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December 30, 2021

VIA ELECTRONIC AND REGULAR MAIL

Christine Woodbury
Planning/Zoning Board Secretary
Township of Franklin
475 DeMott Lane
Somerset, NJ 08873

**Re: Serafin, Malgorzata
Certification of Pre-Existing Non-Conforming Use
ZBA-21-00025 / Block 181 / Lots: 24 and 25
18 Home Street, Somerset**

Dear Christine:

Attached (and enclosed via regular mail) is the updated December 30, 2021 Report issued by DM Bekus Construction Services Incorporated in support of the Applicant's application for pre-existing, non-conforming uses. Please post this Report on the website as it will be an exhibit at the January 6, 2022 Board of Adjustment virtual hearing on the above-referenced matter.

In addition to the above, please be advised that DM Bekus will be the Applicant's presenter at the January 6, 2022 virtual hearing and will need instructions as to the virtual hearing's logistics and screen sharing.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact my office. Thank you for your continued courtesies and best wishes for a safe and successful New Year!

Very truly yours,



FRANCIS P. LINNUS

FPL/mw

Encl.

cc: *Via Electronic Mail Only*

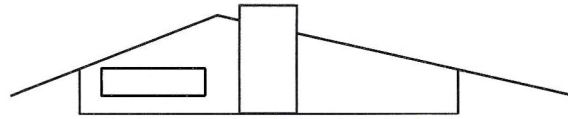
David Bekus

Mark Healey

Kevin Roy

Malgorzata Serafin

Tadeusz Serafin



DM BEKUS CONSTRUCTION SERVICES INC.

45 HUNT LANE

SKILLMAN, NJ 08558

(732) 735-7444

fax: (609) 772-8944

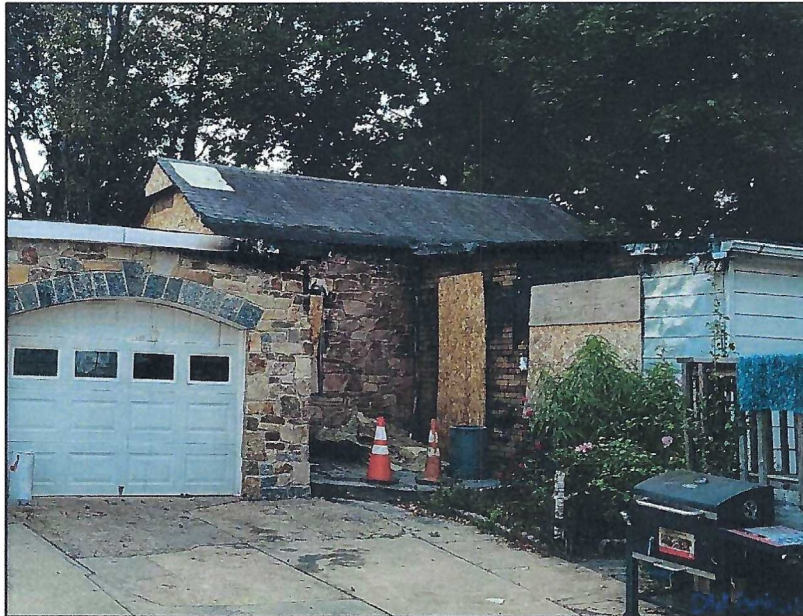
www.DMBConstruction.com

Email: DMBekus@DMBConstruction.com

TYPE & TIME OF OCCUPANCY

FOR THE PROPERTY AT

18 Home Street, Somerset, NJ - BL 181, Lots 24 & 25



September 28, 2021

Updated 12/30/2021 to include primary residence

Overview and Analysis

Francis P. Linnus, Esq., 2875 21 Clyde Road, Suite 101 Somerset, NJ 08873 contacted me David Bekus to investigate a detached building at 166 Victor Street, Somerset, NJ, to see if it could be classified as a preexisting non confirming use. The property includes a main home and a detached building behind the larger unit. The detached building has been occupied as a residence. The purpose of this investigation was to determine if the detached building was originally occupied as a living space and if that occupation preceded 1959.

On Tuesday, September 13, 2021, I visited the site, took pictures, and examined the property. The detached building was burned and damaged, though it was apparent it was occupied, as a kitchen, bath and other areas still indicated recent usage. Public records indicate the home was built in 1935. 18 Home Street consists of two lots, 24 and 25. The rear building has construction materials and methods appropriate for a building from that time.

Data on 18 Home St, Franklin Twp	
Type	residential
Building Description	2SF
Year Constructed	1935
Zoning	R7
Interior Space (ft ²)	1455
Acreage	0.1148
Additional Lots	L25

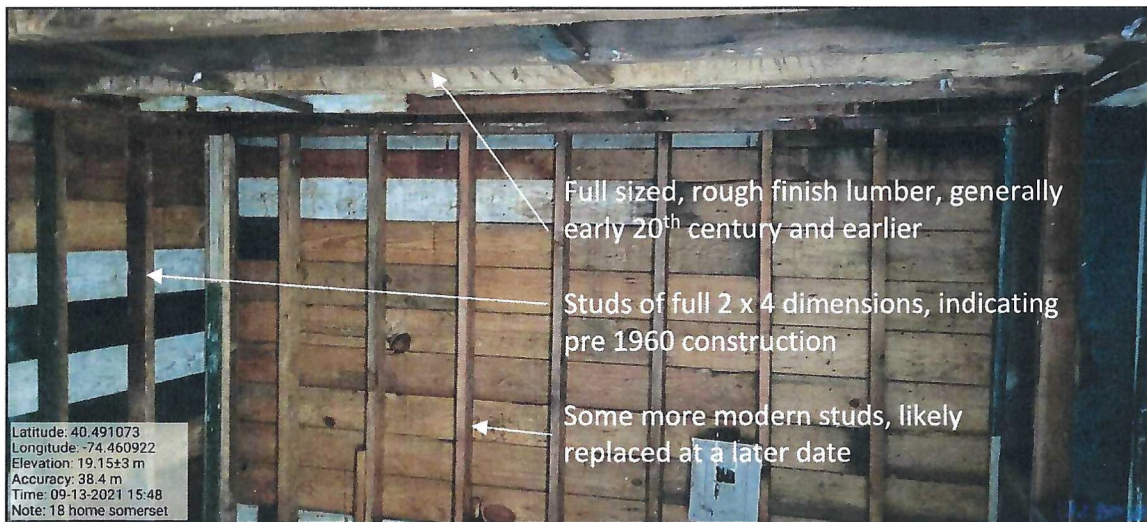
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¹ NJ parcels



The building is single level and consists of an attached garage and separate living area. The living area had a bath, bedroom, kitchen area and front door. The interior finish materials were removed, likely from work done after a fire which occurred on March 21, 2021.³

The interior construction had a mix of construction that indicated construction materials and techniques substantially predating 1959 and several walls that were of later construction. The exterior siding consisted of Aluminum siding over a faux asphalt impregnated brick siding and areas of recently applied stone veneer.



² Google Earth

³ <https://station27.com/18-home-street-fire/>



Floor Joists of full-sized lumber, indicating pre 1940's manufacture

Latitude: 40.491157
Longitude: -74.461129
Elevation: 19.3423 m
Accuracy: 122.7 m
Time: 09-13-2021 15:48
Note: 18 home somerset

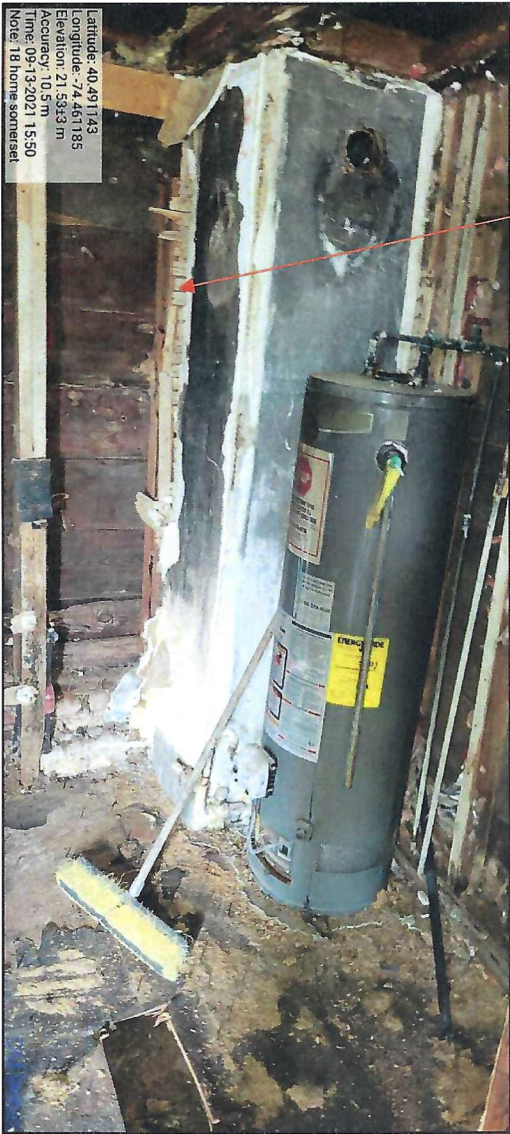
DM Bekus



The joists are notched (let in) which is typical of early 20th century construction and mostly disappeared by the 1960's

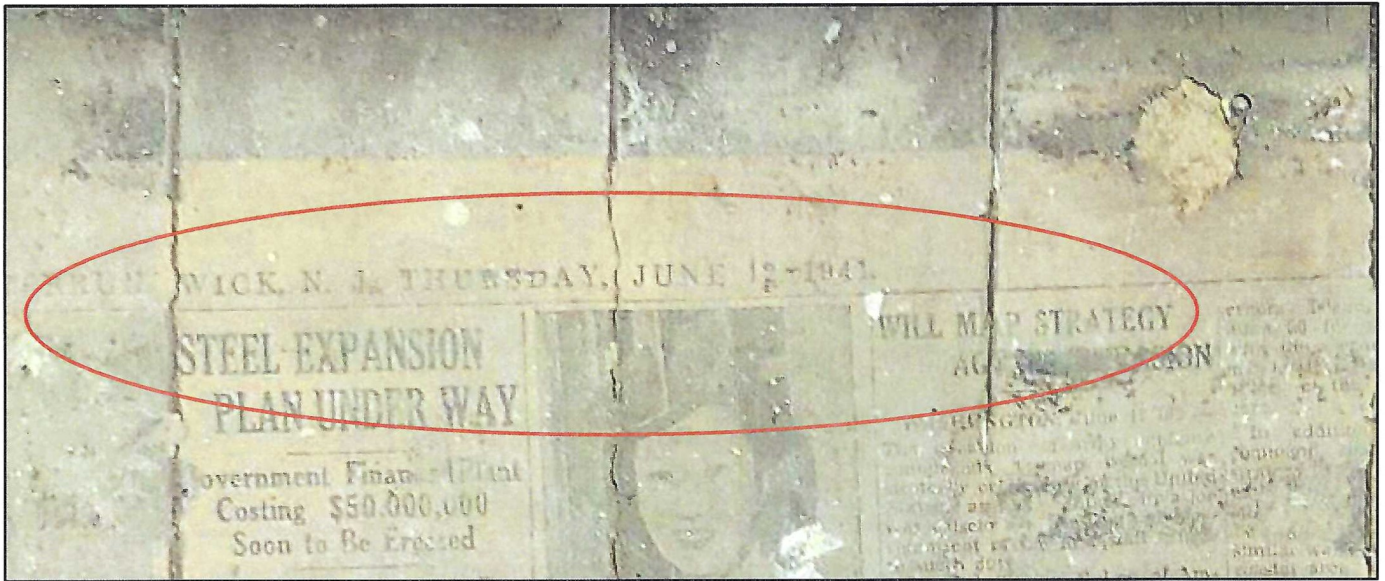
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Accuracy: 23.0 m
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Note: 18 home somerset

DM Bekus

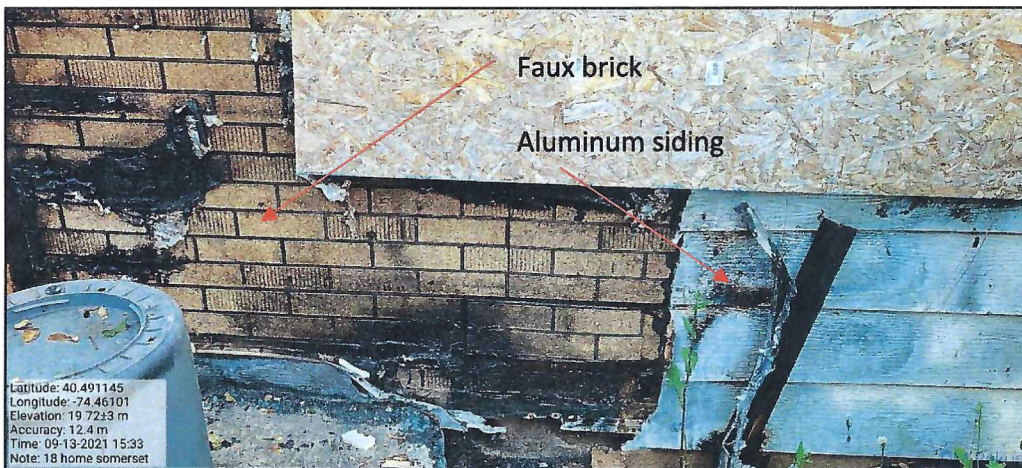


Though the interior finishes were mostly removed, some lath and plaster remain. Lath and plaster was widely used through the 1940's and fell out of favor quickly and all but disappeared in usage by the 1950's. Lath and plaster is indicative that the space was intended as a livable space. Barns (not an uncommon usage through the 1920's in urban areas) garages and sheds did not have plaster finishes, which was almost solely used for spaces that were intended to be occupied.





The pictures above are from the largest room and shows a wood floor that had linoleum installed and then removed. It was common from the mid century and earlier to use newspaper as the separation material from the wood and linoleum. Note that the date on the newspaper is June 12, 1941. There are two important points here. One, the wood floor itself, tongue and groove wood flooring was used in finished spaces. It was not used for garages, out buildings or sheds, it was used when the space was intended to be occupied. Second, the same holds true for linoleum, it was extensively used for kitchen and bathrooms. Linoleum has been used for flooring from circa 1870's through today, though it is no longer as popular, and the manufacturing processes have changed.



The fibrous imitation brick siding, that maybe the original siding was popular in the area from the 1920's through the early 1950's. Which along with all the other components of this building support a 1950's or early construction and occupancy. The aluminum siding was likely installed in the 1960's or early 1970's.

It is common for older buildings to have many renovations and updates over the years and this building is no exception. The plumbing and electrical are modern, though not new. The roof was likely replaced more than once. Even with accounting for the fire damage, the roof was on the building for many years. The building has indications of occupancy and livable space, a kitchen area, bathroom, hot water and bedroom.

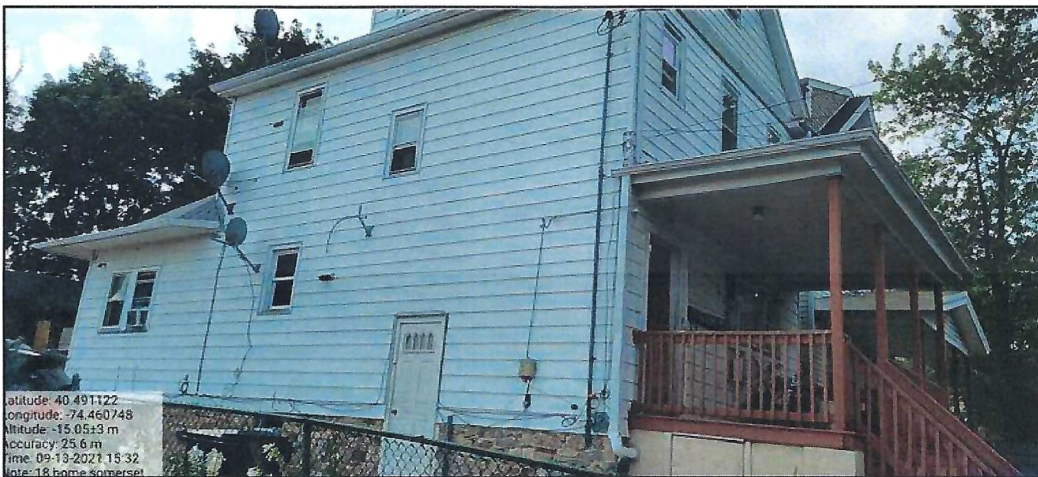
Conclusion

With Reasonable professional certainty, I David Bekus affirm the following:

The detached building at 18 Home Street, Somerset, NJ 08873 was built and occupied prior to 1958 as a separate occupied unit.

Main Building Update

As previously stated in this report the property records show the home was built in 1935. My further investigation supports that date. The following pictures and explanations are from main home.



Main Home. Siding, porch, cultured stone and windows are not from the original construction but are part of ongoing improvements to the home over the years.



Left side



Rear



The electrical and other mechanical systems have also been updated.

However, we did find knob and tube wiring, which clearly indicates 1935 construction as knob and tube was displaced by the 1940's. It appears most of the knob and tube has been removed, as it should be.



Electrical panel in basement. Not part of original construction.

My review of the main home and public records clearly indicate 1940's or earlier construction of both the main home and the detached building in the rear.

David M. Bekus receives compensation for reports and opinions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David M. Bekus". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D" and "B".

David M. Bekus