The report states the removal of the 16+ acres “will have an insignificant contextual impact on the historic resources” but it should explain how and why.

The report mentions rows of historic lilacs and 300 historic oaks and maples. It should indicate if these are in or out of the area that will be retained as the local district.

The new boundary should be outlined in a heavy, dark line on the “Tentative Parcel Map.” The map should include the name of the local historic district, indicate that it is a boundary modification for the district, and the year.
February 23, 2015

Michigan Historical Commission
P.O. Box 30740
702 W. Kalamazoo St.
Lansing, MI 48909

Dear Michigan Historical Commission Members,

Per Section 399.203 of Public Act 169 of 1970, attached is a Preliminary Report compiled by the City of Portage Historic District Study Committee on behalf of the Portage Historic District Commission. The report addresses a proposed revision to the boundaries of a site within the Portage Historic District.

In accordance with the parameters of Section, 399.203, copies of this report have also been transmitted to the local City of Portage Planning Commission, as well as the Michigan State Historic Preservation Review Board.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Erica L. Eklov
Administrative Assistant / HDC Staff Liaison

c: Portage Historic District Study Committee
City of Portage, Michigan
Historic District Study Committee

Historic District Modification
The “Van Riper” Property
3821 West Milham Avenue · Portage, Michigan 49024

Preliminary Report
February 18, 2015

Summary
A request from Patrick and Lisa Lynch, owners of the property commonly known as 3821 West Milham Avenue, seeks to remove an approximately 16.55 acre portion from the approximately 21.02 acres from the Van Riper property located within the City of Portage Historic District. It is the recommendation of the Historic District Study Committee (“HDSC”) that the City Council APPROVE the request as outlined and requested.¹

Authority
*The Local History Districts Act*, being Act 169 of 1970 as amended;
The City of Portage City Council resolution designating the Historic District Commission as the standing Historic District Study Committee, pursuant to MCL 399.214, to review and make recommendations as recited in the February 9, 2015 Communication from Erica L. Eklov, Administrative Assistant to the City Manager.

The Charge of the Committee
The Historic District Study Committee is charged with reviewing the request and acting as set forth in Public Act 169 of 1970. Specifically, the HDSC must:

1. Conduct a photographic inventory of resources within the existing historic district.
2. Conduct basic research of the historic district and the historic resources located within the district.
3. Determine the total number of historic and non-historic resources within the historic district and the percentage of historic resources of that total. In evaluating the significance of historic resources, the committee shall be guided by the selection criteria for evaluation issued by the United States secretary of the interior for inclusion of resources in the national register of historic places.
4. Prepare a preliminary report that addresses at a minimum all of the following:
   a. The charge of the committee.
   b. The composition of the committee membership.
   c. The historic district studied.
   d. The boundaries for the historic district in writing and on maps.
   e. The history of the historic district.

¹ The filing by Patrick and Lisa Lynch was originally styled as an “Application for Certificate of Appropriateness for Modification to Historic District Structures.” The HDSC has treated said Application as a request for a recommendation from the Historic District Study Committee for removal of property from the historic district pursuant to MCL 399.214 and related authority as granted by the City Council.
f. The significance of the district as a whole, as well as a sufficient number of its individual resources to fully represent the variety of resources found within the district, relative to the evaluation criteria.

5. Transmit copies of the preliminary report for review and recommendation to the Portage Planning Commission, to the Michigan Historical Commission and to the state Historic Preservation Review Board.

6. Make copies of the preliminary report available to the public.

7. Hold a public hearing within 60 days after the transmittal of the preliminary report.

8. Following the public hearing, prepare and submit a final report with its recommendations and the recommendations, if any, of the Portage Planning Commission to the City Council. If the recommendation is to modify the historic district, the final report must include a draft of a proposed ordinance.

The Composition of Committee Membership
Voting Members
The HDSC is comprised of members of the Portage Historic District Commission, including: Christine Broberg, Suzanne Nemeth, Russell Randall, E. James Ebert, Jamie Jager, Larry Ahleman, and Fred Grunert.

Non-Voting Participants
City of Portage Liaison: Erica Eklov

Abstentions
Mark Reile and Katie VanLonkhuyzen have abstained from participation in this review due to potential conflicts of interest.

Historic District Studied
Property Address: 3821 West Milham Avenue
Portage, Michigan (County of Kalamazoo)

Parcel ID No.: 00007-025-A

This property is commonly referred to as the “Van Riper Property.” The total size of the property is approximately 21.02 acres of which approximately 16.55 acres is sought to be removed from the historic district for a senior living facility development.

On February 7, 2015, Fred Grunert visited the property and photographed the historic resources, which include the house, outbuilding, and the property generally. Photographs were taken of proposed area to be removed from the historic district, in context within existing boundaries and the street, are attached hereto.

The proposed modification of the Van Riper Property would remove approximately 16.55 acres to the west of the historic home. The modification does not affect any existing structure, building, or edifice and leaves the historic property with approximately 4.46 acres of the remaining land. Any new construction on the new parcel will be subject to the City of Portage construction and development regulations.
The Boundaries for the Historic District in Writing and on Maps

The legal description for the historic property under the prior Historic District Ordinance (approximately):

SEC 7-3-11 W 1/2 NE 1/4 SEC 7 EXC S 165 FT ALSO EXC US 131 ROW, ALSO EXC MICHIGAN HIGHWAY EASEMENT.

The legal description of the current historic district property under the City Assessor (approximately):

THAT PART OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF FRACTIONAL SECTION 7, TOWNSHIP 3 SOUTH, RANGE 11 WEST, CITY OF PORTAGE, KALAMAZOO COUNTY, MICHIGAN, DESCRIBED AS: BEGINNING AT A POINT ON THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SECTION 7 THAT IS 868.34 FEET SOUTH 89° 42' 49" EAST OF THE NORTH QUARTER CORNER OF SAID SECTION 7; THENCE SOUTH 89° 42' 49" EAST ON SAID NORTH LINE 77.75 FEET TO THE WEST LINE OF "THE HOMESTEAD OF PORTAGE NORTH", ACCORDING TO THE PLAT THEREOF AS RECORDED IN LIBER 42 OF PLATS, PAGE 16, KALAMAZOO COUNTY RECORDS; THENCE SOUTH 00° 02' 20" EAST ON SAID WEST LINE 745.00 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89° 57' 40" WEST PERPENDICULAR TO SAID WEST LINE 285.00 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 00° 02' 20" EAST PARALLEL WITH SAID WEST LINE 261.87 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 47° 07' 46" EAST 42.56 FEET TO THE NORTHERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF MCGILLICUDDY LANE; THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY 127.20 FEET ON SAID NORTHERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE AND ON A 230.00 FOOT RADIUS CURVE TO THE LEFT WHOSE CHORD BEARS SOUTH 27° 1' 34" WEST 125.59 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 11° 10' 57" WEST ON SAID RIGHT OF WAY LINE 10.65 FEET TO THE NORTH LINE OF THE SOUTH 165.00 FEET OF THE NORTHWEST QUARTER OF THE NORTHEAST QUARTER OF SAID SECTION 7; THENCE NORTH 89° 46' 18" WEST ON SAID NORTH LINE 631.86 FEET TO THE NORTH AND SOUTH QUARTER LINE OF SAID SECTION 7; THENCE NORTH 00° 05' 48" WEST ON SAID QUARTER LINE 745.80 FEET TO THE EASTERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF HIGHWAY U.S. 131; THENCE NORTH 09° 52' 01" EAST ON SAID EASTERLY RIGHT OF WAY LINE 359.76 FEET TO THE SOUTH RIGHT OF WAY LINE OF WEST MILHAM AVENUE; THENCE SOUTH 89° 42' 49" EAST ON SAID SOUTH RIGHT OF WA Y LINE 806.09 FEET; THENCE NORTH 00° 05' 48" WEST PARALLEL WITH SAID QUARTER LINE 60.00 FEET TO THE POINT OF BEGINNING. CONTAINING 21.02 ACRES MORE OR LESS.

The new legal description of the proposed modified district (approximately):

COMMENCING AT THE NORTH 1/4 POST OF SECTION 7, T. 3 S., R. 11 W., CITY OF PORTAGE, KALAMAZOO COUNTY, MICHIGAN; THENCE SOUTH 89°-42'-49" EAST ALONG THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SECTION, 86834 FEET FOR THE PLACE OF BEGINNING OF THE LAND HEREAFTER DESCRIBED; THENCE CONTINUING SOUTH 89°-42'-49" EAST ALONG SAID NORTH LINE, 77.75 FEET TO THE WEST LINE OF THE HOMESTEAD OF PORTAGE NORTH, AS RECORDED IN THE LIBER 42 OF PLATS ON PAGE 16, KALAMAZOO COUNTY RECORDS; THENCE SOUTH 00°-02'-20" EAST THEREON, 745.00 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 89°-57'-40" WEST, PERPENDICULAR TO SAID WEST LINE, 285.00 FEET; THEN NORTH 1°-08'-30" EAST, 63.87 FEET; THEN NORTH 28°-47'-38" WEST 75.92 FEET; THENCE NORTH 3°-02'-36" EAST, 217.65 FEET; THEN NORTH 18°-55'-42" WEST, 170.22 FEET; THENCE NORTH 0°-35'-36" WEST, 34.24 FEET TO THE SOUTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF WEST MILHAM AVENUE; THENCE SOUTH 89°-42'-49" EAST THEREON, 141.34 FEET; THENCE NORTH 0°-05'-48" WEST PARALLELL WITH THE NORTH AND SOUTH 1/4 LINE OF SAID SECTION, 60.00 FEET TO PLACE OF BEGINNING. CONTAINING 4.46 ACRES.

The legal description of the property to be removed from the district (approximately):

COMMENCING AT THE NORTH 1/4 POST OF SECTION 7, T. 3 S., R. 11 W., CITY OF PORTAGE, KALAMAZOO COUNTY, MICHIGAN; THENCE SOUTH 89°-42'-49" EAST ALONG THE NORTH LINE OF SAID SECTION, 86834 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 0°-05'-48" EAST PARALLELL WITH THE NORTH AND SOUTH 1/4 LINE OF SAID SECTION, 60.00 FEET TO THE SOUTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF THE WEST MILHAM AVENUE; THENCE NORTH 89°-42'-49" WEST THEREON, 141.34 FEET FOR THE PLACE OF BEGINNING OF THE LAND HEREAFTER DESCRIBE; THENCE SOUTH 0°-35'-36" EAST 34.24 FEET; "THENCE SOUTH 18°-55'-42" WEST, 170.22 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 1°-22'-14" WEST, 217.65 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 30°-12'-26" WEST 72.48 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 3°-02'-36" WEST 80.53 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 28°-47'-38" EAST, 75.92 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 1°-08'-30" WEST, 63.87 FEET; THENCE SOUTH 0°-02'-20" EAST PARALLELL WITH THE WEST LINE OF THE HOMESTEAD OF PORTAGE NORTH AS RECORDED IN LIBER 42 OF PLATS ON PAGE 16, KALAMAZOO COUNTY RECORDS THENCE SOUTH 47°-07'-46" EAST, 42.56 FEET TO THE NORTHWESTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF MCGILLICUDDY LANE; THENCE SOUTHWESTERLY THEREON, 127.21 FEET ALONG A NON-TANGENT CURVE TO THE LEFT WITH AT RADIUS OF 230.00 FEET AND THE CHORD Bearing South 27°-01'-34" WEST, 125.59 FEET; THENCE CONTINUING SOUTH 11°-10'-57" WEST ALONG SAID RIGHT-OF-WAY, 10.65 FEET TO THE NORTH LINE OF THE SOUTH 165.00 FEET OF THE NORTHWEST 1/4 OF THE NORTHEAST 1/4 OF SAID SECTION; THENCE NORTH 89°-46'-18" WEST THEREON, 631.86 FEET TO THE NORTH AND SOUTH 1/4 LINE OF SAID SECTION; THENCE NORTH 0°-05'-48" WEST THEREON, 745.80 FEET TO THE EASTERLY RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF HIGHWAY U.S. 131; THENCE NORTH 09°-52'-01" EAST THEREON, 359.76 FEET TO
SAID SOUTH RIGHT-OF-WAY LINE OF WEST MILHAM AVENUE; THENCE SOUTH 89°-42'-49" EAST THEREON, 664.75 FEET TO THE PLACE OF BEGINNING. CONTAINING 16.55 ACRES.

The History of the Historic District
The property located at 3821 West Milham Avenue was first owned by Allison Kivine (asa Kinne), sold in 1836 to brother-in-law Stephen Howard. It is believed that the first brick home, in the style of Greek revival, was built on the site which is today within the City of Portage territorial limits. The home-structure currently existing on the property was built in 1859. The barn is considered to have been built at the same time. The house was constructed using hand-hewn oak timbers, cut by Howard himself, for the basement along with handmade bricks. In the 1920s, the house was then utilized by Albert Henwood and his family, who modernized the home with the installation of plumbing and electricity.

The Henwoods also planted the well-known rows of lilac bushes that still exist on the property. The Van Ripers planted approximately 300 oaks and maples, which still exists on the south side of the property.

In 1945, Dr. Charles Gage Van Riper and his wife bought the property. Van Riper was a well-known audiologist and speech therapist, and founder of the Van Riper Speech Clinic at Western Michigan University.

A written history of the home is at the Portage District Library entitled "Our House."

The Significance of the District
The Van Riper Property, with its structures and vegetation, are historically significant to preserve. However, the proposed removal of 16.55 acre parcel from the historic district will have an insignificant contextual impact on the historic resources.

Recommendation
Following the study of the information contained within, the Historic District Study Committee recommends that the request to modify the Historic District as presented be APPROVED. It is recommended that City Council approve amending the City of Portage Historic District Ordinance, specifically Section 38-35 “District Established; Boundaries,” to reflect the ensuing legal description for 3821 West Milham Avenue (parcel #00007-025-A).
ARCHITECTURAL STYLE: Greek Revival.

EXTerior PHYSICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE SITE OR HOME AND ANY KNOWN MAJOR ALTERATIONS FROM ITS ORIGINAL CONDITION:

Once owned by Allison Liver, sold in 1874 to brother-in-law, Stephen Henry. First brick house in Portage. Porches have been enclosed. Name and stuccoed into plaster (1859). All double walls. Interior— all doors and windows in original part are framed with elaborate moldings and windows all have decorative panel beneath. Original wood floors. Barn - 3 parts, milking parlor for cattle and sheep, forge for horse-shoeing. Back section for maid. Dr. Henwood added plumbing, electricity and 2 additional bedrooms and a bathroom and a fireplace.
CONSTRUCTION DATE: 1850

IS THIS THE ACTUAL DATE? Yes

PLANTER:

SOLDER:

 طفل:

Stephen Howard

BRICKER:

DEPT:

OR APPROX ACREAGE:

EXTERIOR CONDITION: Good

OUTBUILDINGS AND PROPERTY:

YARD:

IS THE SITE FOR SALE? No

IS THE STRUCTURE ON ITS ORIGINAL SITE? Yes
<table>
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<th>Year</th>
<th>Map Type</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Bldg. on Site</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>1873</td>
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<td>S. Howard</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
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<td>Amanda Howard</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1953</td>
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<td>Elijah Cath Van Ryn</td>
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<td>1964</td>
<td>plat</td>
<td>&quot;Encore&quot; magazine, Jan. 91</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
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</table>

ADDITIONAL INFO:

- "Encore" magazine, Jan. 91, feature article on Van Ryn.
ADDRESS  3821 Millard  YEAR BUILT  1859  FILE #  7-1

CURRENT OWNER   SINCE  PHONE

OWNER CONTACTS

I.D.#  PHOTO DATES  c/1860-70, 1861 engaving, p.1/17

MAPS (land owner-acres - house on site)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Owner</th>
<th>Acres</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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<td>Mr. Howard</td>
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<td>yes</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>Mr. W. Howard</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1873</td>
<td>S. Howard</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1890</td>
<td>S. Howard</td>
<td>no</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1910</td>
<td>Charles Howard</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1913</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1928</td>
<td>Albert F. Henwood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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PORTAGE & ITS PAST

#3  See Howard

WEBER REPORT

p. 42-47

KAL. CO. HISTORIES & BIOS.

<table>
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<td>1106-1109</td>
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<td>1906</td>
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</table>

KAL. CO. LAND & DEED RECORDS

"Our Home" - Van Riper, 1878

OTHER SOURCES

3821 W. Milham Avenue - Built by Stephen Howard, very early pioneer settler, in 1859. Constructed using hand-hewn oak timbers, cut by Howard himself, for the basement and barn and handmade bricks, it was probably the first brick house in Portage. When completion was delayed by the Civil War, the family allowed dances to be held there to raise money for the purchase of local soldiers' uniforms. No doubt the people pictured are Stephen and his family who lived in the house until the 1920's. It was then occupied by Dr. Albert Henwood and his family. The present owners are Dr. & Mrs. Charles Van Riper.
ADDRESS: 3821 West Milham

LEGAL DESCRIPTION: West 1/2 Northeast 1/4, Section 7, Town 3 South, Range 11 West, Kalamazoo County, Michigan.

YEAR BUILT: 1859

BUILDER: Stephen Howard

ARCHITECTURE:

Greek Revival. A Michigan farmhouse incorporating the Greek Revival style of architecture. This was probably the first brick house in Portage. A name and date traced into the plaster on the wall of the attic stairway dates the house as being built in 1859. Originally the two front porches were both open. The walls of the house are of brick and are double walls with an air space between. Most of the windows still contain the original rather wavy glass. On the interior, all the doors and windows in the original part of the house are framed with elaborate moldings and the windows all have a decorative panel beneath. The original wood floors (tulipwood in the living room) have been maintained throughout the house.

Barn: Built at the same time as the house, the lower part of the barn was divided into three main parts. The left section was the cow barn where the milking was done. The center section probably held cattle and sheep. The right-hand section in front was the forge where the horses were shoed -- the old forge pit remains today. The back section was the stable for the riding horses.

HISTORY:

The property on which this house was built was first owned by Allison Kinne. In 1836, he sold a 40 acre parcel (NW 1/4, NE 1/4
Sec. 7) to his brother-in-law, Stephen Howard. Stephen was the elder brother of Rossiter Howard, builder of the two homes at 5719 Angling Road. In the late 1850's, Stephen obtained the 40 acres directly south of his present land and on this 80 acre parcel he began to build his brick home in 1859. The advent of the Civil War slowed the building of the house and Stephen and his wife, Catherine, held dances in the two unfinished parlors to raise money to buy uniforms for Michigan regiments.

Stephen Howard had come to Portage Township with his family in the summer of 1831 from the town of Silver Creek on the banks of Lake Erie in western New York State. He was a young man of 23 at the time. The family settled in Section 6 and to all indications Stephen remained with them until on New Year's Day, 1837, he married Catherine Eliza Payne, daughter of Ephriam Payne, who also owned property in Section 6. Stephen and Catherine had six children in rapid succession. Their firstborn, a son, died in infancy. Then came Harriett Fidelia in 1840; Amanda Melvina, 1842; Cecilia Ellen, 1844; John Jay, 1846 and Geroge Stephen in 1848. John Jay died sometime in the 1850's, so Stephen and Catherine had four teen-aged children when they moved into their new brick home. The Howards were related in some way to most of the families in the area -- the Wattles, the Brookes, the Kinnies, the Gibbs, the Gages of Texas Township, etc. The families visited often and a favorite gathering place was the large front porches of Stephen's home -- where the women all sat in rocking chairs and smoked their pipes. Eventually the children began to leave home. Harriet married Henry Brooks (son of early pioneer, Isaac Brooks), Cecilia married Fred Hyatt Buckhout.
and moved to Kalamazoo and George married Pearlie Prouty of Allegan. Amanda did not marry and remained with her parents. Catherine Howard died on Christmas Day, 1890, and Stephen three years later. Amanda remained on the farm and ran it herself with just the help of a hired man. Her aunt, Belva Howard, lived with her from time to time. During the period of 20-some years that she owned the farm herself, Amanda built a small narrow bedroom across the east end of the parlor and probably kept the second floor of the house closed off. Amanda had never been strong, either physically or emotionally, and during her later years spent considerable time in and out of the Kalamazoo State Hospital. Shortly before being committed for the final time in 1926, she sold the farm to a prominent Kalamazoo physician, Dr. Albert Henwood.

Dr. Henwood promptly set out to modernize the house. He brought plumbing and electricity inside and created three additional bedrooms and a bathroom out of the storage area on the second floor. The small pantry and breakfast room were combined into one long, narrow kitchen. The small front parlor was made into Dr. Henwood's office and after removing Amanda's old bedroom from the end of the larger south parlor, it became the living room. The Henwoods replaced the old parlor stove with a large fireplace on the west wall.

Dr. Henwood and his wife, Frances, had four children: Phyllis, James, Mary Jane and John. It was their 16-year-old son, James, who, along with a friend, planted the rows of lilac bushes which now line both sides of the yard. The Henwoods' youngest son, John, was killed during World War II and, wanting a change of scene, they left their home to the care of relatives and moved to Florida, finally deciding to sell in 1945.
The new owners of the property in May of 1945 were Dr. Charles Gage Van Riper and his wife, Catharine. Dr. Van Riper was the Founder of the Van Riper Speech Clinic at Western Michigan University. A severe stutterer in his youth, "Dr. Van" has spent his life helping those similarly afflicted and has become world-famous in the field as a clinician and author. The Van Ripers had three small children, Cathy, Susan and John, when they moved into the house. The home and grounds had been allowed to run down badly since the Henwoods left and the Van Rippers set out to restore the property. More than 35 years later, their home, still standing on its original 80 acres, is one of the loveliest in Portage. Through extensive research into the history of their home and through close friendship with Alice Howard, granddaughter of the builder, Stephen Howard, and with Jim Henwood, Dr. Henwood's son, the Van Ripers have become very knowledgeable of the way things were and, as much as possible, have kept the house and grounds in this way. Dr. Van Riper has written a history of his home entitled Our House which is in the Portage Library collection.

CENSUS REPORTS:

1860

Howard, Stephen  age 52
Eliza (Catherine) 51
Harriet 20
Amanda 18
Celia 16
George 12
1870

Howard, Stephen  age 62
Eliza (Catherine) 60
Amanda  27
Celia  25
George  21

1880

Howard, Stephen  age 72
Catherine  70
Amanda  36

1884

Howard, Stephen  age 76
Catherine  73
Amanda  40

1894

Howard, Amanda  age 52
Barnes, P. A.  72 (female boarder)
Donahue, Frank  63 (hired man)

1900

Howard, Amanda  age 56
Donahue, Frank  68 (hired man)

NOTE:

Genealogical research done on Dr. Van Riper's family has shown that he is a direct descendant (11th generation) of Thomas Gage of Yarmouth, Mass. The same research (from records in the National Archives) has shown that Isaac Gage of Texas Township was a direct descendant (9th generation) of the same Thomas Gage. Isaac Gage was a brother-in-law of Stephen Howard who built this house (the husband of Stephen's eldest sister, Polly). Therefore, Dr. Van Riper can claim a very distant "kinship" with the original builder of his home.
Charles Van Riper—

His Curse Became His Acclaim

By Tom Thienes

In the history of any university is a president, coach, or faculty member who helped put the institution on the map, who gave it an identity, a reputation, a standard of excellence for others to follow.

Such a legendary figure for Western Michigan University is Charles Van Riper, now 84 years old and the teller of Upper Peninsula tales as author Cully Gage. An often painful and tormented childhood as a severe stutterer energized him into becoming one of the world's most renowned researchers and pioneers in speech pathology. A native of Champion in Michigan's upper level, Van Riper came to the Western campus in 1936 and established the first speech clinic in the state.

During his four-decades-plus at Western and even after his 1976 retirement as a Distinguished University Professor, Van Riper spread the word around the globe about the campus's capabilities in speech pathology and audiology. When the WMU Board of Trustees decided to establish a department of speech pathology and audiology in 1965, it was a no doubter who would head it up. The speech, hearing, and language clinic in that department now bears Van Riper's name, thanks to WMU Board action in May of 1983.

Not too shabby an achievement for a man who was such an embarrassment to his family because of his stuttering that he occasionally was not allowed to eat at the table when guests were invited into the home.

"As a boy, I was a very severe stutterer," says Van Riper, gazing out at a homemade version of the Upper Peninsula on his West Milham Road acreage. "I had awful blockings, struggling so badly that I looked like an epileptic. Trying to get a word out, I'd jerk and twitch and have all kinds of spasms. People would slap me across the face to get me out of it. They had the idea that it was some kind of dirty habit, almost like oral masturbation. The attitudes of society toward people with speech defects were crude back then. Their treatment was reprehensible when compared to today's standards.

"You just weren't supposed to stutter," says Van Riper, who has been widowed for about five years. "If you did stutter, you were some kind of freak. You were evil, and thus susceptible to punishments and penalties. That's why I went out to the woods a lot, to be myself and to be by myself. There were fears that I would never be able to speak."

Van Riper says he never really experienced any kind of adolescence because of his speech problems. Talking and expressing opinions as open and free as the Michigan woods that he loves as Cully Gage, Van Riper said it was hard for him as a professional speech pathologist to work with adolescents. "I just couldn't understand them. I had a hard time with my own kids [two daughters and a son], too."

Trying to get a word out, I'd jerk and twitch and have all kinds of spasms.
But, in retrospect, that nightmare was the best thing that ever happened to Van Riper. The cliches fit nicely in his story—always darkest before the dawn, turning a problem into a challenge and opportunity. "I evolved out of it," he says. "I learned how to size them up. If I was able to change and become comfortable with my stuttering, then they certainly were, too. If I had faith in them, then they had to have faith in themselves. If I could become successful, so could they. As therapy, it was very, very successful."

"Of course, all of this had a great impact on me as well," Van Riper says. "There is great satisfaction in being able to do something good in your life. I think I have impacted on the lives of many for the better. That's my greatest accomplishment and the most important value in my life."

The son of an Upper Peninsula physician, Van Riper did not overcome the handicap of being a severe stutterer until he was 26. By that time, he had demonstrated enough innate intelligence to gain entrance into Northern Michigan University, complete two years, and then go on to the University of Michigan to complete a bachelor's degree in physics and English.

"When, at the age of 26," Van Riper wrote in one of his scores of books, articles, and research articles, "I first attained enough fluency to join the human race, I decided to design a life plan so that the rest of my existence would be better than that I had known previously. Those first 26 years had been full of misery and frustration. The rest would be lived as well as I could possibly manage them.

"Now that I could communicate and no longer had to constantly spend my energies in the anxieties and struggles of severe stuttering," the passage continued, "all things were possible. I would make that ugly life of mine a shining thing."

By 1930, he had a master's degree from the Ann Arbor campus. Heading west, Van Riper settled at the University of Iowa to earn a doctorate in psychology, to work with his own speech, and to associate with many of the pioneers in the speech-pathology field. In 1936, the same year that Kalamazoo beckoned, he married the former Catharine Jane Hall, the daughter of an Iowa physician and the first speech pathology major to graduate from the University of Iowa's undergraduate program.

How did this son of Champion become a champion in his field in Kalamazoo?

First and foremost, he was spurred by the passion that, as far as he was concerned, nobody should have to go through the hell that he did as a child. Once he had conquered his stuttering, Van Riper cloaked himself in a missionary zeal to help others overcome problems in expressing themselves verbally. The challenge was that speech pathology back in those days was a nearly uncultivated field and Van Riper had to become one of the pioneers who did the plowing.

"I didn't have any background in speech pathology because hardly anybody did," he said in recalling those early days. "So I became a psychologist because I thought that was about as close as I could come in terms of academic discipline. I had to learn about speech pathology as I went along."

In the process, Van Riper wrote the first textbook of its kind in the nation and established the first clinic in Michigan, which also happened to be only the fourth such institution in the country. The latter required a lot of lobbying with state legislators in Lansing.

"I got the job in Kalamazoo because of Paul Sangren, who had just become president of what was then known as the Normal School at Western," Van Riper says. "Sangren had a nephew who stuttered badly. His nephew had been put through the same crud that I had been as a youngster. Back then, there was no real help for kids like myself and Paul's nephew. I was sent to some quack institutions, just as he
Toddy, it is a profession. There are more than 60,000 members in the American Speech and Hearing Association. "Of course, it wasn't all Charlie Van Riper, but I had a part in it," he says. "There aren't many people who can say that they built a profession, especially a profession that has changed the attitudes of society toward the handicapped, particularly toward the person who stutters. It is now accepted as a problem that can be corrected. To me, that's a major accomplishment."

Part of the normal life that he promised himself was an 80-acre retreat which frequently became an outreach of the campus clinic. Over the years, he and his wife brought student-patients, some with social problems that far outstripped their speech difficulties, into their West Milham Road home. The "Earth Mother," as he called his late wife Catherine, "was able to heal them much better than I did. She loved and babied them. She understood them." Catherine also practiced her profession outside of the home, serving as a psychologist and therapist at the Child Guidance Clinic for many years.

The stays of these adopted children could last a month, a year, even two years. They stayed as long as it took to heal them. Of these 15 or so cases, one could qualify as a movie-made-for-TV. Let "Cully Gage" write the script:

"His name is Bill Wensley. Combat during World War II greatly affected him, so much so that he was admitted to a psychiatric unit in Battle Creek. Prone to fighting, Bill also had a very severe stuttering problem. Because he frequently escaped and raised hell in Battle Creek, they took away his pants.

**To be brutally truthful, it was terrible at first because I had little support.**

They couldn't control him. An incorrigible. Catherine said 'Let's bring him home.' They thought we were nuts. Why would we want a berserk guy running around our house?"

"Our children were accustomed to having people who stuttered in our home because they knew these were people I had trouble helping in the clinic setting. At first, it was difficult putting up with Bill's outbursts, but we persevered.

"After a short time, it became clear. Bill had outbursts because of frustration and those frustrations were based on his inability to speak clearly. Stuttering was the core of his misbehavior, the reason he went mad."

Van Riper charted a course of treatment that included both physical and mental components. While he taught the technique of stuttering more easily, Van Riper also prescribed some physical labor to relieve Bill's frustrations. The task was to build an outside fireplace and Bill tackled the chore with great zeal.

"He went out into the back 40 and found the largest rocks he could," Van Riper says. "He lugged and rolled them in. Some were three feet in diameter. And he began to build something. As his frustrations eased, so did the stuttering. He learned how to
Dr. Charles Van Riper

stutter easily. As the fireplace grew, so did his confidence. He was free from the shackles of a speech defect."

And there is a happy ending to the real life script. Bill Wensley went on to follow in the footsteps of his mentors and became a speech pathologist. Armed with a master's degree, Bill established a speech clinic of his own on the west coast and is now retired in Alaska. "He helped a lot of people and did an awful lot of good," says the proud teacher.

The fireplace fits in nicely with Van Riper's red brick farmhouse, which was built in 1859 and was the first of its kind in the area. The builder was a fellow named Steven Howard, who was one of the Kalamazoo area's first settlers in the early 1830s. A local physician also called it home for a spell. During the Civil War, Union supporters gathered there to raise funds for the cause and buy long underwear for the troops. Van Riper assumed ownership about a half-century ago.

In the old basement, Doctor Van, or Cully, as his friends call him, has wine. Digging around in an old chest of drawers down there, he found a skull that had a small hole behind the ear. An anthropologist told Van Riper that the skull was that of an Indian girl, around 18 years old at the time of death.

"She either died from a mastoid infection or was hit by an arrow behind the ear," Van Riper says. "I think all old houses should have a skeleton in its closet. I at least got a part of one."

Van Riper bought the property for $14,000, an investment that he recouped when he granted an easement to Consumer's Power Company. Even though vehicles by the thousands stream by each day on near-by I-94, there is still enough natural serenity to satisfy Van Riper, at least until he can travel to his real Shangri-La in the Upper Peninsulas.
"I've got two gardens down here," he says, "and a fountain. That stand of trees out there is my link to the Upper Peninsula. I planted most of them, 300 or so. Hardwoods. Oaks and maples. The pines are now nearly 50 feet tall. This is my own cocoon. I can sit out in those woods, light up my pipe, and philosophize. The healing of myself

I can become part of it all.
I'm young again. I'm sipping from the Fountain of Youth.

starts in those woods, or when surrounded by great bouquets of flowers in the garden. Bathed in beauty, it's easy to be happy."

Van Riper can watch cascading water bubble up from a fountain made from an old kettle once used to scald hogs. Maybe he can hear the vegetables grow in his second garden. "I'll sit down there in the early morning or evening and watch the wildlife come in—the deer, raccoons, possum, squirrels. Even with the cars flying by beyond the soybean field, I can become part of it all. I'm young again. I'm sipping from the Fountain of Youth. I take that feeling back to my typewriter."

And out pops Cully Gage! And tales of his real-life Shangri-La, the Upper Peninsula, to which he travels each summer. "I renew my boyhood up there amidst the moose, the deer, the wolves, and the loons on the lake. I can go for 40 miles and never hit a road. That's where I bathe my soul." Cully comes from Kalle, the Finnish word for Charles. Gage is the maiden name of Van Riper's mother.

His first effort was The Northwoods Reader, a book of stories about true-life characters he had known as a boy growing up in Champion. The volume was seasoned by a few tales that he "just made up." The intent was to write for his children and grandchildren so that they could know how things truly were in the Upper Peninsula around the turn of the century. He showed the tales to close friends, who recommended that he submit the vol-

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Jacobson's
Dr. Charles Van Riper

The name Cully Gage seemed to fit this change-of-pace in writing. After all, Charles Van Riper was the author of scholarly research papers and textbooks. Charles Van Riper had to be careful about what he said. Cully Gage could freewheel. And he sure did!

"The books were easy to write. I'd get a vague idea of a tale, do some mulling over it, try to find in my memories some character who would fit in, and then the stuff just poured out of my index fingers," he says.

His first editor was the "Earth Mother." If Catharine, his wife, didn't chide or get teary-eyed, he'd go back to the drawing board and do some revising. "It turned out I didn't have any worries about being sued," he says. "The people up there loved the tales. The feedback was great and that drove me to keep on writing them. I've written seven volumes in the Nonthwoods series now. Some have called me the Garrison Keillor of the Upper Peninsula. Except I have Van Riper Lakes instead of Woebegone."

As Dean Martin used to say, keep those cards and letter coming, folks, because they are therapeutic for Cully Gage, who has had more than his share of ambulance runs. There have also been bouts with diabetes.

"I've written about 35 books," he says, "but I enjoy the Cully Gages the most." So do many of his readers, if his mail is any indication:

"Your stories put me in a place I wish I was," wrote one reader. "They soothe the soul."

A younger fan wrote: "I'm not much of a speller, but your stories touch my heart and warm my soul."

"I could not quit reading until I snapped the last page closed," said another. "Aw, Cully, you broke my poor cracked old heart again and I love you for it. Here's to you, old sir, with all my gratitude, respect, and a dual clink of the glass and my old deutsch head. Good stuff! Goddammit, Cully, I mean it."

"I laughed and I cried," wrote one emotional reader. "What a great satisfaction it must be to bring joy to so many people. I hope that we will have more stories from you before you join your beloved Grandpa Gage."

"I love you, Cully Gage, because you have always been so in love with life," wrote an elderly woman. "I treasure your books. Thank you for writing them and sharing your heart's ease with me. What a beautiful, kindred person you are!"

A Love Affair with the U.P. was not in the genre of the other Nonthwoods

Deep in thought in his study, Van Riper uses the two-finger method to put the finishing touches to his latest book. He has written over thirty-five of them during his lifetime.
The healing of myself starts in those woods.

Readers. For Cully Gage, this book was more of a “gut check,” as athletes like to say when times are the most tense in the contest. Instead of telling tales about the fascinating characters he knew as a boy, he talked about the land, the forests, the lakes, and the streams of the Upper Peninsula, and how they shaped one man’s life. Chapters were titled “My Boyhood in the Forest,” “The Dark Years of My Youth,” and “Living Alone in the Forest.”

The last chapter on “Growing Old” dealt with the death of his beloved “Earth Mother” after two years of chemotherapy for cancer. Here’s the concluding paragraphs:

“This book should probably end right here, but there is just a bit more to say. In September, my son, John, drove me up to the lakes to do some of my grieving. Some of it. My healing rock didn’t help much and after I got home, I found our old house very, very empty.

“But life goes on, a life that has a big hole in it which shows no sign of shrinking, but I try to live around it with some grace. Writing more Northwood Readers has helped and so have my trips northward. I’ve managed to get to the cabins every summer and every deer season. Everything up there has changed; yet everything remains the same. Herman sits on his white rocks; the old cabin holds me in its arms; the forests and lakes lift my spirit. Children and grandchildren join me there and last summer at the cabin on the second lake, we watched a mother moose feeding on Katy’s [his wife] white water lilies, then swim with her calf across to the south shore. The loons give their long wail at eventide and I find some peace. That other love affair, the one I’ve had with my beloved U.P., still continues. I’ll be back again, old cabin.”

Van Riper’s classic textbooks in speech pathology have been translated into German, French, Finnish, Spanish, Japanese, Korean, and Arabic. There is even a Braille version. Thanks to Van Riper’s leadership and the growth of the WMU department to international stature, students from all over the world come to Kalamazoo to train in the profession of speech pathology.

“But it has been my little books about the people I knew as a boy in the Upper Peninsula that have given me the greatest pleasure,” Van Riper says. “They have evidently rung a small gong and I get a lot of fan mail which tells me about other lives and experiences up there. My readers have sent me smoked fish, pasties, saffron bread, maple syrup, and other U.P. specialties. People just drop by the old farm here and visit. Old men don’t usually make new friends, but these books have brought many to me.”

Parents and friends of children, who have seen how his definitive texts—The Nature of Stuttering and The Treatment of Stuttering—have improved their young lives and freed them from the shackles of a speech defect, probably do not agree with this assessment of the value of his written words. Cully Gage brings happiness and warm memories. Charles Van Riper perhaps brought hope.

In his 627-page volume on The Nature of Stuttering, Van Riper surveyed the world literature on the subject, compiling and organizing most of the information concerning the nature and the cause of the disorder. The book contains essentially everything from the first written mention of stuttering to the latest concepts in French, Japanese, Russian, Hungarian, Polish, German, and English. Van Riper examined all written accounts from before the time of Christ to the present, providing a wealth of clinical observations and experiences. It has become a classic.

His books on Teaching Your Child to Talk and on Speech in the Elementary Classroom were among the accom-

Dr. Charles Van Riper

As Cully Gage, Van Riper understands a man’s relationship with his environment, with nature’s way. From that exudes his sense of serenity of being part of it all. A sense of humor helps as well.

“I have this huge shredding machine,” Van Riper says. “I use it to compost corn stalks, leaves, and other vegetation. One day, it got stuck. Before trying to fix it, you are told to unhook the spark-plug wire to avoid accidents. Then it’s safe to remove what is plugging up the shredder. Well, I didn’t do that and, all of a sudden, the blades started to revolve.

“I looked down into the bin and saw the scarlet and green colors. The green was from the corn stalks. I didn’t know where the red came from. I just said, ‘My, isn’t that beautiful!’ He said, ‘I realized those were my fingers. I wrapped my hand in a towel and off I went to the hospital to get sewed up.”

“When I got back to the farm,” he says, “I continued with the composting, finger stubs and all. I put the results on the roses. I think I’m the only man who ever was reincarnated as a rose and lived to see it. I recycled myself. The roses that year had the biggest blooms I ever saw.” Kind of blooming red!

“Because of my health problems and the loss of my wife,” Van Riper says, “it’s been hard to maintain that sense of serenity, but I’ve managed. I’m not afraid of death. It will be the end of a useful life. I made a very fine life after a very evil beginning. I became a useful person and had an impact for good. I think I have helped a lot of people. So I have a right to feel some peace. The problems of my childhood are just memories, something to learn from.

Van Riper could have harbored lifetime ill feelings against his father, but if
Photos of 3821 West Milham for HDSC Report

1. View looking East at proposed drive

2. View looking South at proposed drive

3. View looking at House from drive

4. View of tree line separation at drive

5. View looking South at House

6. View of tree line West of Barns
Photos of 3821 West Milham for HDSC Report

7. View from corner of house looking West

8. View looking from house to Milham

9. View from South West corner of property

10. View of tree line looking North East

11. View of barns looking North East

12. View of barns looking North
Photos of 3821 West Milham for HDSC Report

13. View of barns looking East

14. View of barns looking East

15. View of tree line looking North

16. South of property looking North

17. South of property looking North at barns
TENTATIVE PARCEL MAP
FOR
MMM DEVELOPMENT
LOCATED IN SECTION 7, T. 3 S., R. 11 W.,
CITY OF PORTAGE, KALAMAZOO COUNTY, MICHIGAN
BY
Prein & Newhof
Engineers & Surveyors
Environmental & Soils Laboratory
7123 STADIUM DRIVE
KALAMAZOO, MICHIGAN 49009
PHONE: (269) 372-1158
FEBRUARY 17, 2015

Remainder Parcel:

Commencing at the North 1/4 post of Section 7, T. 3 S., R. 11 W., City of Portage, Kalamazoo County, Michigan; thence South 89°42'49" East along the North line of said Section, 868.34 feet for the place of beginning of the land hereinafter described; thence continuing South 89°42'49" East along said North line, 77.75 feet to the West line of The Homestead of Portage North, as recorded in Liber 42 of Plats on Page 16, Kalamazoo County Records; thence South 00°02'20" East thereon, 745.00 feet; thence South 89°57'40" West, perpendicular to said West line, 285.00 feet; thence North 1°08'30" East, 63.87 feet; thence North 28°47'38" West, 75.92 feet; thence North 3°02'36" East, 80.53 feet; thence North 30°12'26" East, 72.48 feet; thence North 1°22'14" East, 217.65 feet; thence North 18°55'42" East, 170.22 feet; thence North 0°35'36" West, 34.24 feet to the South right-of-way line of West Milham Avenue; thence South 89°42'49" East thereon, 141.34 feet; thence North 0°05'48" West parallel with the North and South 1/4 line of said Section, 60.00 feet to the place of beginning. Containing 4.46 Acres.

Split Parcel:

Commencing at the North 1/4 post of Section 7, T. 3 S., R. 11 W., City of Portage, Kalamazoo County, Michigan; thence South 89°42'49" East along the North line of said Section, 868.34 feet; thence South 0°05'48" East parallel with the North and South 1/4 line of said Section, 60.00 feet to the South right-of-way line of West Milham Avenue; thence North 89°42'49" West thereon, 141.34 feet for the place of beginning of the land hereinafter described; thence South 0°35'36" East, 34.24 feet; thence South 18°55'42" West, 170.22 feet; thence South 1°22'14" East, 217.65 feet; thence South 30°12'26" West, 72.48 feet; thence South 3°02'36" West, 80.53 feet; thence South 28°47'38" East, 75.92 feet; thence South 1°08'30" West, 63.87 feet; thence South 0°02'20" East parallel with the West line of The Homestead of Portage North as recorded in Liber 42 of Plats on Page 16, Kalamazoo County Records; thence South 47°07'45" East, 42.56 feet to the northwesterly right-of-way line of McGilliguddy Lane; thence Southwesterly thereon, 127.21 feet along a non-tangent curve to the left with a radius of 230.00 feet and a chord bearing South 27°01'34" West, 125.59 feet; thence continuing South 11°10'57" West along said right-of-way, 10.65 feet to the North line of the South 165.00 feet of the Northwest 1/4 of the Northeast 1/4 of said Section; thence North 89°46'18" West thereon, 631.86 feet to the North and South 1/4 line of said Section; thence North 0°05'48" West thereon, 745.80 feet to the Easterly right-of-way line of Highway U.S. 131; thence North 09°52'01" East thereon, 359.76 feet to said South right-of-way line of West Milham Avenue; thence South 89°42'49" East thereon, 864.75 feet to the place of beginning. Containing 16.55 Acres.