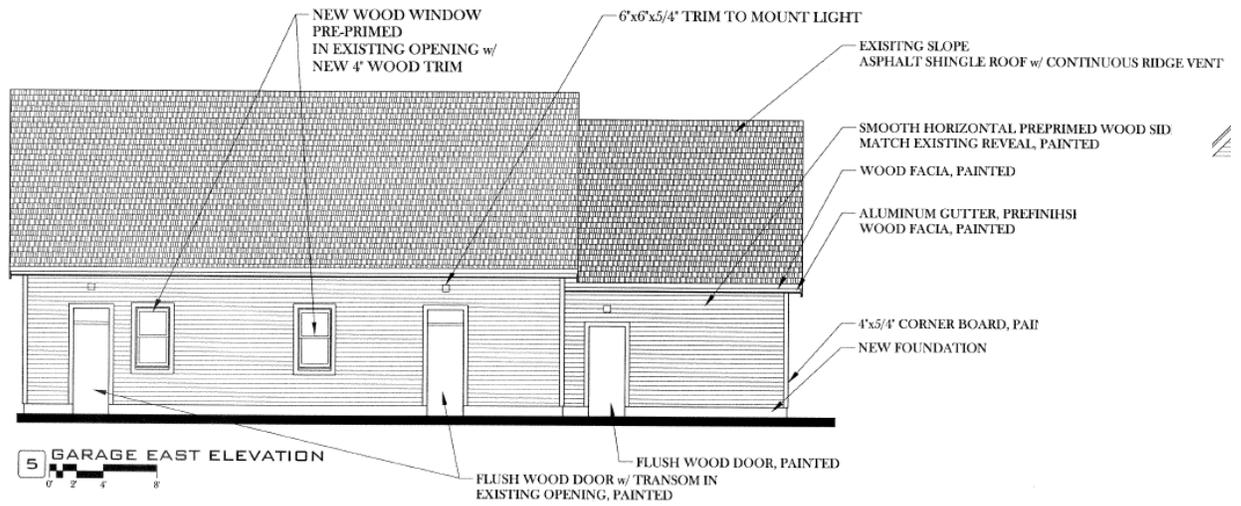
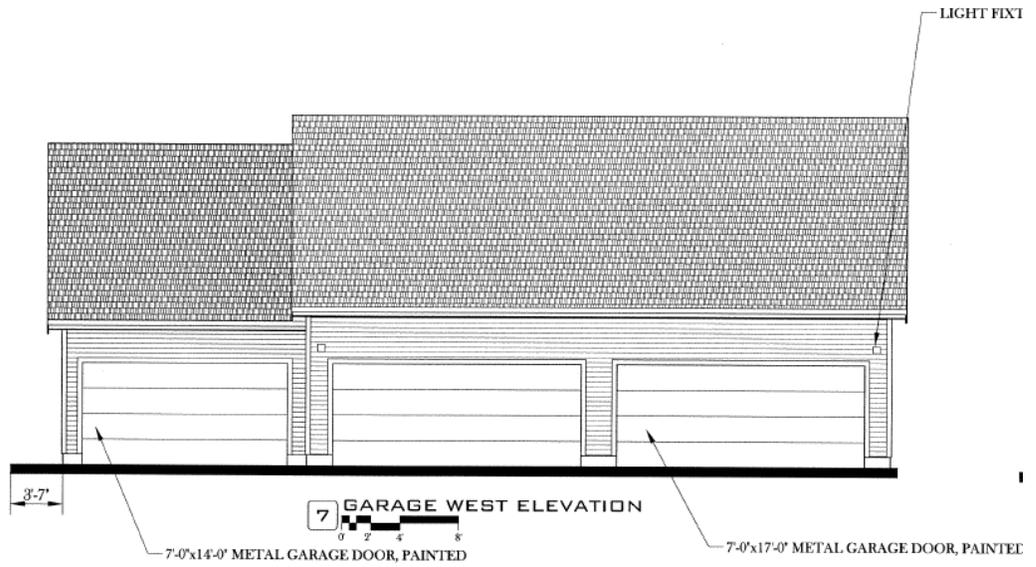


Drawn By: Darryl Gunyon darryl@greensitehomes.com	Green Site Homes, LLC 8530 Wilson Road, Indianapolis, IN 46278 317-752-1469	Project: Garage: 1826 N. Alabama St. Indianapolis, IN, Lot 97 & S. 1/2 Lot 98 Allen & Roots Addition	Date: 6-3-2010	Foundation Plan Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0"	Sheet 3 of 9
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Windows have determined to be non-historic after investigating the framing inside the structure. Applicant is proposing to eliminate the openings.





Building Review

for

**1826 Alabama Street
Indianapolis, IN**

Prepared for:

BB Construction Management, LLC
P.O. Box 44058
Indianapolis, IN 46244
Ph: (317) 636-1616

Prepared By:



112 S. Meridian Street
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By:

Christian C. Badger, PE

Date:

November 16th, 2009

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Job Number: 09-039

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be removed including the basement floor slab. The existing wood first floor will have to be removed so that a future slab can be replaced.



Figure 4. Holes in the floor boards

To reuse the remaining building; the structure will be required to be torn down and sorted into usable and non-usable wood.

C. Exterior Siding Issues

The exterior of the building is covered with lap siding which is in turn covered with ivy. Several pieces of the siding are missing and have allowed water to get behind the siding and into the wall. This water has caused damage to the wood. The lap siding has lost most of the white paint over the years and has warped pulling nails out or splitting the siding. The ivy has also caused damage to the wood work by borrowing into it. The amount of planing required to reuse the siding is impractical and the resulting pieces will be too thin to reuse.

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D. The Existing Second Floor

The existing second floor was removed and only the joists are showing now. The joists appear to be in fair condition and could be reused after cleaning and removal of the nails and other attached stuff.



Figure 7. Existing second story floor joist

E. The Existing Roof

The existing roof will have to be replaced because the building must be dismantled if it is to be reused. The roof is using a system of rafters and purlins with plywood, tar paper and shingles. The existing dormer and windows though out the carriage house will need to be replaced due to warping of the glass if it is still there.

F. Recommendation

To reuse this structure will require to much work for little to no benefit. The existing structure is not unique nor of exceptional quality to save. The building placement does not allow for the structure to be seen from Alabama Street. The entire foundation will have to be replaced as well as the first floor and all of the siding and windows. The required replacements will remove it from historic consideration. The final recommendation is to replace the entire structure and not to save anything of the former building.

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