



PLANNING COMMISSION STAFF REPORT

Originator Kris Aaker Assistant Planner	Meeting Date April 24, 2013	Agenda # B-13-13
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Recommended Action: Approve the variance as requested.

Project Description

A 4.17 foot side yard setback variance at 4515 Browndale Ave. to add living space less than the required 10 feet to the side yard but match the existing 5.8 foot side yard setback of the existing attached garage for owners: Bruce and Ann Christensen.

INFORMATION/BACKGROUND

The subject property is located in the north east corner of the intersection of Browndale Ave. and Bridge Street consisting of a 2 ½ story home with an attached three car garage loading from Bridge Street, (see attachments A.1 – A.6, site location, ariel photos, photos of adjacent neighbors). The property is located within the Historic Country Club District with certain improvements on properties including those proposed, requiring review and approval of the Heritage Preservation Board.

The owners are hoping to reduce the footprint of the existing attached garage, convert the area to a mud room/family room and add a detached three car garage in the rear yard. The new garage conforms to all of the ordinance requirements. The existing attached garage has a porch above, so there is living space at the same setback as the north wall of the garage.

The zoning ordinance requires a minimum 10 foot side yard setback for living space and 5 feet for a garage. The existing living space of the home is nonconforming and is located 8 feet from the north lot line on the 1st floor and 5 feet 10 inches to the side lot line on the second floor, (porch above the garage). The garage is located 5 feet 10 inches from the north lot line and conforms to the attached garage setback requirement of 5 feet. The garage cannot however, be converted to living space at the existing side yard setback without a variance, (it would bring the nonconforming living space on the 1st floor

closer to the side yard).

The ordinance would allow the continuance of the nonconforming 8 foot north side yard setback on the first floor and the 5.83 foot side yard setback on the second floor for living space given the alternate setback rule. The alternate setback standard will not, however, allow the first floor living space to extend into the garage area without the benefit of a variance, since the garage wall is closer to the side lot line. The porch above the garage requires the structural support of the side wall below to remain, so it is necessary to keep the side wall of the garage at the existing setback, (see attachments A.7 – A.22, photos, surveys and building plans).

The addition and new garage have been reviewed and approved by the Heritage Preservation Board on April 9, 2013, and received a Certificate of Appropriateness for the project, (see attachment A.22 – A.24, draft minutes of the Heritage Preservation Board).

The neighboring house adjacent to the expansion area is located 19 feet from the lot line so spacing between homes will remain at approximately 24 feet.

SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Surrounding Land Uses

Northerly: Single-dwelling homes.
Easterly: Single-dwelling homes.
Southerly: Single-dwelling homes.
Westerly: Single-dwelling homes

Existing Site Features

The subject property is 12,520 square feet in area. The existing home was built in 1935.

Planning

Guide Plan designation: Single-family detached
Zoning: R-1, Single Dwelling Unit District

Building Design

The proposal is to replace the existing garage with a mud room/family room with smaller living space area than the current garage footprint and to construct a three stall detached garage.

Compliance Table

	City Standard	Proposed
Front -	39feet	40.1feet
Side-	10+ height	*5.83 feet
Rear -	25 feet	49 feet
Building Height	2 ½ stories 30 feet to midpoint 35 feet to ridge	2 1/2 stories, 25.5 feet to midpoint, 32 feet feet to the ridge
Lot coverage	25%	25%

*** Variance Required**

Primary Issues

- **Is the proposed development reasonable for this site?**

Yes. Staff believes the proposal is reasonable for four reasons:

1. The proposed use is permitted in the R-1, Single Dwelling Unit Zoning District and complies with all requirements with the exception of the existing north wall setback of the garage.
2. The home conforms to the lot coverage requirements; is appropriate in size and scale for the lot and the improvements will enhance the property and not detract from neighborhood. The footprint of the room addition would be less than the existing attached garage and will continue to support the porch area above.
3. The improvements will provide a reasonable use of the site and improve on the existing conditions. Spacing between the proponent's and neighboring structures will remain the same. No setbacks will change on the home.
4. The home improvement and garage have been reviewed and approved by the Heritage Preservation Board. The plan has received a Certificate of Appropriateness.

- **Is the proposed variance justified?**

Yes. Per the Zoning Ordinance, a variance should not be granted unless it is found that the enforcement of the ordinance would cause practical difficulties in complying with the zoning ordinance and that the use is reasonable. As demonstrated below, staff believes the proposal does meet the variance standards, when applying the three conditions:

Section 850.0.Subd., requires the following findings for approval of a variance:

Minnesota Statutes and Edina Ordinances require that the following conditions must be satisfied affirmatively. The Proposed Variance will:

1) *Relieve practical difficulties that prevent a reasonable use from complying with ordinance requirements.*

Reasonable use does not mean that the applicant must show the land cannot be put to any reasonable use without the variance. Rather, the applicant must show that there are practical difficulties in complying with the code and that the proposed use is reasonable. "Practical difficulties" may include functional and aesthetic concerns.

Staff believes the proposed variance is reasonable. The small addition to the living space will match the existing setback of the north garage wall. A practical difficulty is the original placement of the home. At the time the home was built, different setback standards were in place, allowing living space to be closer to the side yards. The existing porch above the garage is at the proposed nonconforming setback of the garage side wall and requires the structural support of the wall below to remain.

2) *There are circumstances that are unique to the property, not common to every similarly zoned property, and that are not self-created?*

Yes. The unique circumstance is the existing setback of the garage with a porch above. The porch on the second floor could be expanded at the existing nonconforming setback as proposed on the first floor without the need for a variance. The first floor cannot expand closer to the north lot line without a variance given the rules for living space vs. garage area and for alternate setback standards. The alternate setback standards allows for matching an existing nonconforming setback, but only on the same floor as the encroachment.

3) Will the variance alter the essential character of the neighborhood?

No. The proposed improvements will not alter the essential character of the neighborhood. The footprint of the home will be reduced and spacing between structures, (home to the north), will remain the same. The detached garage conforms to the ordinance requirements and has received a Certificate of Appropriateness from the Heritage Preservation Board.

Staff Recommendation

Recommend that the Planning Commission approve the variance.

Approval is based on the following findings:

- 1) With the exception of the variance requested for side yard setback, the proposal would meet the required standards and ordinances for the R-1, Single Dwelling Unit District.

- 2) The proposal would meet the required standards for a variance, because:
 - a. The proposed use of the property is reasonable; as it slightly alters existing conditions without reducing setback or impacting the surrounding neighbors.

 - b. The imposed setback and existing attached garage location does not provide opportunity to convert garage to living space on the first floor.

 - c. The original placement of the home, closer to the north lot line, makes it difficult to adjust living spaces within the existing structure without the benefit of a side yard setback variance.

Approval of the variance is subject to the following conditions:

- 1) Subject to staff approval, the site must be developed and maintained in substantial conformance with the following plans, unless modified by the conditions below:
 - Survey date stamped: April 9, 2013.
 - Building plans/ elevations date stamped: April 9, 2013.

Deadline for a city decision: June 7, 2013



VARIANCE APPLICATION

CASE NUMBER B-13-13 DATE 4/9/2013
FEE PAID pd.

City of Edina Planning Department * www.cityofedina.com
4801 West Fiftieth Street * Edina, MN 55424 * (952) 826-0369 *
fax (952) 826-0389

FEE: RES - \$350.00 NON-RES - \$600.00

APPLICANT:

NAME: Jean Rehkamp Larson (Signature required on back page)
ADDRESS: 2732 W 43rd St. Minneapolis 55410 PHONE: 612-285-7275
EMAIL: jean@rehkamp Larson.com

PROPERTY OWNER:

NAME: Bruce + Ann Christensen (Signature required on back page)
ADDRESS: 4515 Browndale Ave. Edina 55424 PHONE: 952-927-5465

LEGAL DESCRIPTION OF PROPERTY (written and electronic form):

Country Club District, Brown Section, Lot 8, Block 5

**You must provide a full legal description. If more space is needed, please use a separate sheet.

Note: The County may not accept the resolution approving your project if the legal description does not match their records. This may delay your project.

PROPERTY ADDRESS: 4515 Browndale Avenue Edina, MN 55424

PRESENT ZONING: R-1 P.I.D.# 10-028-24-21-0041

EXPLANATION OF REQUEST:

Please see attached sheet

(Use reverse side or additional pages if necessary)

ARCHITECT: NAME: Jean Rehkamp Larson PHONE: 612-285-7275

EMAIL: jean@rehkamp Larson.com

SURVEYOR: NAME: Frank R. Cardarelle PHONE: 952-941-3631

EMAIL: _____

PLANNING DEPARTMENT
MAR 09 2013
CITY OF EDINA

Minnesota Statutes and Edina Ordinances require that the following conditions must be satisfied affirmatively. Please fully explain your answers using additional sheets of paper as necessary.

The Proposed Variance will:

YES

NO

Relieve practical difficulties in complying with the zoning ordinance and that the use is reasonable

Correct extraordinary circumstances applicable to this property but not applicable to other property in the vicinity or zoning district

Be in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the zoning ordinance

Not alter the essential Character of a neighborhood

(Please see attached sheet)

PLANNING DEPARTMENT
MAR 09 2013
CITY OF EDINA

City of Edina Planning Department

Variance for the property at 4515 Browndale Avenue

The owners of this 1935 brick colonial home wish to open up a dark, North facing kitchen and eating area by removing an existing attached garage which currently blocks light, views and access to their back yard. The proposed plan is to construct a family room/mudroom addition at the main level of the home, with a flat roof balcony above, similar to one that currently exists over the attached garage. The new addition will follow along the same line as the existing North façade as the garage did, in order to preserve the second story sunroom above.

Because the use of space is changing from an attached garage, which required a 5' side yard setback, to living space, which requires a 10' side yard setback, a variance is being sought for the portion of the addition that will encroach over the required side yard setback.

A detached garage proposed for the site respects both the 3' detached garage side and rear yard setbacks, and the 25% total lot coverage requirement. A variance is not required for the garage, but it is shown in the drawings for reference purposes.

The proposed Variance will:

Relieve practical difficulties in complying with the zoning ordinance and that the use is reasonable

Due to the location of the existing second level sunroom, and the wish to preserve it, the new addition sits directly below it to provide structural support along its North façade. The portion of the addition over the 10' side yard setback is 49.8 square feet, and ranges from 5'-4" to 5'-10" from the property line. A 39 square foot open entry porch on the Northeast corner of the addition will sit approximately 5'-4" from the property line, which meets the city of Edina's 3' setback requirements for an unenclosed porch.

Correct extraordinary circumstances applicable to this property but not applicable to other property in the vicinity or zoning district

The existing attached garage obstructs access to light and to the backyard from the kitchen. In an effort to improve the connection to the backyard and to increase natural light in the kitchen and through the main core of the home, the homeowners wish to add light filled living space in place of the attached garage on the East side of the home. The wish to preserve a second story sunroom requires the North façade of the new addition to remain in its current location and sit over the side yard setback. A flat roof on the addition serves as a small balcony off of the second level sunroom, replacing a much larger roof terrace on the garage that is being removed.

Be in harmony with the general purposes and intent of the zoning ordinance

We believe that the intent of the zoning ordinance is to allow for development and improvement of homes in a manner that maintains safety, character and massing of an existing home unto itself and in its established neighborhood. The proposed addition continues along the line of the existing attached garage, supporting the existing sunroom above. An 11'-4" stretch of the North side of the addition encroaches into the required side yard, and when structural support is no longer needed for the sunroom above, the addition steps back at the open porch, respecting the 10' side yard setback requirement. The removal of the attached garage and the addition of the new family room reduce a very long, flat stretch of the existing North façade by 16'-9".

Not alter the essential character of the neighborhood

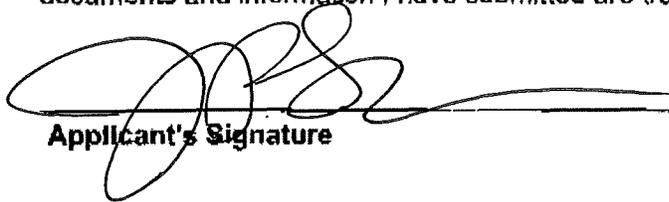
The new family room and mudroom addition has been carefully designed to respect the scale of the existing home and of the other homes in the neighborhood. The addition will tuck under an existing second floor sunroom, so the overall building height will not change from what currently exists. Traditional materials will be used on the addition and will match the character of the existing home. The proposed addition at 4515 Browndale Avenue seeks to retain the traditional detailing and quality craftsmanship of the 1935 home and of the surrounding historic Country Club neighborhood.

APPROVED
MAR 09 2013
CITY OF EDINA

APPLICANT'S STATEMENT

This application should be processed in my name, and I am the party whom the City should contact about this application. By signing this application, I certify that all fees, charges, utility bills, taxes, special assessments and other debts or obligations due to the City by me or for this property have been paid. I further certify that I am in compliance with all ordinance requirements and conditions regarding other City approvals that have been granted to me for any matter.

I have completed all of the applicable filing requirements and, to the best of my knowledge, the documents and information I have submitted are true and correct.



Applicant's Signature

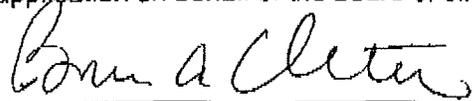
4.8.13

Date

OWNER'S STATEMENT

I am the fee title owner of the above described property, and I agree to this application.

(If a corporation or partnership is the fee title holder, attach a resolution authorizing this application on behalf of the board of directors or partnership.)



Owner's Signature

4/8/13

Date

Note. Both signatures are required (if the owner is different than the applicant) before we can process the application, otherwise it is considered incomplete.

MAR 09 2013

CITY OF...



side location

A-1



A.2



A.3



A.A



A-5



A-6



FRONT VIEW OF 4515 BROWDALE AVENUE



VIEW OF HOME AND ATTACHED GARAGE FROM BRIDGE STREET

A.7



VIEW OF NORTH ELEVATION, SHOWING LINE OF EXISTING ATTACHED GARAGE TO BE REMOVED AND REPLACED WITH SMALLER ADDITION BELOW THE SECOND STORY SUNROOM

PLANNING DEPARTMENT
MAR 09 2013
CITY OF EDINA

A. B



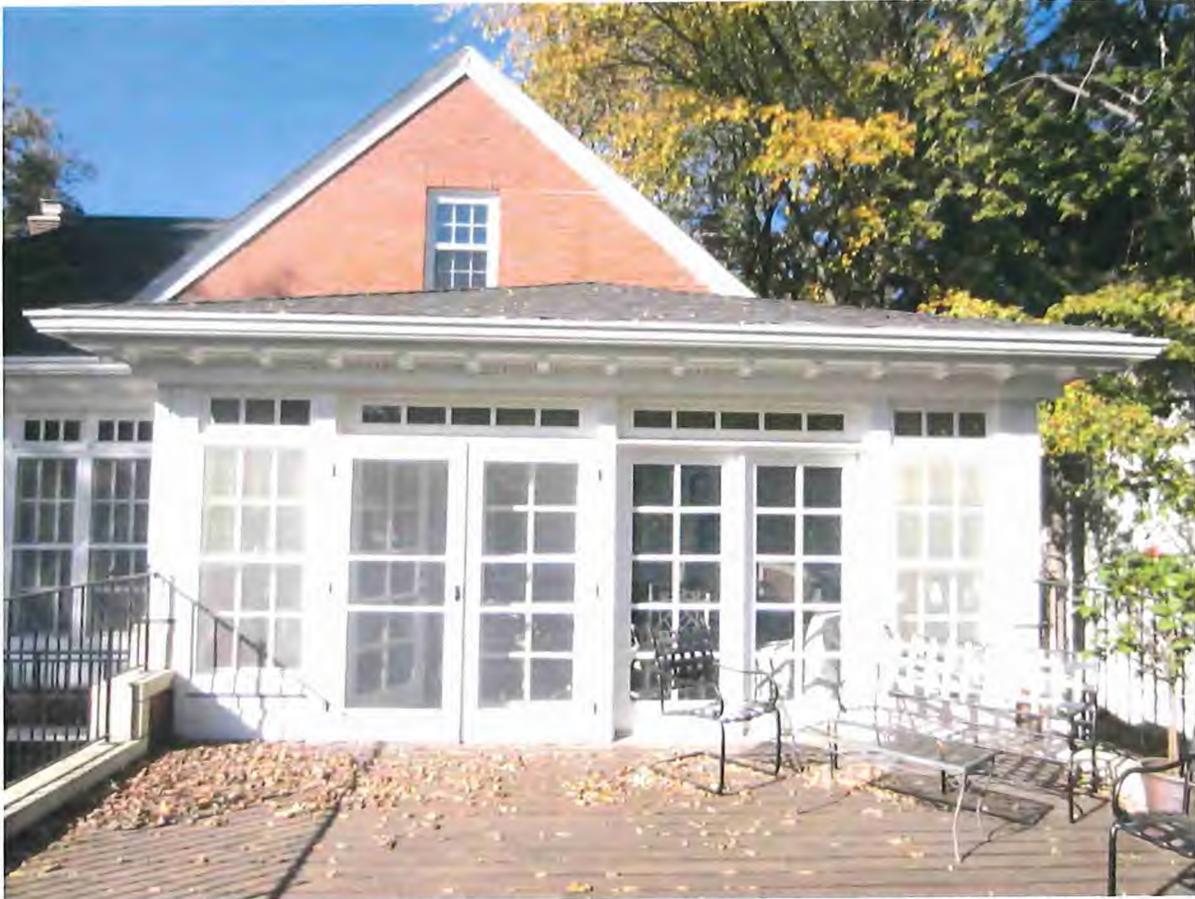
VIEW OF EXISTING NORTH ELEVATION OF HOME AND SIDE YARD



VIEW OF EXISTING SUNROOM AND RELATIONSHIP TO SIDE YARD

PLANNING DEPARTMENT
MAR 09 2013
CITY OF EDINA

A-9



EXTERIOR VIEW OF EXISTING SECOND LEVEL SUNROOM (TO REMAIN)



INTERIOR VIEW OF EXISTING SUNROOM

A.10

PLANNING DEPARTMENT
APR 09 2013
CITY OF EDINA



The Christensen Residence
Edina, Minnesota

GENERAL NOTE:
FULL SIZE SET: 24" X 36". SCALE AS NOTED.
HALF SIZE SET: 11" X 17". SCALE IS 1/2 OF NOTED.

REV. 12-08-13
MAR 09 2013
DR. [unclear]
Stable

REHKAMP LARSON ARCHITECTS INC.
2732 West 43rd Street, Mpls, MN 55410
Tel. 612-285-7275 Fax. 612-285-7274

The Christensen Residence
4515 Browndale Avenue
Edina, MN 55424

PROJECT PHASE:
Variance Set

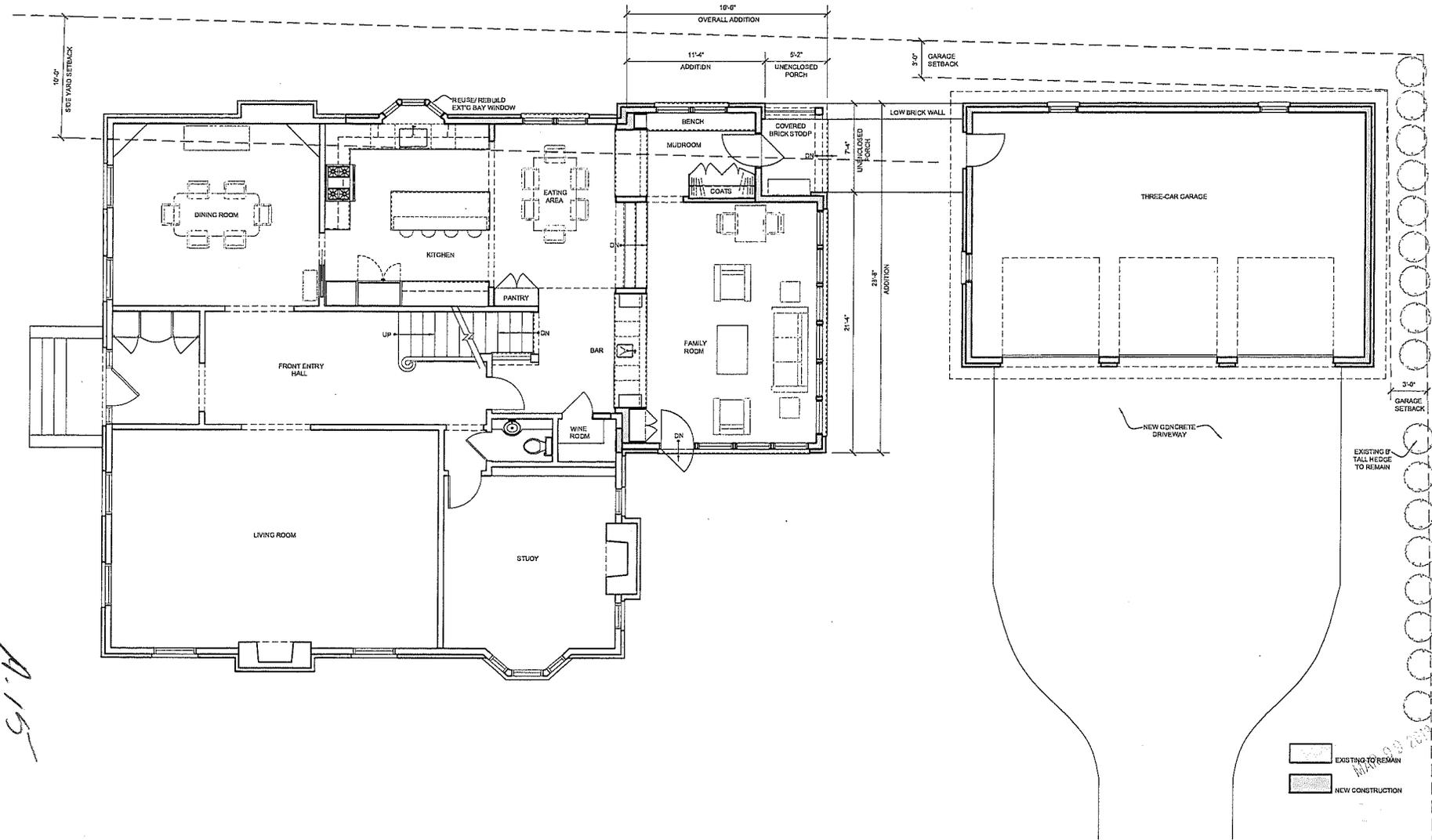
PROJECT NUMBER:
12-028

ISSUE DATE:
April 9, 2013

DRAWN BY:

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

A.11



A.15

1 MAIN LEVEL FLOOR PLAN
 Scale: 1/4"=1'-0" on 24x36 (1/8"=1'-0" on 11x17)



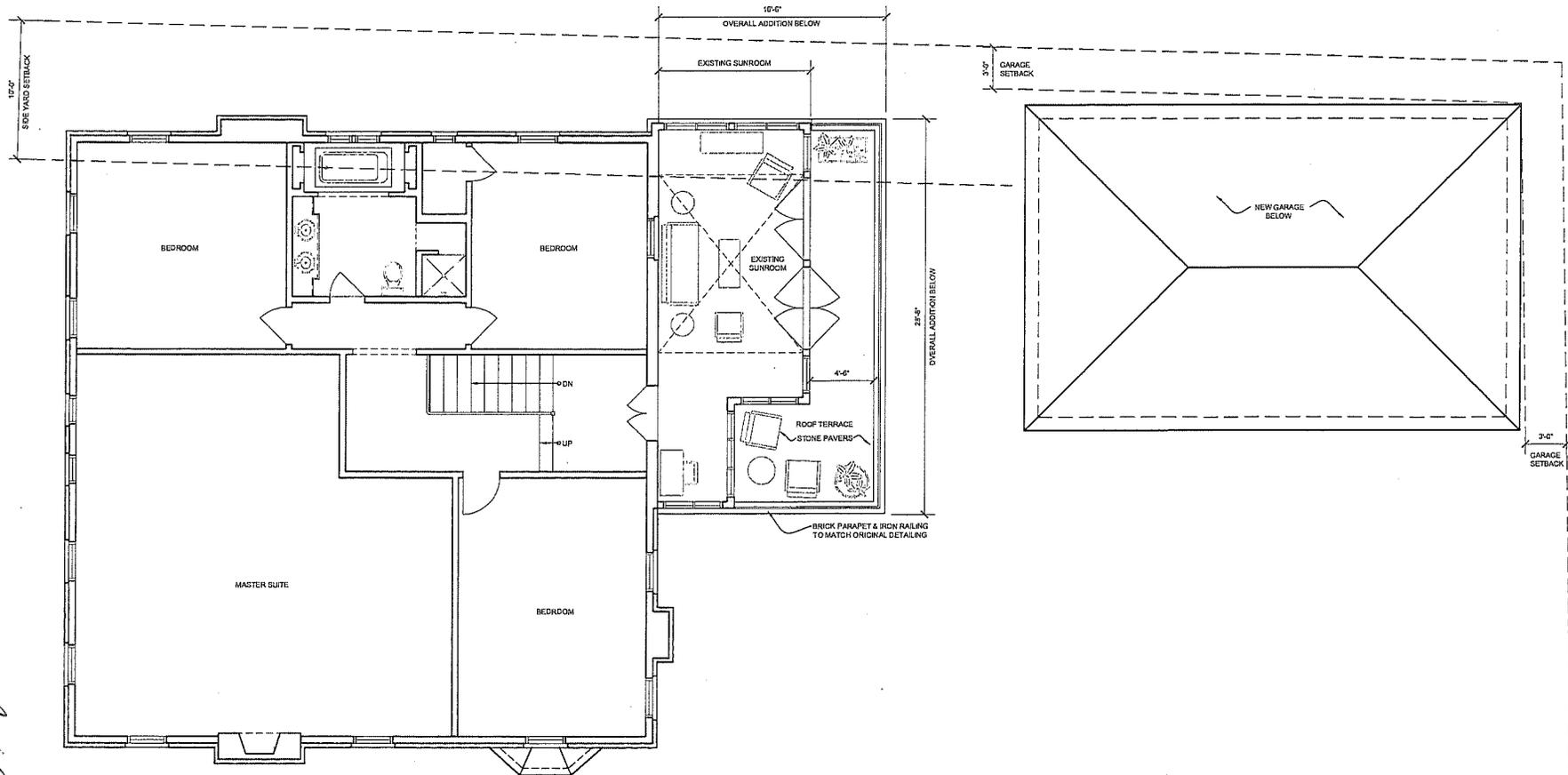
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ISSUE DATE:	April 9, 2013
DRAWN BY:	

A11
 MAIN LEVEL FLOOR PLAN

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION



1 UPPER LEVEL FLOOR PLAN
 Scale: 1/4"=1'-0" on 24x36 (1/8"=1'-0" on 11x17)



MAR 09 2013

REHKAMP LARSON ARCHITECTS INC.
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PROJECT PHASE:	Variance Set
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ISSUE DATE:	April 9, 2013
DRAWN BY:	

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

A12
 UPPER LEVEL FLOOR PLAN

A12



1 SOUTH ELEVATION (BEFORE)

Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0" on 24x36 (1/8" = 1'-0" on 11x17)

PROPERTY LINE



2 SOUTH ELEVATION (AFTER)

Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0" on 24x36 (1/8" = 1'-0" on 11x17)

NEW DETACHED GARAGE

PROPERTY LINE

REHKAMP LARSON ARCHITECTS INC.
2732 West 43rd Street, Mpls, MN 55410
Tel. 612-285-7275 Fax. 612-285-7274

The Christensen Residence
4515 Browndale Avenue
Edina, MN 55424

PROJECT PHASE:
Variance Set

PROJECT NUMBER:
12-028

ISSUE DATE:
April 9, 2013

DRAWN BY:

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

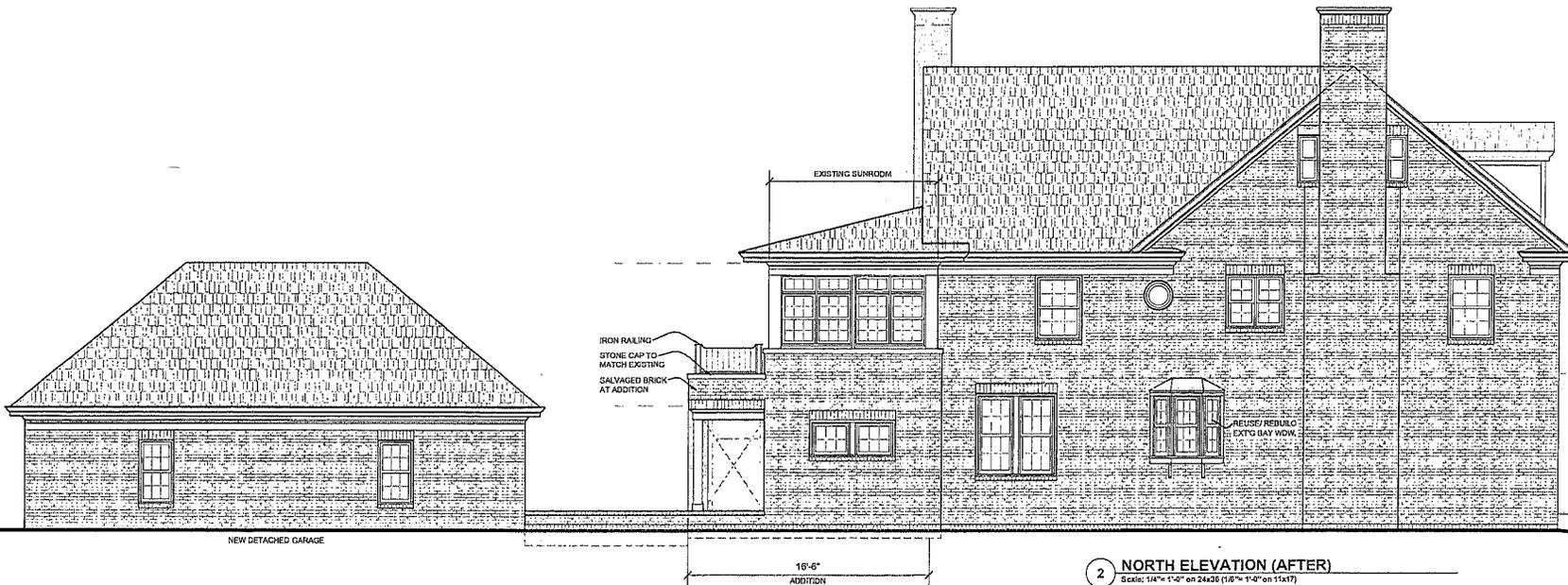
A20

BEFORE & AFTER
ELEVATIONS

A-17



1 NORTH ELEVATION (BEFORE)
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0" on 24x36 (1/8" = 1'-0" on 11x17)



2 NORTH ELEVATION (AFTER)
Scale: 1/4" = 1'-0" on 24x36 (1/8" = 1'-0" on 11x17)

PROPERTY LINE

PROPERTY LINE

REHKAMP LARSON ARCHITECTS, INC.
2732 West 43rd Street, Mpls, MN 55410
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The Christensen Residence
4515 Browndale Avenue
Edina, MN 55424

PROJECT PHASE:
Variance Set

PROJECT NUMBER:
12-028

ISSUE DATE:
April 8, 2013

DRAWN BY:

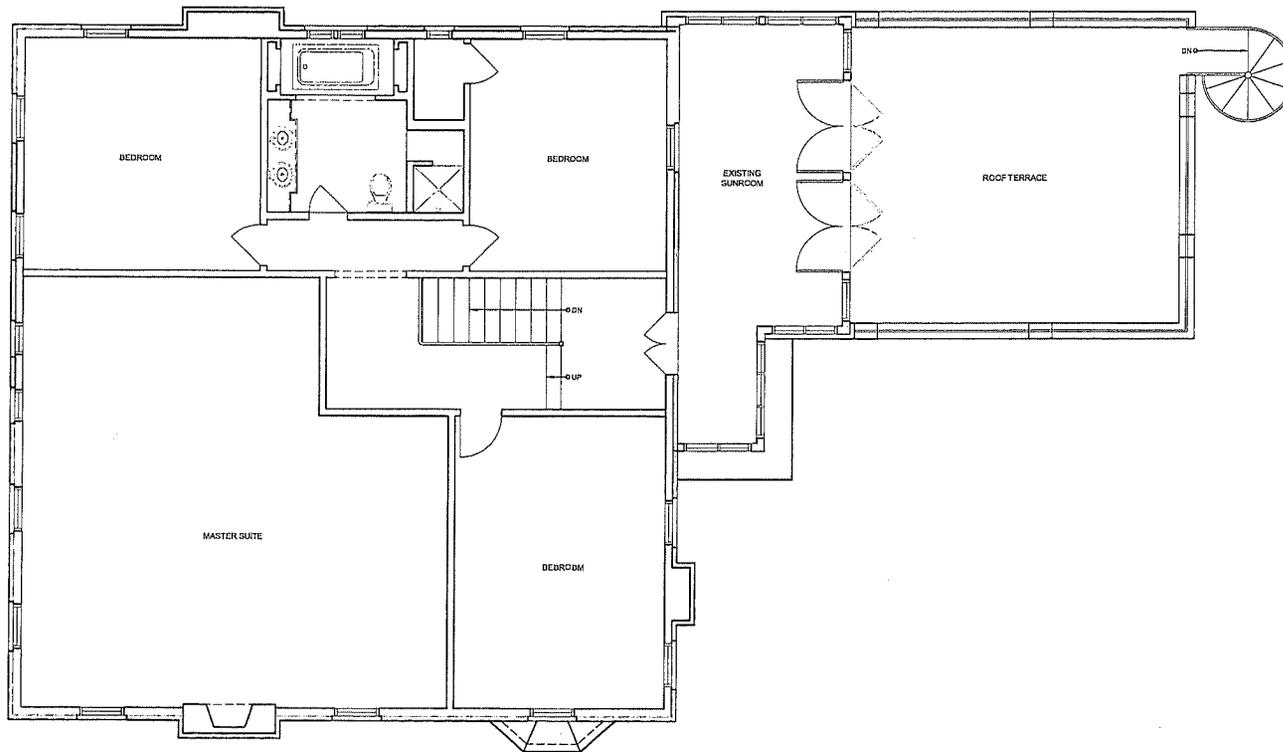
A22

BEFORE & AFTER
ELEVATIONS

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

MAY 3 2013

A-14



1 EXISTING UPPER LEVEL FLOOR PLAN
 Scale: 1/4"=1'-0" on 24x36 (1/8"=1'-0" on 11x17)



MAR 09 2013

REHKAMP LARSON ARCHITECTS INC.
 2732 West 43rd Street, Mpls, MN 55410
 Tel. 612-285-7275 Fax. 612-285-7274

The Christensen Residence
 4515 Browndale Avenue
 Edina, MN 55424

PROJECT PHASE:
 Variance Set

PROJECT NUMBER:
 12-028

ISSUE DATE:
 April 9, 2013

DRAWN BY:

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION

X12

EXISTING UPPER
 LEVEL PLAN

17.0

VII. REPORTS & RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Certificates of Appropriateness

I. H-13-3 4515 Browndale Avenue - Build a detached garage in the northeast Corner of the rear yard, and convert an attached garage to living space

Planner Repya reported that the subject property is located in the northeast corner of Browndale Avenue and Bridge Street. The existing home, a Colonial Revival style constructed in 1935, currently has a single story 3-car attached garage accessed by a driveway on the south side of the property on Bridge Street.

The Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) request entails the construction of a new detached garage in the northeast corner of the rear yard. The plans also include reducing the size of the attached garage and converting it to living space.

The proposed 736 square foot 3-car detached garage measures 21' 8" x 34' feet in area. A service door and window are provided on the west elevation, and 2 windows are shown on the north elevation. Access to the garage will be obtained through 3 single overhead doors on the south elevation from Bridge Street. A new curb cut and driveway from Bridge Street is proposed to accommodate the easterly placement of the new garage. The creation of a new easterly curb cut will require the existing curb cut be removed. Ms. Repya added that the design of the structure is proposed to compliment the style of the home with brick cladding on the walls and an asphalt shingled roof. The height of the garage is shown to be 19' 6" at the highest peak. The height at the mid-point of the gable is shown to be 14' 6", and a height of 9' 6" is provided at the eave line. The hip roof is designed with a 10/12 pitch, complementing the hip roof of the home. All dimensions for the proposed structure are consistent with the surrounding detached garages as well as the three stall garages previously approved by the HPB through the COA process.

The proposed location of the garage is 4.5' from the south and west property lines to accommodate the soffit overhang setback of 3 feet.

Ms. Repya pointed out that because the subject property is a corner lot, the conversion of the garage to living space is visible from a street facing façade (Bridge Street) requiring a review of the plans as part of the COA. The new space has been designed to provide a compatible use of the home while at the same time maintain the home's overall historic character. The square footage of the existing 672 sq. ft. attached garage space will be reduced for the conversion to living space to ensure that the total footprint of the structures on the lot does not exceed the 25% maximum allowed by the Zoning Ordinance. (The existing lot coverage is 21%, and the proposed lot coverage will be 25%).

Ms. Repya also explained that a side yard setback variance is required due to a non-conforming side yard setback from the north property line for the garage conversion to living space. It has been the policy for projects requiring both a COA and a variance to first receive the COA; and

once approved then move on to the Planning Commission for consideration of the variance request. The proposed detached garage complies with the required setback criteria and will not be subject to the variance.

Preservation Consultant Robert Vogel reviewed the proposed plans and opined that the design of the proposed new garage meets the general standards for new construction in the Country Club District plan of treatment. The plans submitted with the COA application describe a structure that appears to be compatible in size, scale, building materials, and texture with the historic house. The contemporary design is consistent with the standards for rehabilitation because it is compatible with the size, scale, color, material, and character of the property and the surrounding neighborhood. He added that the proposed new garage will not have an adverse effect on the historical significance and integrity of the property or the district as a whole; thus he recommended approval.

Regarding the proposed conversion of the attached garage to living space, Mr. Vogel observed that the plans meet the Secretary of the Interior's standards for rehabilitation and the design review guidelines of the district plan of treatment. The new addition will be visible from Bridge Street thus included in the COA review. The demolition of attached garages is considered appropriate in the Country Club District when the alteration makes possible an efficient contemporary use of the property while preserving those architectural features which are significant to its historical and architectural values. The plans presented demonstrate that no significant architectural character defining features of the home will be destroyed; and when the project is completed, the house will retain its distinguishing historical qualities. Mr. Vogel added that he was pleased to see that the applicant proposes to minimize the size and visual impact of the new addition. The plans submitted with the COA application show an addition that is compatible in scale, materials, and texture with the rest of the house; thus approval of the garage conversion to living space was also recommended.

Planner Repya concluded that she concurred with Consultant Vogel's evaluation of the proposed improvements to the property, noting that the detached garage is consistent with new garages previously reviewed in the district and conversion of the attached garage to living space will blend in well with the historic façade of the home; thus, she too recommended approval of the COA request.

Findings supporting the recommendation included:

- The plans provided with subject request clearly illustrate the scale and scope of the proposed projects.
- The proposed detached garage will complement the architectural style of the home and not be detrimental to the adjacent historic structures.
- The addition to the home visible from Bridge Street will preserve the structure's significant architectural character defining features and retain its distinguishing historical qualities.
- The information provided supporting the subject COA meets the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance and the Country Club District Plan of Treatment.

Ms. Repya also recommended the following conditions for approval:

- Subject to the plans presented; and
- The placement of a year built plaque on the exterior of the new detached garage.

Architect, Jean Rehkamp Larson was present to represent the applicant.

Member Christiaansen asked for clarification of the variance required and whether the homeowner had considered an alternative plan that would not require a variance. Ms. Rehkamp Larson explained that the variance is required because the existing home currently has a non-conforming side yard setback, and there would be no way to redesign the existing attached garage to living space without obtaining a variance.

Ms. Christiaansen also inquired about the amount of impervious space that would be provided with the proposed plan. Ms. Rehkamp Larson explained that the existing driveway/curb cut will be removed and the proposed plans will include a walkway from the detached garage to the rear of the home with a grassy area, and a small patio within the lot coverage allowance.

Member Mellom asked if the proposed plan would require the loss of any boulevard trees. Ms. Rehkamp Larson explained that there is a boulevard tree along Bridge Street that will not be adversely compromised by the proposed project. She added that the arborvitae hedge along Bridge Street will be removed to provide for the new driveway.

A brief discussion ensued among the board - members expressing how much they liked the project, agreeing that it is sensitive to the subject home as well as its surroundings.

Member Mellom then moved approval of the COA subject to the plans presented and a year built plaque be displayed on the exterior of the detached garage. Member Weber seconded the motion. All voted aye. The motion carried.

2. 4633 Drexel Avenue – Sketch Plan Review WITHDRAWN

B. Edina Heritage Award

Member Mellom reminded the board that she and student members Sarah Good and Nathan Johnson had agreed to take on the task of reviewing the 2013 Heritage Award nominations and recommending an award recipient for consideration by the HPB. Ms. Mellom pointed out that the two following nominations were received:

#1 6601 France Avenue – Southdale Center

Submitted by Robert L. Moore, HPB Member

SUMMARY: Simon Properties has recently completed a massive \$19.1 million renovation on Southdale Center. Gone are all the dated teal and gray colors of the 1990s and back in place are many of the wonderful mid-century aspects that harken back to the era during which the