

## Exploring Asylum Hill – 40 Ashley St

Michael Barr bought his home at 40 Ashley St about a year and a half ago, and since then has been busy making improvements, both to his property and to the community around him. He discovered AHNA early on and began attending their meetings and quickly found a place where his skills and interests could make things better. As a result, he is now a member of the Board of Directors of AHNA and has been chairing the newly revived Quality of Life Committee for the last few months.

Where we explore Mike's efforts is in the rebuilding of his garage in the back of his property.

It's not anything that can be seen from the street, but having a usable garage adds both convenience and value to his home. It is one of three that were originally built of brick, all with flat roofs and all very close together. His neighbor's garage to the north is about 5' away and the one to the west is about 10'.

Since it had been mostly neglected by the previous owner for many years, he decided to fix it up included changing the flat roof to a pitched roof, as some of the others in the neighborhood are. For this he needed a variance, and AHNA was helpful in getting that accomplished.

The actual work began about a month ago with the demolition of the remains of the largely rotted flat roof. Once that was done, masons were hired to replace the defective bricks and repoint all the weak mortar. However, the project began more than a year earlier with a trip to Hartford Dept of License & Inspections where Mike found everything he'd need to do. As a good neighbor and wanting to be sure the project was successful both for himself and the neighborhood, he hired an architect, presented drawing to AHNA at a monthly meeting, applied for the needed variance, went to the required Historic Preservation Commission meeting, and received his building permit.

Now that the walls are fixed, the newly designed framing, deck and roof will be installed. Mike expects the work to be completed by July.

More photos of the garage before and in progress can be seen at:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/FfjULeDL713WsDb28>

