

Village of Skaneateles
Historical Landmarks Preservation Commission Hearing
April 14, 2010

In the matter of the application submitted by William & Corinne Buterbaugh for a Certificate of Approval from the Commission to install a bathroom exhaust fan vent at 103 East Genesee Street in the Village of Skaneateles.

Present: Charles Williams, Chairman
Andrew Ramsgard, Member
Pat Blackler, Member
Beverly White, Member
David Neibert, Member
Mona Smalley, Member
Kihm Winship, Member
Katharine Dyson, Member
Karlene Miller, Member

Jorge Batlle, Clerk to the Historical Commission

Corinne Buterbaugh, Applicant

Chairman Williams opened the public hearing at 7:37pm announcing the application of William and Corinne Buterbaugh for 103 East Genesee Street. He said, "we have a sketch as to where that is."

Member Smalley said, "it looks great." The Chairman said, "they have a problem getting through the eave area... they would hide it up above. Jorge doesn't let them exhaust it into the attic or the 3rd floor." Batlle said, "not a good idea unless you like mold and other smells." Member Miller asked why this was needed? Corinne Buterbaugh said, "it doesn't have a fan now." Member Miller asked, "does it have a window?" Buterbaugh said, "yes." The Chairman said, "from a legal viewpoint, the window takes care of that. But they want additional ventilation. In the winter time they don't want the window open."

Member Neibert said, "comment – my opinion is I have an exhaust fan in a bedroom in my upstairs, and they run through the attic and out through the soffit - the soffit board and down and you don't even see it. From the street of my lawn actually. It's on the side of my house. There's no vent visible because it's up basically in the soffit and it's just a grille thing up in there and you don't even see it. So, I just saying that because I see your second choice is the soffit as opposed to the front of the building." Buterbaugh said, "they don't know where they will be able to put it." The Chairman said, "it's a finished off room up there." Member Neibert said, "...visually if it's on the soffit it wouldn't really be noticed."

Buterbaugh said, esthetically that would be our first choice. But we may not be able to do that until they take the wall - there's no way to access where we are going in, until we tear things down. The attic is finished. So, at this point we are just guessing what's there. We'd love to put it in the soffit so it wouldn't show but we don't know that we are going to be able to do that." The Chairman said, "knowing that house it's got timbers like that (large) 6 by 6s." Member Ramsgard said, "other issues, over the window there's probably a header or a timber. You have to go right through that. But if you go through the soffit you'll be able to get up and over and around it. Once you open it up, it's a lot easier to go through the soffit." Chairman Williams said, "these windows up there - do they go up or down into the wall?" Buterbaugh said, "the attic ones go down." The Chairman said, "so there's slots below the window sill there where..." "...are those in the same plane as the exterior wall?" asked Member Ramsgard. Williams said, "yes, just about the same plane as the exterior wall."

Member Smalley said, "I see no objection at all in putting the fan right there." Member Neibert asked, "how would you even run it through the header over the window without compromising the structural integrity?" Member Ramsgard asked, "Chuck you said it was timber frame?" The Chairman said, "you have your 6 by 6s from the stone all the way to the second floor ceiling/roof there." Member Ramsgard said, "there might be a plate timer at the top of the wall and the window might not have a header. In a timber frame house, you frame up the box and then the structural line is at the top ring and it allows you to put windows and openings pretty much anywhere you wanted to. So, there may be - it's tough to tell until you open it up. You might get lucky or not, until you see the inside."

Member Neibert said, "my comment is I would say, first choice should be the soffit." Member Miller said, "I would agree with that too." Member Neibert said, "and only if it is an impossible situation." Member Ramsgard asked, "are those real shutters, Chuck?" The Chairman said, "wood ones - yes and with the old cast iron brackets. 35 pair of them on the house." Member Ramsgard said, "if you didn't go above and couldn't get through the soffit or you couldn't get through the header, you could go behind the shutter, on the sidewall and you'd never see it." Chairman Williams asked, "how about in the winter time all that moisture hitting the shutter and freezing?" Member Ramsgard said, "it shouldn't be unless it's like a steam shower, it's not going to vent out that much. It's not like a dryer vent where you have steam coming out. You don't have that much moisture. It's just a thought. Definitely the soffit would be my first choice to go through as well."

Member Winship asked, "essentially what are we doing? Can we approve this and essentially give the Buterbaughs permission to do what they find is best?" Member Ramsgard said, "I think so. As long as the vent is kept white in the same color as the trim. Nobody will ever see it. First choice would be to go through the soffit, just for the ease of construction. It will work better. Then through the frieze over the window if you can't make that. I would give them the option to go behind the shutter if they run out of options."

Member Miller said, "**I make a motion that approve the vent: doing the soffit first, the frieze second and the behind the shutter third.**" Seconded by Member Dyson. The vote was 9-0 in favor of the motion. The hearing was closed at 7:46pm.