

**Historic Significance of
the Driveway at the
James E. and Phillippina
House**

1075 Lombard Avenue

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ST. PAUL'S ARCHITECTURE

A HISTORY



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CLIFFORD

Historic significance of driveway

- In the book *St. Paul's Architecture, A History* by Jeffrey A. Hess and Paul Clifford Larson, the James E. and Phillippina Niemeyer House is discussed in Chapter 3, *From the Picturesque to the Moderne, 1920-1940*.
- The primary reason the house is featured is the **driveway** and **tuck-under garage** making the house unique and "modern."

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1922-1942

St. Paul's Architecture, A History

- The accompanying text on page 124 is as follows:

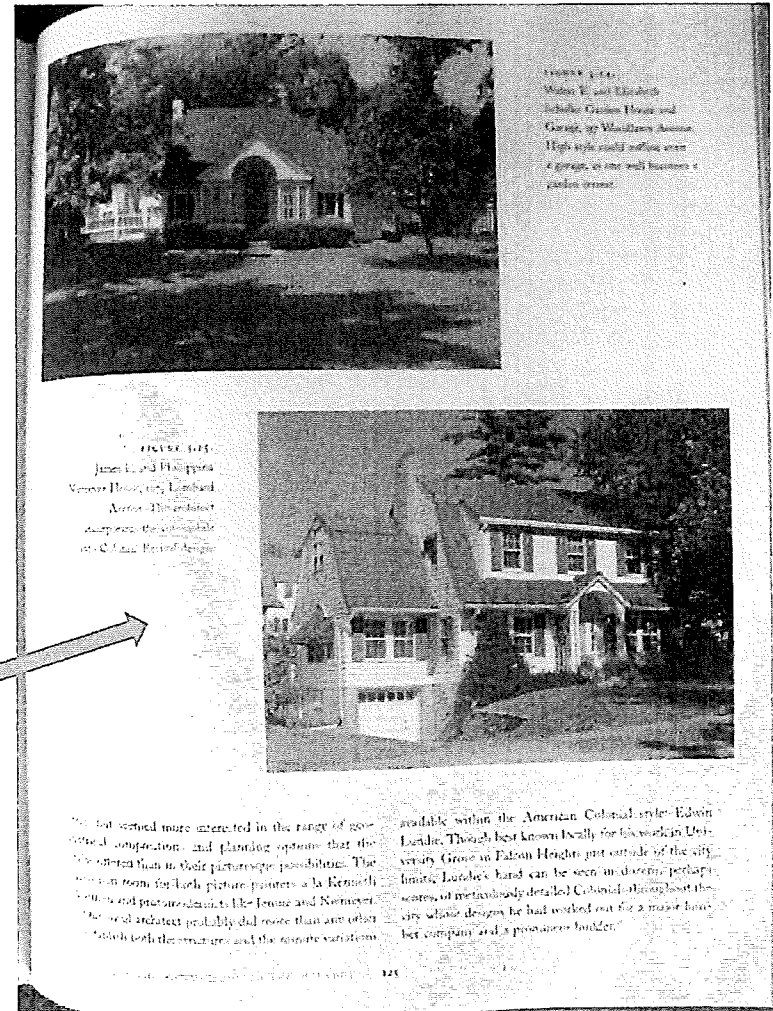
“One of the asymmetries regularly tolerated by the original builders was a side porch or, if enclosed, a library wing. In the 1920's, this theme was taken up many times by architects and builders across the country. New lifestyles dictated that the old library wing now serve as an extension of the living room into a “sun porch” or as it was first called, a “living porch.” With the introduction of the automobile, this wing also became the ideal location for a tuck-under garage. The James E. and Phillippina Niemeyer House, designed by the prominent local architect James Niemeyer (1890-1957), shows how readily a scholarly take on the Dutch Colonial architecture of New York could make this adaptation (Figure 3.25).

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FIGURE 3.25 (page 125)

“James E. and
Phillippina Niemeyer
House, 1075 Lombard
Avenue. The architect
incorporates the
automobile into Colonial
Revival design.”



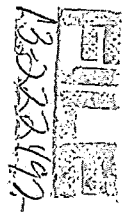
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Lombard Avenue

- Located one block south of St. Clair Avenue; 2 blocks in length from Lexington Avenue to Milton Avenue. The street is transected by Benthill Road.
- The majority of the houses on south side of the street have no alley access.
- There are 58 houses facing Lombard Avenue with 34 driveways on the avenue.
- Lombard Avenue is a 2-way street but the street is narrow **allowing parking only on the south side of the street.** Despite that parking configuration, two cars going in opposite directions cannot pass at the same time without one pulling into the parking space to let the other pass.
- **Parking is limited on Lombard Avenue, especially evenings and weekends.**

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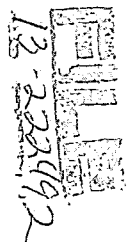


Safety and ease of use of 1075 Lombard Avenue

- The driveway, that has been in place for over ninety years, provides a secure, close parking place for visitors to my house, including my aged parents and less able bodied friends and relatives.
- The original design of the driveway resulted in repeated flooding of the garage space during heavy rainfall and rapidly melting snowfalls, thus the need for the elevation change of the current driveway.
- The original garage door windows were repurposed to maintain the appearance of the tuck-under garage.

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Legal Basis for Allowing the Front Yard Driveway to Remain at 1075 Lombard Avenue

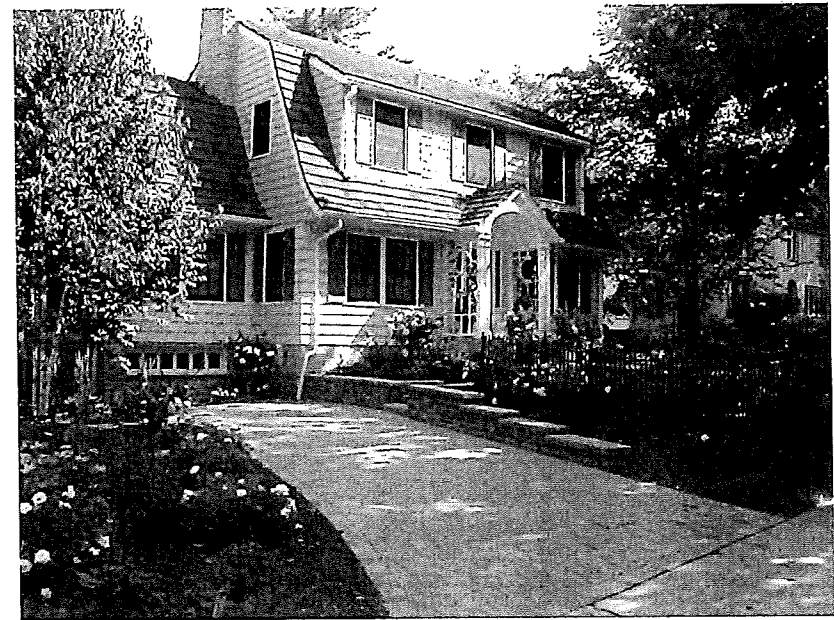
- The driveway falls within legal land use as described in the Zoning code **Section 62.104 part (f) – Nonconforming Uses of Land**, which states:

“An existing off-street parking place for one- and two-family dwellings in a required front or side yard shall be considered a legal non-conforming use, provided the parking space was established pursuant to a curb cut permit issued by the department of public works prior to October 25, 1975, and the parking space has existed continuously since the permit was issued or it can be demonstrated by clear and convincing evidence that the parking space has been in existence and used continuously since October 25, 1975. The burden of proof shall be on the property owner.

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View from Lombard Avenue of the driveway before and after.



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Lombard

Summary

- **Unique topography** of the lot at 1075 Lombard Avenue lead to the constructed garage going from “detached” to “attached” resulting in the original zoning variance, and as part of the that variance, the demand for removal of the front driveway.
- **No precedent** is being requested in maintaining a driveway at the James E. and Phillippina Niemeyer House and will be in keeping with the **historic significance** of the original design of the house.
- **Safety and ease of use** by visitors to 1075 Lombard Avenue given the unique features of Lombard Avenue, argues for **keeping the driveway** that has been in place for over **90 years**.

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