



Department of Planning and Development

Staff Report to the Historic Districts Commission

June 24, 2021

3861 S. Adams Road New Construction and Landscaping	
REQUEST	Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a senior living building on the east portion of the lot and new parking, drives, and landscaping on the entire site
APPLICANT	Priya Living
FILE NO.	HDC # 21-001
PARCEL NO.	15-31-301-011
ZONING	R-4 with an FB-1 Flexible Business 1 overlay
HISTORIC DISTRICT	3861 S. Adams Road (Salmon Matthews House)
STAFF	Kristine Kidorf, Kidorf Preservation Consulting

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Request

The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to construct a two-story tall senior living facility with associated driveways and parking on the east two-thirds of the property as well as on an additional parcel to the south of the district. The existing stone house is not proposed to be used, but is proposed to be stabilized and made weathertight using doors and windows purchased by the current owner and stored on site.

Historical Information

The subject site is a single-resource historic district located on the east side of South Adams Road north of South Boulevard. The stone house is an upright and wing in the Greek Revival style. It is the only stone Greek Revival style house in Rochester Hills. It is significant for its architecture. The original two-room wood frame structure was constructed in 1824 by Salmon Matthews. In 1840 the stone upright and wing section was constructed on the west end of the frame structure, possibly by Daniel Grey. The house

underwent a major renovation in the 1950s, including the aluminum sided addition to the second floor of the south wing of the house. A second addition was constructed in 1985 and a detached garage was constructed in 1983.

The original survey sheet states that the house was used as part of the Underground Railroad during the Civil War. The original survey sheet states that the windows are of hand-blown glass. As of 2017 the windows had all been removed from the house, some of the wood frames remained. The 1983 detached garage did not contribute to the property and was demolished prior to 2017.

Previously a PUD was approved for the property to construct the Lorna Stone Village, a mixed-use development that never took place. The property is now owned by a church and the applicant is in the process of purchasing the property. In December 2011, the Commission approved the demolition of the rear addition and front porch and remodeling of the garage. A site visit in 2017 indicated that the additions as well as the garage have been demolished. Over the last five years the current owner tuckpointed the stone house and has stabilized the interior of the building as well as replaced the roof with new asphalt shingles and restoration of the wood soffit, fascia and cornice returns. In 2017 the Commission issued a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of the windows, reconstruction of a rear wall and blocking in of four existing window openings, installation of a new rear door, construction of a barrier free ramp, and the installation of cementitious siding on the portion of the building with aluminum siding. Not all of that work was completed but the owner purchased the doors and windows which are stored on site.

Review Considerations

The applicant is requesting a certificate of appropriateness to construct a 2-story tall, 110,079 square foot (assumed 55,039 sq. ft. per floor) senior living facility with associated parking and driveways on the east two-thirds of the parcel. The applicant proposes to stabilize and keep the existing house and will provide a landscape buffer between the new building and parking lot and the existing house.

Site – the applicant proposes reconstruct the existing driveway from Adams Road with a new, wider curb cut and driveway in the same location. The new drive will extend past the house to the proposed parking lot for the new building. The driveway is required by the fire department and will only be used in case of emergency. A gate near Adams Road is proposed. A crushed gravel pathway is proposed to meander through the front and side yard from the southeast corner of the new building parking lot to the pathway paralleling Adams Road. Interpretive signage is proposed near the intersection of the gravel path and Adams pathway. The lawn will be re-seeded with grass. Perennial foundation plantings are proposed for new beds around the perimeter of the house. The existing concrete patio will remain. Numerous new trees are proposed along the Adams pathway and the south lot line as well as the yard area to the south of the house.

A new driveway and parking area are proposed 37 feet east of the east side of the house. A landscape buffer consisting of deciduous and evergreen trees and shrubs are proposed on the west side of the parking area to screen the house from the parking area and building beyond. Fifteen-foot-tall light posts are proposed in the parking area and along the driveway near the house.

The new building will be surrounded by a driveway with parking spaces at various locations around the building. The main entrance and parking lot will be from South Boulevard on a parcel outside of the historic district.

House – The applicant proposes to stabilize the existing house by installing the windows and doors approved by the Commission in 2017 and purchased by the current owner which are stored on site. Some tuckpointing may be required. The applicant is not proposing to use the house but will maintain the exterior and provide

historic research and interpretation regarding the property that will be made available to the public through interpretive signage and through the Rochester Hills Museum at Van Hoosen Farm.

New Building – The west edge of the new building is proposed to be 96’ east of the rear wall of the house. It is proposed to be two stories tall with a combination of flat, shed, and gable roofs clad in asphalt shingles. The west elevation of the building closest to the house will have walls clad in a combination of brick and 4” cement lap siding. The windows and doors are proposed to be vinyl with a variety of opening sizes and configurations. The balcony railings will be painted steel. The front of the new building will be clad in a combination of brick veneer and cement panels. The footprint of the new building is somewhat E-shaped with four courtyards, two internal and two opening to the south side of the building.

The applicant indicates the following materials will be used for the project:

1. Existing house – previously purchased and approved aluminum-clad wood windows with thermopane glass, wood for the new rear door;
2. Site – gravel pathway through the yard, Adams pathway will be 8’ wide asphalt; Adams driveway apron and drive will be asphalt with concrete curb and gutters; new parking area and circulation drive around the new building will be asphalt with concrete curb and gutter; the driveway gate at Adams is of an unknown material and appearance; various deciduous and evergreen trees and bushes throughout, unknown perennials
3. New building – brick veneer, cement lap siding and panels; asphalt shingles

Summary

1. The house is a single resource historic district. The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the following: reconstruction, widening, and lengthening of existing driveway and driveway cut to Adams Road; stabilization of existing house including installation of approved windows and doors; new gravel pathway, lawn and gardens around the house; construction of a two-story tall 110,079 square foot living facility with circulation driveway and parking areas.
2. Staff comments – although the proposed new building is much larger than the existing house the building and surrounding drive and parking are far enough away from the house that with the proposed landscaping between the house and new parking lot, the building will not be very visible. Since the driveway next to the house will only be for emergency use the amount of traffic near the house will not increase. Although the work and landscaping as proposed will change the character and setting of the house, it will not destroy any historic or character defining features.
3. The applicant is in the process of submitting the proposed plans to the City’s Planning and Building Departments for a formal review. Any work performed in connection with this project will be required to meet all zoning and building codes, rules and regulations.

Potential Motion

(Subject to adjustment based on Commission discussion)

MOTION, in the matter of File No. HDC 21-001, that the Historic Districts Commission **APPROVES/DENIES** the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the reconstruction, widening, and lengthening of existing driveway and driveway cut to Adams Road; stabilization of existing house including installation of approved windows and doors; new gravel pathway, lawn and gardens around the

house; construction of a two-story tall 110,079 square foot living facility with circulation driveway and parking areas as proposed for the single-resource historic district located at 3861 South Adams Road, Parcel Identification Number 15-31-301-011, with the following Findings and Conditions:

Findings:

1. The property is a single resource historic district, the proposed reconstruction, widening, and lengthening of existing driveway and driveway cut to Adams Road; stabilization of existing house including installation of approved windows and doors; new gravel pathway, lawn and gardens around the house; construction of a two-story tall 110,079 square foot living facility with circulation driveway and parking areas **appear to /do not appear to** destroy any character defining features of the property.
2. The materials and design for the driveway gate at Adams and final building and site design must be submitted for approval by **staff/Commission**.
3. The proposed reconstruction, widening, and lengthening of existing driveway and driveway cut to Adams Road; stabilization of existing house including installation of approved windows and doors; new gravel pathway, lawn and gardens around the house; construction of a two-story tall 110,079 square foot living facility with circulation driveway and parking areas **are/are not** in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standard for Rehabilitation and Guidelines, in particular, standards 2, 9 and 10 as follows:
 - 2) *The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces, and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.*
 - 9) *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction will not destroy historic materials, features, and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.*
 - 10) *New additions and adjacent or related new construction will be undertaken in a such a manner that, if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*