



**Department of Planning and Development**  
 Staff Report to the Historic Districts Commission

May 4, 2012

<b>3861 S. Adams Road Garage Removal</b>	
<b>REQUEST</b>	Certificate of Appropriateness for removal of garage
<b>APPLICANT</b>	Michael J. Gordon, AIA, Moiseev/Gordon Associates, Inc.
<b>FILE NO.</b>	HDC 12-004
<b>PARCEL NO.</b>	15-31-301-011
<b>ZONING</b>	R-4 with a FB-1 Flexible Business 1 overlay
<b>HISTORIC DISTRICT</b>	3861 S. Adams Road (Salmon Matthews House)
<b>STAFF</b>	Jim Breuckman, AICP, Manager of Planning

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**Request**

The subject site is located on the east side of South Auburn Road north of South Boulevard. 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. The lot is developed with an existing one-family Greek Revival stone upright and wing house constructed in 1824 and 1840. Additions to the house were constructed in the 1950s and in 1985. A detached garage was constructed in 1983. The applicant received HDC approval of Certificate of Appropriateness for Phase I of a larger project in December of 2011.

Phase I consists of rehabilitating the stone house by removing the east (rear) and west (front) additions, removing the vinyl siding, replacing the windows and doors, cleaning and tuckpointing the stone exterior walls; installing new aluminum gutters and downspouts, repairing the garage and installing a new gravel parking lot behind the house. Future phases may include a glass connector to a new school building, paved parking lots, and a new church building at the rear of the property, although those plans have not been finalized.

At this time the applicant is asking approval to remove the garage on the site.

## Historical Information

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The subject site is a single-resource historic district. 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 original frame structure is reported to still exist within part of the east addition although it was heavily altered in 1950 and during later additions. The front porch and addition that is east of the original 1824 structure are not contributing features to the house. It is not known if any of the 1824 house and original or older front porch structure remains within the new enclosures.

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. Although it is difficult to tell with the boards it appears that the windows in the stone house are still original.

The 1983 detached garage does not contribute to the property.

*Photograph of the garage taken December, 2011:*



## Review Considerations

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The detached non-historic garage is structurally sound and salvageable, but is in a state of disrepair. The applicant is requesting to remove the garage instead of repairing it as previously proposed.

## Summary

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1. The house is a single resource historic district. The house is historic, but the garage is not, being constructed about 30 years ago.
2. The applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the removal of the garage.

## Potential Motion

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(Subject to adjustment based on Commission discussion)

**MOTION**, in the matter of File No. HDC 12-004, that the Historic Districts Commission **APPROVES/DENIES** the request for a Certificate of Appropriateness for the removal of the non-historic detached garage accessory to the house located in 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, however the garage is not a contributing feature to the district. No changes to contributing features are proposed at this time.
2. The plans for the removal of garage **will not / will** remove any character defining features of the district.
3. The proposed additions and rehabilitation of the existing non-contributing resource **are/are not** in keeping with the Secretary of the Interior's Standard for Rehabilitation and Guidelines Number 2:
  - 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.*

\* If denying – include reason for denial along with information about how to correct the application and how to reapply.

### Conditions of Approval:

(Only necessary if approval is being granted)

1. Care will be taken to not damage or destroy historic materials on the house during the removal of the additions.
2. All work proposed for the subject site shall receive all appropriate Building Department permits prior to any work being performed.
3. No work is being requested or approved regarding other outbuildings or site features on the property at this time.