

ENGINEERING AMERICA CO.

76 WASHINGTON ST. SARATOGA SPRINGS, NY 12866

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TRANSMITTAL SHEET

TO: Design Review Commission	FROM: Tonya Yasenchak
COMPANY: City of Saratoga Springs	DATE: November 9, 2016
FAX NUMBER:	TOTAL NO. OF PAGES INCLUDING COVER: 2
PHONE NUMBER:	SENDER'S REFERENCE NUMBER:
RE: Obstarczyk Demo #147 Spring St., Saratoga Springs, NY	YOUR REFERENCE NUMBER:

URGENT FOR REVIEW PLEASE COMMENT PLEASE REPLY AS REQUESTED

Dear DRC Members,

Engineering America Co, on behalf of the Obstarczyk's, the owners of #147 Spring St., has submitted a variance application to the City of Saratoga Springs Zoning Board of Appeals for the removal of the existing accessory structure and construction of a new accessory structure to meet their garage and storage needs. The project, located within a Historic District, requires DRC review as part of the process for the removal of the existing structure and new construction. However, due to the correct City process, the project needs to go before the ZBA prior to the DRC due to the proposed new building location requiring setback variances. Currently, the ZBA has requested that the DRC provide an advisory opinion regarding the removal of the accessory building.

Engineering America Co. presented information to the DRC for discussion at their 11/2/16 meeting. Following the correct City review process, EACo. is not able to make a formal application for demolition until any variances are granted. We understand that should the project receive the requested variances, a fully complete application for demolition & new construction, with supporting materials, will be provided to the DRC for further review. This correspondence is intended to answer questions and comments which arose during the meeting by DRC and the Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation as follows:

- 1) Historic Review Ordinance: Demolition request requirements
 - a. Applicant shall document “good faith” efforts in seeking an alternative that will result in the preservation of the structure including consultation with the DRC and Saratoga Springs Preservation Foundation. The relocation of structures may be permitted as an alternative to demolition.
 - i. The DRC has been to the site twice to review the project and the condition of the existing structure. At the most recent site meeting of 11/7/16, the DRC was able to walk thru the building to observe structural elements of the structure as well as view the location of the building relative to the neighbors’ home.
 - ii. The alternative of lifting the structure, installing a foundation and rebuilding / repairing the structure in it’s existing location is not feasible.
 1. The current structure is less than 1’ from the property line & less than 6’ from the neighboring house.
 2. The neighbors are not amenable to this option as it would include construction vehicles, workers, and structural blocking which may cause substantial disturbance to their property.
 3. The current condition of the existing structure, with rotted studs & few or no sill plates, would substantially limit the ability to safely lift the structure.
 - iii. The alternative of lifting the structure and moving it to another location within the site is also not feasible.
 1. The current structure is less than 1’ from the property line & less than 6’ from the neighboring house.
 2. The neighbors are not amenable to this option as it would include construction vehicles, workers, and structural blocking which may cause substantial disturbance to their property.
 3. The current condition of the existing structure, with rotted studs & few or no sill plates, would substantially limit the ability to safely lift & move the structure.
 4. The existing house deck and lot width would limit safe relocation of the structure.
- 2) The applicant shall document efforts to find a purchaser interested in acquiring and preserving the structure.
 - a. The Obstarczyk’s purchased the property in April 2016 with the intention of preserving the structure. However, costs for such a preservation project, as well as site logistics, have made such a project very difficult, if not impossible. They do not desire to sell their new home & have thus not placed their home on the market to find a purchaser to preserve the structure. Any new owner would be faced with the same limitations.

- b. The Ostarczyk's have not made any efforts to find a purchaser for just the structure due to the deteriorated condition of the building's structural elements.
- 3) The applicants shall demonstrate that the structure cannot be adapted for any other permitted use, whether by the current owner or by a purchaser, which would result in a reasonable return.
 - a. Current Saratoga zoning regulations do not allow for any use of an accessory structure for habitable or conditioned space without a variance.
 - b. The current size of the structure at 16' depth would not adequately allow for the storage of vehicles (typically requiring 18' min).
- 4) The applicant shall submit evidence that the property is not capable of earning a reasonable return with "dollar & cents proof provided." The applicant will be providing this information at the time of the DRC application. However, the following additional costs for attempted preservation should adequately provide a preliminary sense of hardship:
 - a. Cost of lifting the structure in place for construction and relocation: \$7,000 (+/-)
 - b. Cost of repairs to neighbor's fence, landscaping, etc.: \$1,000 (+/-)
 - c. Additional construction costs (to be determined at time of DRC application) would also be involved when removing or sistering studs, removing existing roofing for replacement of sheathing, removing & replacing siding, etc.
- 5) Acceptable Post- Demolition plans for the new building and site will be provided at the time of formal DRC application. Preliminary plans have been submitted for review. The following elements will be included in the proposed plans:
 - a. The proposed building is intended for the storage of 2 vehicles.
 - b. Relocating a new structure 3' from the property line would allow for wood siding & materials instead of non-combustible materials and fiber cement board siding.
 - c. More than 50% of the existing structure needs to be replaced to meet NYS Building Codes. This not only involves additional costs (if attempting preservation), but also results in a renovated structure that holds no semblance to the original structure:
 - i. The 1st floor walls need to be either sistered or replaced. This constitutes over 75% of the walls being replaced
 - ii. 100% of the wall sheathing is required; the current siding acts as sheathing but does not meet NYS Code
 - iii. 100% of the siding needs to be replaced due to it's condition.
 - iv. 100% of the roof sheathing needs to be replaced
 - v. At best 50% of the roof finish needs to be replaced. The old tin roof is not salvageable. Some of the slate may be salvageable.

- d. The Owners are open for continued discussion with the DRC regarding options for the design of a new accessory structure to be consistent with the character of the existing home and the historic nature of the neighborhood. Additional options will be submitted during the DRC review process.

We thank the DRC for your time and advisory opinion. We respect the review process and will be submitting a formal application with supporting documentation after determination from the ZBA.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Tonya Yasenchak, PE