



## The City of Orange Township Historic Commission

### Commissioners

Keith Carroll  
Kathy Dowd  
Jody Leight  
Brandon Matthews  
Janice Morrell  
Troy Simmons  
Abdiel Velez  
Karen Wells

January 10, 2023

Wanny Manasse  
Manasse Associates  
32 Cleveland Avenue  
Vailsburg (Newark), N.J. 07xxx  
[sbapropertymgmt@gmail.com](mailto:sbapropertymgmt@gmail.com)

Dear Mr. Manasse:

On December 21, 2022 you appeared before the Orange Historic Preservation Commission for advice on an Application for a Certificate of Appropriateness dated December 19, 2022, which Application was signed by you, for a vacant lot property designated as 480 Heywood Avenue, also known as Block 1502, lot 12 on the City of Orange Tax Map. Accompanying the Application was a survey by Schmidt Surveying, dated March 28, 2022 showing the topographic lines on the vacant lot, which appears to be an irregularly shaped lot with a frontage of fifty-seven (57) feet and a depth of one hundred thirteen (113) feet (approximately) to the rear lot line. According to the Application, p. 2, the "plan is to construct a 1-family house keeping the structural likeness of existing homes in the neighborhood."

The OHPC appreciates the opportunity to comment on the aesthetics of the proposed design prior to any action by the Planning Board or Zoning Board of Adjustment, however, the OHPC's first comment was that it could not comment on any aesthetics of the design without an actual design plan prepared by an architect or other design professional, which plan(s) did not accompany the Application. At that juncture, Mr. Manasse, after being sworn, shared his computer screen and showed the Commission certain designs for each elevation (front, sides and rear) of the proposed 2 and one half story, 1 family house with front-facing attached garage. The Commission indicated that it could not act, without having had these plans to study prior to the meeting. Mr. Manasse was encouraged to share these design elevations, at a future meeting on the Application after making revisions to the designs per the comments of the OHPC on December 21, 2022.

The OHPC advised that smooth or wood grain Hardie plank siding would be allowed and that it should be field-painted, if real wood clapboard is not contemplated for the exterior walls, and that vinyl siding of any kind is not allowed.

The OHPC informed you that the proposed asphalt shingle roof was acceptable, however, you should consider using architectural style shingles which are thicker and last longer and provide more dimension. The color for the shingle proposed was charcoal, however, the OHPC declined to make color recommendations without seeing the full proposed colorway.

You were asked to have your architect revise the side façades away from being large blank walls, and to show all windows including all locations and sizes including aperture size, type of windows, number of divided lights, and other features such as shutters, framing, and depth, and to show all proposed window materials.

You were encouraged to locate a driveway along the left or right side of the property and to construct a detached garage in the rear of the property rather than having an attached front-facing garage, including asking for a variance if necessary for any side yard setback minimum deficiency. The Commission observed that front-facing attached garages enclosed within the footprint of the house are not in keeping with historic homes in the Montrose-Seven Oaks Historic District, whereas minimal side yards are not uncommon in the Historic District particular after such yards had to accommodate automobiles after the turn of the last century, with such automobiles being parked in the rear detached garage. The side yard setback is ten (10) feet in this zoning district, according to Mr. Manasse.

With respect to the front façade, you were asked to ask your architect think more about the design and differing types of façade treatments in the front of the proposed house, which include (as far as the computer-designed elevations could be seen) stucco at the base, stone veneer and clapboard horizontally to be placed on the first floor facade, a modern-looking front door opening, possibly black in color, and vertical unpainted oak wood or wood-look material to be placed on the exterior of the second story. Unpainted wood, while trending now and naturally beautiful, is not historic— it was observed that the wood would not last through the New Jersey winters in an unpainted status, and therefore, wood was painted to preserve it. The differing treatments (horizontal clapboard of unknown material, vertical oak, stone veneer with a stucco base) did not lend itself to a cohesive design or historic presence. The Commission asked for the façade(s) to be revised to present a coherent historic design and selection of materials.

As to windows, large picture-type windows (based on the size of the aperture opening) under gables, with minimalist corbels, seemed to predominate, but there was no detail as to what type of window was actually intended, where, what the composition/materials would be, whether there would be dimensional framing, decorative details, and whether the sizes and locations of the windows would be attractive, or more randomly placed within the facades, especially on the sides that otherwise were presented as rather blank walls.

A flagpole also appeared to be proposed for the front of the house, mounted above the garage area, partly horizontally, which projection made it look rather like a nautical flagstaff.

As one Commission member put it, the design looked like, “Suburbia USA,” which look does not fit the Historic District

Without a site plan, photographs, three-dimensional color images, showing architectural features, decorative appliques or trim, railing drawings, front door depiction, and so forth, the

OHPC could not comment further. The OHPC looks forward to a revised design with more details, especially for the front façade, the windows (all windows on all facades) and materials selections. If you or your architect have any questions about these comments of the OHPC, you should contact Chairman Simmons. Thank you again for your appearance before the OHPC seeking our advice on your residential construction project at an early stage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Joyce Lanier", with a large, stylized initial "J" and a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Joyce Lanier  
Secretary

cc: Historic Preservation Commission  
Janine Bauer, HPC Counsel  
Building Department