



Department of Planning and Development

Staff Report to the Historic Districts Commission

January 2, 2024

1385 S. Adams – New signage

REQUEST	Replace an existing sign with a larger sign near the street
APPLICANT	Somerset Early Childhood Center – Printnology Inc.
FILE NO.	PHDC2023-0011
PARCEL NO.	70-15-20-151-022
ZONING	R-1 One Family Residential
HISTORIC DISTRICT	Lawnridge Hall, 1385 S. Adams
STAFF	Kristine Kidorf, Kidorf Preservation Consulting

In this Report:

Request	1
Review Considerations	2
Summary	2
Potential Motions	2

Request

This is an application for the replacement of an existing monument sign along Adams Road with a larger monument sign that will be set behind the sidewalk outside of the required clear view area. The property contains a Colonial Revival style house constructed c. 1928, a garage, storage shed, a ranch house, and large church building. According to the 2002 *Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey* the house is known as Lawnridge Hall.

The subject property is located on the east side of Adams Road adjacent to the Christian Hills neighborhood. It is a non-contiguous single property district and is currently zoned R-1 One Family Residential.

Historical Information

The 2002 *Rochester Hills Historic Districts Survey* indicates that the house was constructed for Donald C. Wilson, brother of Alfred G. Wilson, owner of Meadowbrook Hall. About 1936 the thirty-acre property was sold to Alfred. In 1957 eighteen acres of the property, including the house, was sold to the Presbytery of Detroit for the creation of University Presbyterian Church. The house is significant for its Colonial Revival architecture.

Review Considerations

It is proposed to remove an existing, smaller sign located at the north side of the existing north driveway cut between the sidewalk and street, and construct a new, larger sign that will be located to the south side of the same driveway cut behind the sidewalk. The proposed sign will be 4'6" tall and 6' wide, with an overall height of 6' above ground level. The 2-sided painted aluminum sign will have dimensional letters and vinyl graphics and be mounted between two posts.

The applicant has indicated that the following materials will be used for the project:

1. The sign will be 2-sided painted aluminum with dimensional letters and vinyl graphics. The material of the posts supporting the sign was not specified. There does not appear to be any lighting associated with the new sign.

Summary

1. The property is a single resource non-contiguous district, Lawnridge Hall, constructed about 1928, and is significant for its architecture.
2. The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness to remove an existing aluminum sign and construct a new larger aluminum sign that will be installed on the south side of the north driveway cut behind the sidewalk.
3. Staff offers the following comments on the proposed work. The existing and proposed sign are located at the northwest corner of the property, a large distance away from the historic house. The proposed sign will likely not be visible from the house due to the existing trees between the sidewalk and buildings. The existing sign is not historic and the new sign will not destroy any character defining features of the property. The work as proposed meets The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, in particular standard numbers 9 and 10.
4. Any work performed in connection with this project will be required to meet all zoning and building codes, rules, and regulations.

Potential Motions

(Subject to adjustment based on Commission discussion)

MOTION, in the matter of File No. PHDC2023-0011, that the Historic Districts Commission **APPROVES/DENIES/POSTPONES** the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for removal of the existing sign and installation of the new sign in the new location as proposed at 1385 S. Adams Road, Lawnridge Hall, Parcel Identification Number 70-15-20-151-022, with the following Findings and Conditions:

- 1) The proposed removal of the existing sign and construction of the new sign **is/is not** appropriate;
- 2) The proposed removal of an existing sign and construction of a new sign as proposed **is/is not** in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines, in particular standard numbers 9 and 10 as follows:

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, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

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.

