



Cade Sterling &lt;csterling@cityofevanston.org&gt;

## Comments on Preservation Commission Meeting, 5/10/2022: 1217 Michigan

Langdon E. Alger [REDACTED]  
 To: Cade W Sterling <csterling@cityofevanston.org>  
 Cc: Pamela Marie Alger [REDACTED]

Sun, May 8, 2022 at 7:06 PM

Dear Cade,

We would like to offer comments on the proposed update to the property at [1217 Michigan Ave, Evanston](#). Whereas we have specific items to mention given the historic building standards, we have to also say that we are surprised that this proposal is being offered as it is, given the original proposal was "reconsidered due to denial of proposed Minor Zoning Relief".

Here are our comments regarding the applicability to construction standards as referenced in the Staff Report for this project,

### Alteration

1. The proposed garage will cause a major alteration of the overall lot, in that it will visually become a part of the existing house, which already has significant bulk compared to the lot size. In addition, the proposed garage's location, size, and height will significantly alter the environment for the historic apartment building next door.
2. Note that the character and structure of the existing garage, driveway, and security fence all seem to have disregarded the original qualities of the house long ago.
3. The proposed garage would not have been a product of its "own time", as garages built around the turn of the 20th century were typically small, detached and well-separated from the main house. Additionally they originally did not have an expansive concrete driveway, as they usually had no concrete at all (or at a maximum, a pair of straight concrete strips leading to the garage door).
4. Again, the changes which have taken place in the course of time for this building do not seem to be very preserving of history.
5. No comment.
6. The proposed garage design, the placement of the garage, the trellis, the garden wall, the pool & the deck do not, in any way, "match the material being replaced". Nor are they "accurate duplications of features, substantiated by historic, physical, or pictorial evidence" in any manner.
7. No comment.
8. The placement and size of the proposed garage significantly opposes this standard's edict to "protect and preserve archaeological resources affected by, or adjacent to, any project". As already stated this is because the entire North side of the apartment building adjacent to 1217 Michigan will have its light, openness, and accessibility adversely affected by the new garage's bulk and location.
9. Again, the new structures and accessories are completely incompatible "with the features, size, scale, proportion, massing, color, material and character of the ... neighborhood and environment." The neighborhood is very open and airy, especially due to the open boulevard across the street. Yet the proposed work at 1217 Michigan visually tightens up their entire lot and dramatically increases its visual bulk.
10. No comment.

### Construction

1. *Height*. Historically, garages were just big enough to house the early automobiles. The proposed garage has a height which peaks above the house's 2nd floor level, which makes the garage act more like an addition to the house.
2. No comment.
3. *Proportion of openings*. The proposed garage has a very wide door, which is visually incompatible with the rest of the site. In addition, such a wide garage door was not characteristic of the early garages. It seems as though the garage door should be altered so that at least visually it appears that there are 2 doors.
4. *Rhythm of solids to voids in facades*. The placement of the garage completely eliminates an existing void which currently exists between the house and the existing garage, which definitively interrupts the existing rhythm of solids to voids.
5. *Rhythm of spacing and structures on streets*. The proposed design makes the entire lot appear to be fully loaded, especially when looking at it from across the street. The remainder of the homes on both sides of the boulevard

have much more openness, and most assuredly do not have solid front fences which close off the home from the rest of the neighborhood.

- 6 *Rhythm of entrance porches, storefront recesses and other projections* While not being considered, the existing security fence already causes a significant departure from the rest of the street - setting back the garage and opening the flow. A proposal to replace the fence with something more period-appropriate and less bulky would go a long way towards improving it.
- Relationship of materials and texture* The proposed stone wall has no relationship to any existing structure or features on the existing property.
8. No comment.
9. No comment.
- 10 *Scale of a structure* The proposed garage eliminates all "open space" when looking at the Western exposure, as there is no opening whatsoever from the North end of the lot to the South end. The house already has an expansive amount of living and working space, given it has 3 floors above the basement and is a large structure. Adding an additional 650 square feet of garage space adds a vast amount of scale to an already large amount of bulk.
11. No comment.
12. *Original qualities.* The removal of the existing garage will definitely help in this regard. However, the bulk and location of the proposed garage seems inappropriate compared to what it would have been like prior to the current garage. Additionally, the proposed trellis, stone wall, and pool all act in concert toward eliminating any of the lot's original qualities. And finally, the proposed additional space for "spa equipment", as well as the pool itself, will completely change the original quality of life for all neighbors located all 360° around that spot.
13. The proposed location of the garage will make it difficult for the historic apartment building next door to "protect and preserve [it] archaeological resource", as maintenance to the apartment building's exterior facade will become difficult given how close the garage is being placed to the apartments.
14. *Innovative design.* The proposed design seems to violate this standard given the phrase: "additions do not destroy significant historic, cultural or architectural material". Specifically, it negatively impacts the historic nature of openness and practical usage of light for the adjacent apartment building.
15. No comment.
16. *New Construction.* The proposed garage design does not nod towards the existing architecture of the house, but it is definitely incompatible with the existing apartment building to the South. The main reason for that is because the garage will butt up against the historic apartment building, and will also block a few of the adjacent building's windows. It should be noted that the apartment's windows are critical components for the apartment building, not only because they provide light and air circulation to inhabitants, but also because they themselves are historic. In fact, the windows in all of the apartment buildings are the originals from the building in 1901, as are the panes within those windows. Also note that Page 41 of the agenda provides a misleading view of the proposed garage and its location, as the East-most windows were not included in the rendering, and it appears as if no blockage would occur.

In conclusion, we recommend to the board that this plan be revised once again to improve upon the infractions to standard mentioned above.

Respectfully submitted,

Langdon E. & Pamela M. Alger  
[1213 Michigan Ave Apt 2](#)  
[Evanston, IL 60202](#)



Cade Sterling &lt;csterling@cityofevanston.org&gt;

---

**Regarding 1217 Michigan Avenue - Landmark - Lakeshore Historic District - 22PRES-0049**

---

**Steven Denenberg** [REDACTED]  
To: Cade Sterling <csterling@cityofevanston.org>

Mon, May 9, 2022 at 8:53 AM

I would like to submit these comments to the Historic Preservation Commission regarding Case 22PRES-0049 for their consideration.

Regarding 1217 Michigan Avenue - Landmark - Lakeshore Historic District - 22PRES-0049

This plan should not receive a Certificate of Appropriateness.

In this proposal the replacement garage is not located in an appropriate place.

It is inappropriate placement in consideration of the history of the location, and if placed as proposed it would be visually incompatible with its environs.

If allowed this plan will radically change a site-this groupings of building and the space between them- that has been essentially unchanged for 122 years.

It will be a radical change as viewed from the public by-ways and a very radical, dramatic change as viewed by its immediate neighbors.

By its proposed location the replacement garage violates at least these several of the Construction Standards that the HPC is considering.

It violates enough of the standards so significantly as to be found inappropriate overall.

**Standard 1-Height**

The proposed placement of the replacement garage- two stories, 28 ft at the top, and 3 feet from its neighboring landmark structure- is not visually compatible with that neighboring building nor the overall site as viewed from the street. It is situated out of place. It is too high and too wide for its proposed location. Its height and width are better suited to the existing garage site with more distance and space around it.

**Standard 4-Rhythm of solids to voids in the facades**

The relationship of solids to voids-of structure to space to my understanding-as this area is viewed from public ways is disrupted by the placement of the garage. The long existing relationship of the three component structures of the site will be destroyed. Forcing the new garage between the two landmarks plugs up an area that now from the street has an open and spacious view between the structures of sky, treetops and roof tops.

### Standard 5-Rhythm of spacing and structure on streets

This placement of the proposed garage will completely alter the rhythm and spacing on the street. It will change a portion of streetscape that has been structurally established with little change for 122 years.

However, it is viewed –if moving north from Hamilton, moving south from Burnham or directly from directly across in Stockham place park- there will be a jarring disruption of the rhythm and spacing of a streetscape that has existed for almost one and a quarter century of history.

### Standard 8-Roof shapes and mounted equipment

The roof of the structure is visually incompatible for its site. There is no coherent relation between it and the landmark structure closest to it. The garage has been pushed up against the neighboring building within 3 feet of it. The high peaked rooftop is forced into a space where it doesn't belong totally ignoring the existence and notability of its neighboring landmark structure.

### Standard 10-Scale of a structure

The scale of the structure is not visually compatible as it has been located.

It is not an insignificant structure. Two stories, 28 feet tall, 24.5 ft wide. It squeezes against its landmarked neighbor without reason or justification.

The building it impinges on, that it seems to ignore, is not an ignoble structure whose view is of little consequence and would better be hidden. The imposing wall is not a utility site on an alley. There is no mess of pipes or wires or trash receptacles. It is a well-maintained example of early 20th construction. The brick, the windows, the trim all done as best could be done in 1902. Clean, functional lines that should not be obscured by a large completely unrelated structure.

The north wall of the Mellwood Apartments Building is an integral component of that landmark property. Its stature and its existence represent significant history of its neighborhood and its city.

All these noted objections result from the placement of the garage.

Historically, aesthetically, this new garage belongs on the site of the current garage in the actual rear yard of the property.

There is plenty of room for it. At least 20 feet as it is proposed now to the rear property line.

(Certainly, the "Spa Equipment" could be moved closer to the spa and further from the coach house and the 1213 Michigan tier without effect on the spa's operation.)

It is my hope that the members of the Historical Preservation Commission have had a chance to view the site in question in person, to see it as it has looked-excluding the unfortunately added electronic gate-for 122 years.

I hope that the members have been able to envision how the site would be changed were the proposed garage injected between the two landmark buildings.

I hope too that the commission member can envision how it will look to its most immediate neighbor.

Certainly, if the view from the street by those simply passing by is considered important, the view of the project by immediate neighbors should be considered as or more important as well.

The immediate neighbors will be confronted by the resulting project continually, everyday for years to come

For one neighbor this proposed project will look like a blank twenty-foot-high wall three feet away.

People have been gazing out that particular kitchen window on the first floor of 1213 Michigan for 122 years.

The windows that this proposal blocks have been seen from without and seen through from within for 122 years. Historic sight for preserving.

The setting of the new structure is not appropriate and should not be certified so.

The appropriate place for the new garage in this unique historic setting is at the actual rear yard of the property.

That is the location of the current garage, and it has been the location of predecessor auxiliary buildings through the homes roughly 130 years of existence.

And it is the location that the designers of the Mellwood Apartments Building in 1902 faced intentionally with a blank unwindowed wall.

Zoning rules may allow this 2 story, 28 ft tall, 24.5 ft wide structure, 3 feet from the landmark next door.

While this maybe allowed under zoning rules by placing this structure between the two existing landmarks all the structures involved will be degraded.

As will the block they are in. And by the sight, and probably as well by the precedent set, so will the historic district.

Owners of property in the historic district become stewards of the history of their property and are obligated to defend and protect their property's history.

And it is the responsibility and charge of the Historical Preservation Commission to be allied with and to support owners in that effort.

The Historical Preservation Commission should deny a certificate of approval for the current design of this proposal and recommend that the location of the replacement garage be the location of the current garage it replaces, a placement then that could be determined appropriate.

Most sincerely,

Steven Denenberg

[1213 Michigan Ave. #3](#)

[Evanston IL 60202](#)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]





Cade Sterling <csterling@cityofevanston.org>

---

## 1217 Michigan

---

David Dwyer [REDACTED]  
To: csterling@cityofevanston.org

Sat, May 7, 2022 at 8:46 PM

C Sterling, [et.al.](#)

Please consider deeply the objections to this revised attempt by the owners of 1217 Michigan to compromise the quality, value and safety of all of the members of the Michigan Park Condominium Association, and again deny the proposed building project.

It is clear that what is being proposed re-creates the same exact set of problems as did the first proposal, which you denied.

Also, from a pure financial perspective, their proposal seeks to enhance the value of their 1-family property by directly diminishing the value of our 25-family property.

Please remain consistent and reject this application.

Robert D Dwyer, [REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]



Cade Sterling &lt;csterling@cityofevanston.org&gt;

---

**proposed construction at 1217 Michigan**

---

Mon, May 9, 2022 at 7:44 PM

To: csterling@cityofevanston.org

Cc: [REDACTED]

The proposed garage construction proposed at 1217 Michigan should not be approved for a number of important reasons:

Like the 1217 house the adjacent building, the Michigan Park Condo Association (MPCA) is on the Historic Register and is thus subject to the same requirements to maintain its historic foundation as the 1217 house. Adding this garage will severely violate a number of the HPC rules, particularly rules 1,5,8,14 and 16. The new garage will completely block windows and impede ventilation for at least 2 of the 3 floors of the MPCA residents in the 1213 tier.

Construction will also it severely inhibit the ability of MPCA to maintain their structure. As MPCA was built in 1902 maintenance of the bricks is essential. Access to the north wall has been consistently been denied though it was required for periodic inspection by contractors. Further if work, such as tuckpointing, is required, it will not be able to be completed as the necessary scaffolding or lifts will not be able to access the MPCA walls on the north side of the building. It is also further noted that the distance between the residence to the north of 1217 is at least 8-10' while the proposed garage is slated to be quite a bit closer to MPCA. As the house to the north is considerable newer than 1217 one might assume that the distance between the two residences was determined in accordance with HPC rules, which seem not to be applied equally in this instance.

Once again we strongly urge the HPC not to approve the addition to the 1217 residence

Thank you in advance for your consideration

Paul Melchior

[1211 Michigan # 1](#)

[Evanston, IL 60202](#)

5/10/22, 9:04 AM

CITY OF EVANSTON Mail - proposed construction at 1217 Michigan

[REDACTED]

Email: [REDACTED]

Phone: [REDACTED]

[1211 Michigan, Evanston, IL 60202](#)



Cade Sterling &lt;csterling@cityofevanston.org&gt;

---

**1217 Michigan Avenue - 22PRES-0049**

---

**Polly Nandiko** [REDACTED]  
To: Cade Sterling <csterling@cityofevanston.org>  
Cc: Steve Denenberg [REDACTED]

Mon, May 9, 2022 at 10:37 PM

To Cade Sterling  
City of Evanston

Regarding: Certificate of Appropriateness for detached frame garage - 1217 Michigan Ave.

My neighbors within the landmark Mellwood Apartments Building-now owned by the Michigan Park Condominium Association/MPCA have broached some of the construction standards of question. I reside at 1213 Michigan Avenue, and as a neighbor directly to the south and on the first floor...I strongly feel the said proposal should be denied.

The proposed structure, although with nice detail, is unproportionally large for a garage of a home of that period and appears to be more of a coach house (replica of main house) in appearance/scale. Will someone reside on the second floor?

Perhaps not visible from the street, but as the direct and at very close proximity neighbor...the scale is even more imposing. Nearly twice the height and located almost twice as close to MPCA as the previous proposal from 1217. This structure could perhaps be smaller, however, it certainly should be located further back in their yard...closer where their current garage is vs unnecessarily on top of our building/living space. If the proposed structure were further back, it would also not unnecessarily block the windows that my family looks from as did others from the same location for the past 122 years.

Consider a particularly relevant opinion on the value of natural light in a home. It is found in an article about the last renovation of 1217 Michigan Avenue.

The article is titled Shining A Natural Light On Great Design.

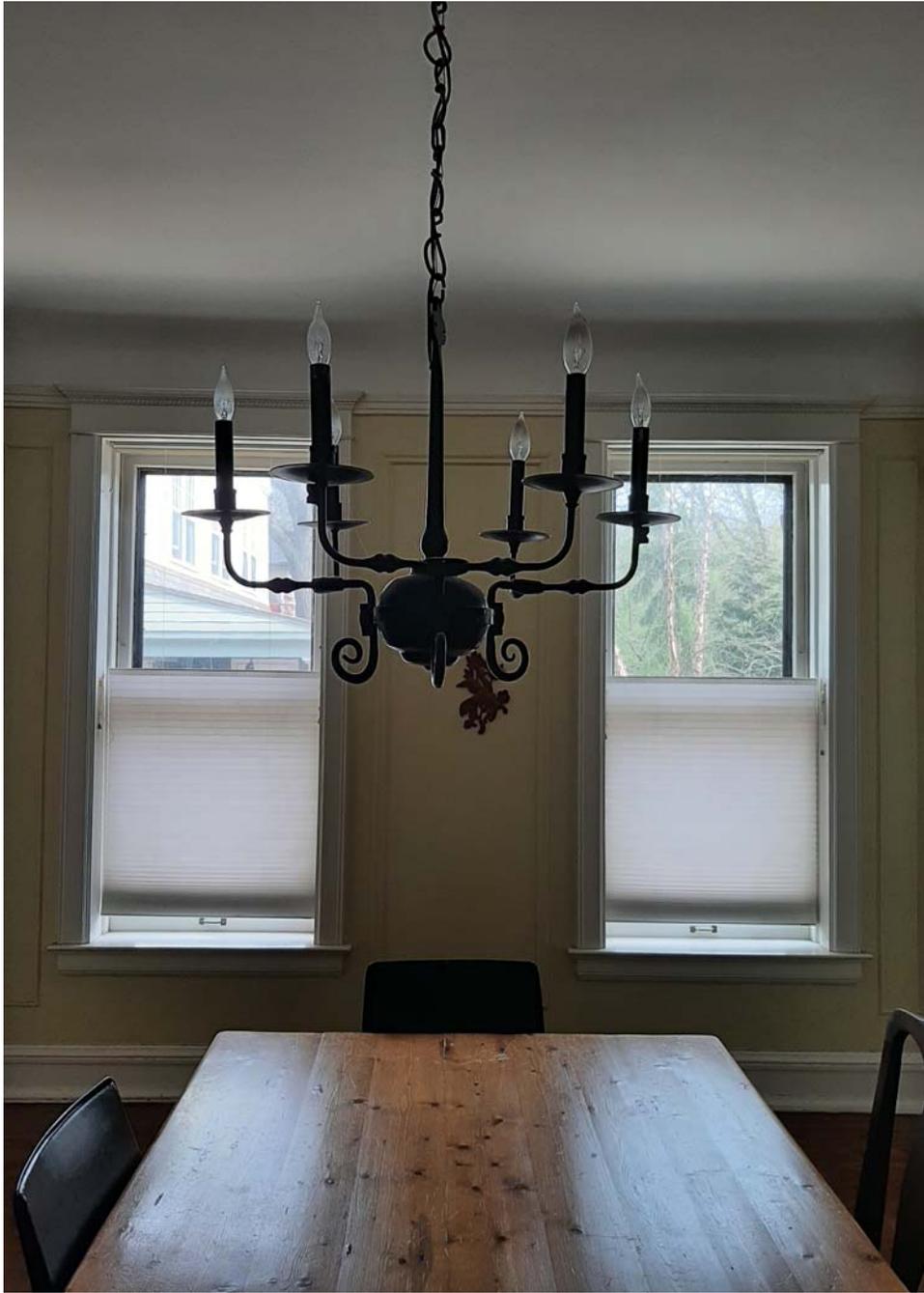
<http://www.shumakerdesignassociates.com/shining-a-natural-light-on-great-design>

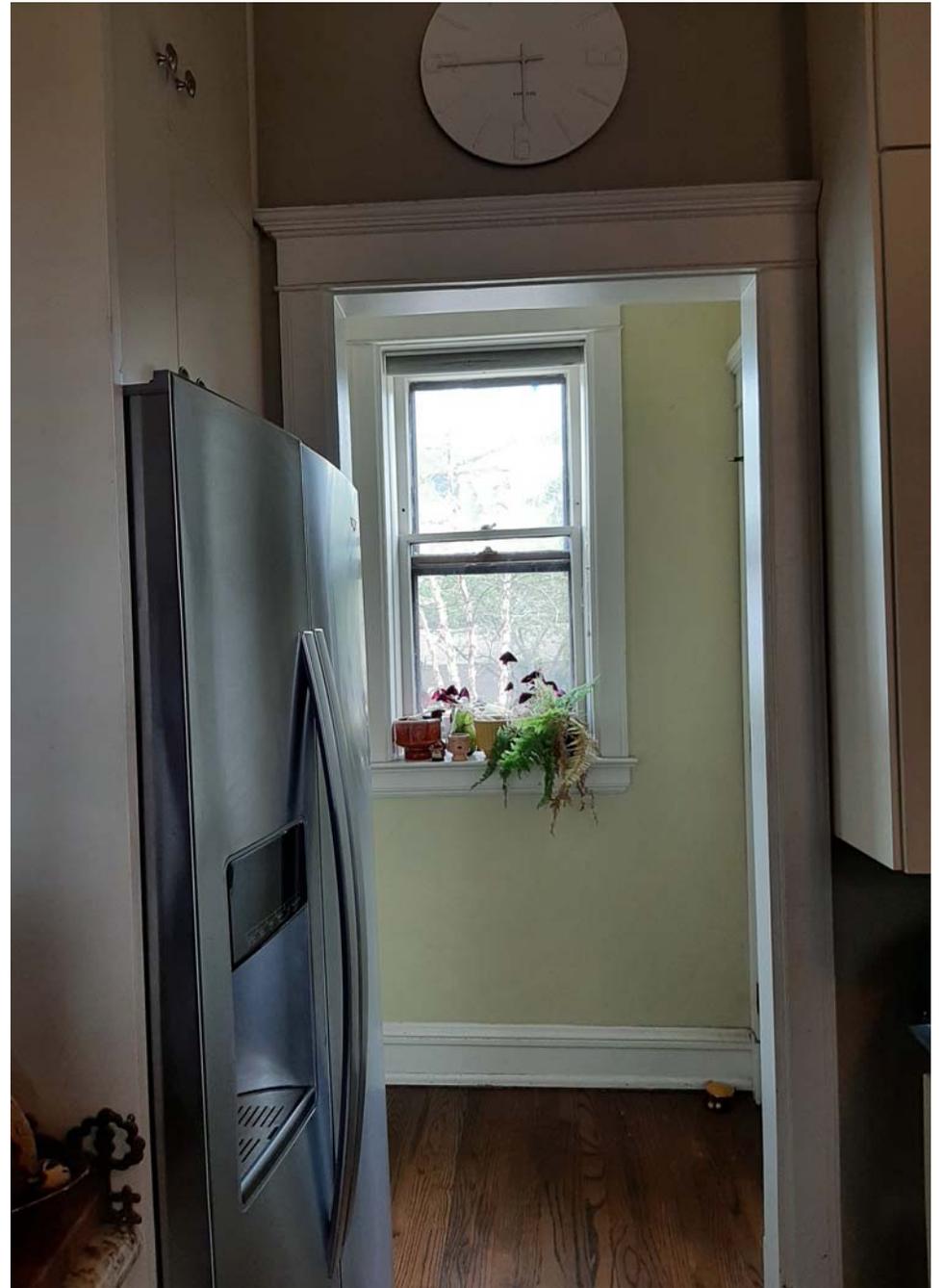
The opening sentence-

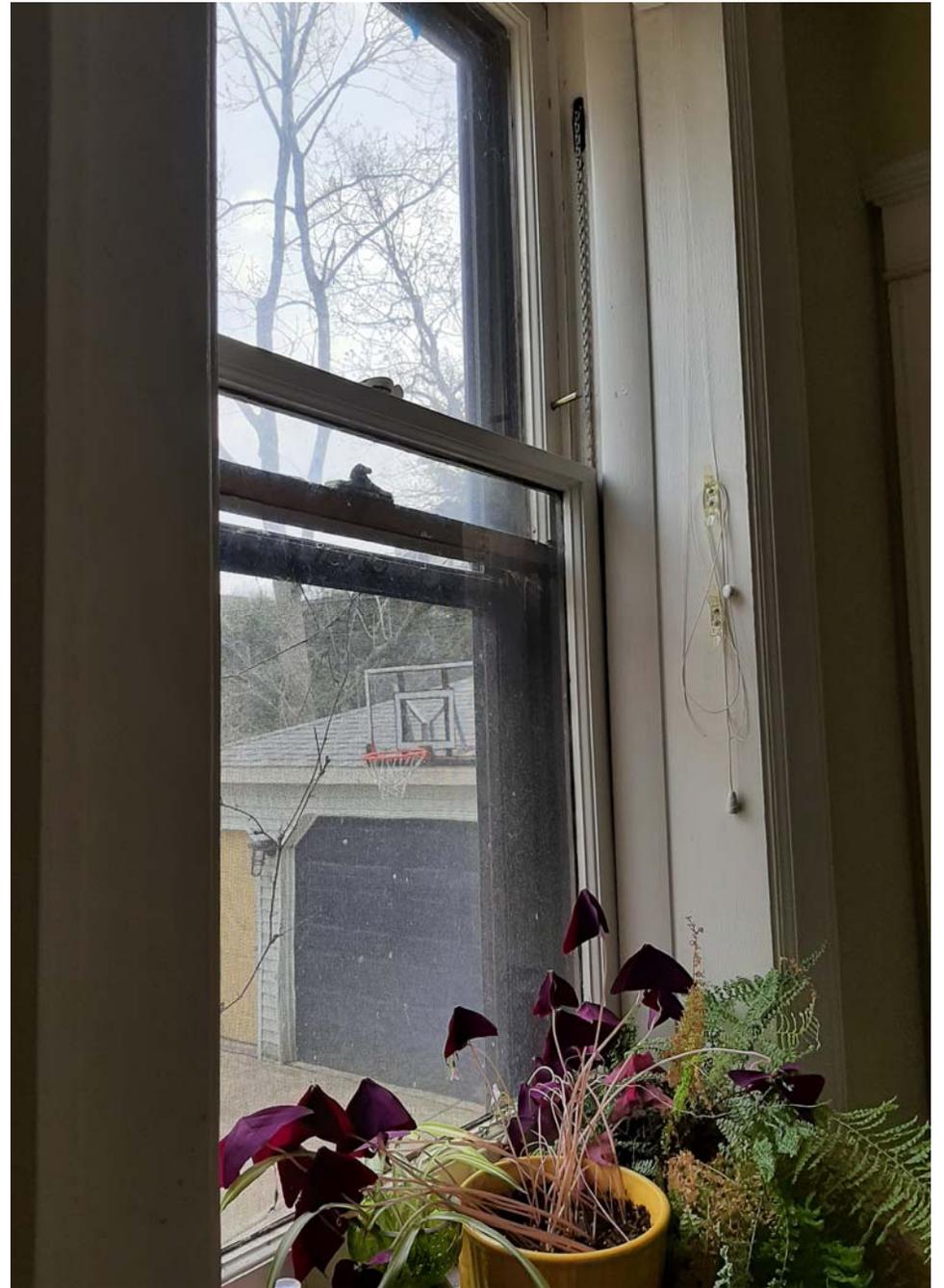
"Sunlight makes us happier, kinder, and more creative. Science says so, but Shondi Nickell didn't need the research to tell her that natural light makes her and her family feel better." In addition to this opening there are six references to natural light as well as references to "morning light" and "light filled" rooms. All to the point of the importance and benefit of natural light in a home. Increasing the natural light in their home was important to the Nickell's. One would assume then that they would understand completely how the loss of natural light will affect the neighbors' enjoyment of our home as well as property value.

It seems that without question, one's projects/activities/improvements should not negatively impact anyone else's existence, particularly when there is a clear way to avert this unnecessary impact on another/next door neighbor.

Thank you,  
Polly Nandiko  
1213 Michigan Avenue #1











Cade Sterling &lt;csterling@cityofevanston.org&gt;

---

**1217 Michigan Ave - Certificate of Appropriateness #22PRES-0049**

---

**Shondi Nickell** [REDACTED]  
To: csterling@cityofevanston.org  
Cc: Garry Shumaker [REDACTED]

Tue, May 10, 2022 at 8:53 AM

Hi Cade,

In lieu of speaking at the meeting tonight, we wanted to provide a brief note to the Preservation Commission. Thank you for your continued involvement as we pursue the construction of a new historically appropriate and functional detached garage on our property. We were disappointed that our previous project was denied by Zoning for a minor variance, but we are excited about this new proposal and the opportunities it affords us while honoring many of the unique features of our home. With this project we are not asking the City for any variances and have made compromises on our priorities to fully comply with the applicable standards of appropriateness and zoning laws.

Thank you once again for your time and consideration. We will be attending the meeting tonight if there are any questions or additional information we can provide.

Shondi and Jake Nickell  
1217 Michigan Ave Homeowners



Cade Sterling &lt;csterling@cityofevanston.org&gt;

---

**Case #22PRES-0049 - 1217 Michigan Ave Comments - Mtg 05/10/2022**

---

**Gregory Quick** [REDACTED]  
To: "csterling@cityofevanston.org" <csterling@cityofevanston.org>  
Cc: Gregory Quick [REDACTED]

Tue, May 10, 2022 at 9:14 AM

Cade,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. Reviewing several of the historical requirements I highlighted (bolded and underlined) those in the attached word.doc that I believe apply to this discussion.

I visually checked the current garage location in regards to the home at 1217 Michigan and the north wall of the Condominium that I live in just to the south. Moving a larger and taller garage forward would drastically change the visual aesthetics of current layout (which is acceptable - garage at back) to an unacceptable visual situation. Both from the street and from the Condominium owners with windows on the north side of building.

I can see no situation where moving the location of garage forward, that blocks the historic windows and views of the condominium, is acceptable.

My question to the owners of 1217 Michigan is - would they move the garage even further forward near their driveway gate (not to block Condo windows)? My guess is absolutely not as it would block their side windows! Consideration needs to be given to the residents of the condominium who have not had their windows and air flow blocked for over 100 years.

I appreciate your reviewing my comments - 1205 Michigan Ave #2

Greg Quick  
[REDACTED]

---

 **1217 Mich Ave Garage Comments.docx**  
14K

5.

***Rhythm of spacing and structures on streets.*** The relationship of a structure or object to the open space between it and adjoining structures or objects and **the setback from the public ways shall be visually compatible with the properties, structures, sites, public ways, objects and places to which it is visually related.**

10.

***Scale of a structure.*** The size and mass of structures **in relation to open spaces**, windows, door openings, porches and balconies shall be visually compatible with the properties, structures, sites, public ways, objects and places **to which they are visually related.**

11.

***Directional expression of facades.*** A structure **shall be visually compatible with the properties, structures, sites, public ways, objects and places to which it is visually related** in its directional character, whether this be vertical character, horizontal character or non-directional character.

14.

***Innovative design.*** Innovative design for new construction and additions to existing properties shall not be discouraged when such new construction or additions do not destroy significant historic, cultural or architectural material, and **such design is compatible with the size, scale, color, material and character of the property, neighborhood or environment.**

16.

***New construction.*** In considering **new construction** such as **a new free standing structure**, the Commission shall not impose a requirement for the use of a single architectural style or period, **though it may impose a requirement for compatibility.**



Cade Sterling &lt;csterling@cityofevanston.org&gt;

---

## 1217 Michigan Avenue

---

mary Chlebowski [REDACTED]  
To: Cade Sterling <csterling@cityofevanston.org>

Tue, May 10, 2022 at 12:02 PM

Dear Mr. Sterling,

Once again, I write to voice my objections regarding the proposed garage at 1217 Michigan.

The revised drawings show a 2 floor garage which will

- 1) again obstruct the windows of the first floor of 1213 Michigan
- 2) now obstruct windows on the second floor of 1213 Michigan
- 3) bring the structure too close to the street.

There is no good reason why the new garage cannot be placed at the site of the current garage. Bringing it forward will create an eyesore from the street.

I own and reside in the 100+ year to the immediate south. Placing the garage forward will make any repairs to the north wall difficult at best.

The proposed plans, if approved, will likely decrease the value of the condo units at 1213, and, logically, the value of the rest of the units within the condo building.

Any fence the 1217 owners plan to install at the driveway must not be attached to the historic building to the south.

I appreciate your efforts and implore you to heed comments from neighbors.

Regards,

Mary Chlebowski

[Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone](#)



Cade Sterling &lt;csterling@cityofevanston.org&gt;

---

## Opposition to Proposed Project at 1217 Michigan Avenue

---

Chris Foley [REDACTED]  
To: "csterling@cityofevanston.org" <csterling@cityofevanston.org>

Tue, May 10, 2022 at 3:01 PM

Dear Mr. Sterling,

I am writing in regard to the proposed project at 1217 Michigan Ave. I have serious concerns about the complete reimagining of the garage structure at this property. It appears that they are taking a standard garage and making a 2 story structure of it. This would be okay if the location of the structure remained the same. However, based on the proposal it appears they are requesting to move the structure forward. This would absolutely cover the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor windows at the 1213 Michigan Ave property.

Also, it appears that they are also moving the structure even closer to 1213 Michigan Ave (*a registered Landmark building*) than the previous proposal and leaving only a 3 foot distance between structures. This will make maintaining our beautiful building very difficult at best.

### Objections from a Preservation Perspective

- 1213 Michigan Ave is part of our Federally recognized Landmark building and as such the proposed garage redesign should be respectful of the original building scape.
- The windows on our building are original from 1902 and we as a community have respected the guidance of the Historic Preservation Committee as it relates to keeping the historic street scape of those windows. The attitude of the HPC down through the years has been "those windows are historic they can be maintained but not replaced".
- With this proposed new structure, it would eliminate many of the windows from street view.
- The North wall is an early example of 20<sup>th</sup> century quality, built by skilled masons in 1902; this will now be obscured as well.
- The new proposed structure would be 3 feet from the north wall. This to me seems egregious and makes the maintenance of our building markedly more difficult; not to mention the hazard it would create for rescue personnel if that would ever be necessary.

Thank you for you time and attention to our concerns.

Kind regards,

Chris Foley

1205 Michigan Ave #1



Cade Sterling <csterling@cityofevanston.org>

---

## I am opposed to Case #22PRES-0049

---

**Ann Rhomberg** [REDACTED]  
To: "csterling@cityofevanston.org" <csterling@cityofevanston.org>

Tue, May 10, 2022 at 1:30 PM

Hello Mr. Sterling,

I have been living in the MPCA condo for 25+ years and I'm writing to express my opposition to the 'garage replacement project' at 1217 Michigan.

The proposed garage would disrupt what has been in place for over 120 years. It's inappropriate for historic and aesthetic reasons and unfairly blocks out windows of our MPCA building. It also intrudes our space.

Thanks in advance for considering my extreme level of discontent.

Ann Rhomberg  
205 Hamilton Street  
Apt 3