

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

In the matter of the application submitted by Birchenough/Lazarus for a Certificate of Approval from the Commission, to replace the vinyl siding on the house with clapboard and repair and construct a roof over the existing front porch on the premises located at 108 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

William Birchenough, Applicant

Noel Gettman, Observer

Chairman Williams opened the public hearing at 7:54pm announcing the application of Birchenough/Lazarus for 108 East Genesee Street.

Member Miller said, "I like it a lot." Member Dyson said, "It needs a front porch." Chairman Williams asked, "are you going to eliminate the siding?" William Birchenough said, "I do not know how long that siding has been on it. Some of it is starting actually droop" The Chairman said, "we moved there 30 years ago and it was on before that." Member Miller asked, "will it be all of it or just the front?" Birchenough said, "a couple of years ago we did the back of the house. The siding we used is called DuraPrime. As most renovations projects went, it cost a little more that what we initially budgeted. So, we had to put off doing the two sides and the front of the house."

Member Neibert asked, "what's underneath the vinyl that's there now?" Birchenough said, "I think it's like a shingle." Member Dyson said, "I thought it was clapboard." The Chairman said, "there was a car that drove into it." Birchenough said, "I didn't even know that. Somebody was in the house and told us about it... I know why we figured it out as it was actually sheet rock on that front wall and the rest of it is plaster and lath." Member Ramsgard

said, "it was quite a sight to see the car sticking out of it. It was probably 20 years ago." Birchenough said, "I might even be longer than that as I've been back here for 25 years.."

Member Winship asked, "are we talking about the colors tonight? Is the color going to change?" Birchenough said, "it's going to be the same as the color on the back." Member Miller asked, "what is the color on the back?" Birchenough said, "sort of a lightish gray." Holding up the photo, member Miller asked, "is it the same as that?" Birchenough said, "very close." Member Ramsgard said, "it says blue (plans)." Member Neibert said, "it looks gray." Member Dyson said, "it looks gray. I like it." Birchenough said, "I may be a blue." Member Dyson said, "it's going to make the house look terrific." Birchenough said, "we've wanted to do that since day one."

Member White asked, "are you replacing the side lights on the front? I don't see them on the drawing, that's all." Birchenough said, "we haven't actually decided the lights, whether we'll use the same ones that we have on there." Member White said, "or you could have a ceiling light." Birchenough said, "yes, that would be an option. We kind of like the look of the side lights...or both."

Member Winship asked, "how far out is it coming?" Birchenough said, "no further than what exists." Member Neibert said, "right here it is 4 feet 4 ¼ inches." (cell phone interference) Birchenough said, "it's going to match that brick front porch. I think we'll probably do a blue stone instead of brick, which matches what we did on the back. Right now we catch most of the water that comes down the hill. We have a pond in the front. There's quite a dip in the lawn. We just want to raise the whole thing up. Whereas now there are 2 steps, we are going to make it one step from the walkway up onto the porch...and lift the rest of the lawn. It seems like it's sunk anyway. It's hard to believe that that's the way it always was." Chairman Williams said, "you have a built in rain garden." Birchenough said, "also, I'd like to keep it away from the house." The Chairman asked, "landscape it around to it goes down to the east side of the house?" Birchenough said, "actually this would be another matter. I talked to our neighbor behind and he has a drainpipe that comes up to our property. We've talked about possibly doing a ditch down through there, making sort of a rock thing, and then be able to take that water and hook into him, just to get out of there." Member Miller asked, "Gary Dower, right?" Birchenough said, "yes. It's behind on the east side of his house. So, it wouldn't be hard to hook into it."

Member Blackler asked, "so what's the floor? The floor is still brick right?" Birchenough said, "it's brick now. We'd like to go to the blue stone, slate type of thing." Member Miller said, "it looks in the drawing that it is still brick." Member Neibert said, "it's just random pattern blue stone." Birchenough said, "to our way of thinking, it's quite a lot more attractive than the brick is." The Chairman said, "as long as it has a little texture to it so it can get slippery." Member Neibert said, "it looks like the front of it, the facing, is brick." Member Miller said, "that's what I thought too." Member Neibert said, "the surface if blue stone. You couldn't do that in blue stone." The Chairman said, "well you can. You can get blue stone in big curb sections." Member Neibert said, "that looks fine."

Birchenough asked, "would you have any objection if we too that face brick that's out and actually put in a couple of layers of blue stone to support the top? (using the drawing), where

this looks like brick here, he's got it just as the front face." The Chairman asked, "you are going vertical?" Birchenough said, "personally, I'd rather stack up like we have a big dry laid wall out back. You have several stones, like a laid stone wall." Member White said, "that looks good." Member Miller said, "that would look nice."

Member Winshap asked, "there's like a fan pattern here over the door. Is that going to be glass, is that wood?" Birchenough said, "it exists." Member Winship said, "just above that arch, this comes off then you have a square thing that's going to be above that fan, then the grid right there." Birchenough said, "that railing grids matches the railings that we did on the back of the house, on the upper level." Member Winship asked, "there's no change to the windows or the shutters?" Birchenough said, "no. We want to get new shutters some day. Is that something that we need to come before you guys in the future?" Member Blackler said, "fortunately, yes."

The Chairman said, "you've got some pitch to the roof there, it looks like, to either side, so it goes off to the side. You don't want the snow and ice building up on top of that. You have a slight pitch." Birchenough said, "I don't even use that door in the Winter. I look up there and see those icicles." The Chairman said, "once in a while a guest will come through the front door." Birchenough said, "yes, we'd like to be able to have it be nice."

Member Neibert asked, "do we have 2 things here – the porch and then the siding, or is this all one package?" The Chairman asked, "what do you have, plastic shutters?" Birchenough said, "they are actually wood." The Chairman said, "if you replaced them with wood ones, you would not have to come here." Birchenough said, "right, we will just take them off and paint."

Holding the photo, Member Winship asked, "is there any change to the garage door?" Birchenough said, "we'd like to put a new garage door on at some point." Member Winship said, "this one (drawing) looks like 3 panes, and it must be four." Looking at the photo, Birchenough said, "you notice that this thing is kind of buckled, looks lousy. We'd like to put a new door in too." Member Blackler asked, "you are not planning to do it right now?" Birchenough said, "We have only talked about it. We don't have it in the plan, no." Discussion continued about the garage door and its relationship between the photo and the drawing.

Member Winship asked, "what we are talking about here is the porch and the new siding, essentially...it seems fine to me." Member Miller said, **"I will make a motion that we approve the front porch design and the siding as presented. Colors to match the south side of the house and as indicated on the 3/29/2010 drawings."**

Member Neibert said, "so it could be either slate or brick." Seconded by Member Dyson. The vote was 9-0 in favor of the motion. The hearing was closed at 8:09pm.