

From: [Hallam Stanton](#)
To: [Historic District Commission \(Staff\)](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]858 Edison, Application Number 21-7307
Date: Tuesday, June 8, 2021 10:08:27 AM

Dear HDC,

I write regarding 858 Edison. The owners have submitted an application (21-7307) to revise a previously approved addition. It is on the agenda for your next meeting, Wednesday June 9, 2021. My family and I are neighbors, with a clear view of the construction that has taken place at 858 Edison thus far.

I have read the recently issued staff report and agree with its recommendation 100%. But to the extent that it helps you make an informed decision this Wednesday, I want to offer two additional observations.

First, the owners of 858 Edison have not acted in good faith. This is evidenced by their actions. They started to construct their addition the morning after you approved their plans, despite the fact that it was impossible for them to have secured the necessary permits in such a short time. Immediately they began building an addition that was in scale and scope similar to a version that you had earlier rejected. In the process, they demolished sections of the property that they had promised to keep, laying waste to historic materials such as original windows. And to the extent that their contractor is now claiming that "the dormer was removed as it was found to be structurally beyond repair," this is almost certainly a lie. With my own eyes, I saw him and his team take sawzalls to it in order to remove it. It took them time and effort.

Second, what is going on at 858 Edison threatens historical preservation in Boston-Edison more generally. As you may know, the addition was opposed by a large number of nearby residents who signed a petition calling for you to reject it. When you eventually approved a scaled down version of what the owners had originally submitted, these same residents accepted your decision even though they may have disagreed with it. However, I have since heard from several residents who question whether they too must get historic approval before moving forward with projects, in light of what has happened. If all it takes to circumvent HDC's authority is to get a rubber stamp based on fake plans, you have no authority at all. People are beginning to think that they can simply do as they please.

My family and I will not be making a public statement at the June 9 meeting, but we have spoken out at previous meetings. The owners of 858 Edison will soon be our neighbors, and we would prefer not to create any more bad blood if we can avoid it. We will respect your decision and continue to apply for historic approval while renovating our property. However, if the HDC cannot stop such a fragrant disregard for historic preservation, we will not be surprised if others choose not to.

Best,
Hallam Stanton
869 Longfellow Street.

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