

**STAFF REPORT 03-10-2021 MEETING**

**PREPARED BY: G. LANDSBERG**

**APPLICATION NUMBER: 21-0000**

**ADDRESS: 1566 BAGLEY**

**HISTORIC DISTRICT: CORKTOWN**

**APPLICANT: TIM FLINTOFF/4545 ARCHITECTURE**

**DATE OF COMPLETE APPLICATION: 02-22-2021**

**DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 02-26-2021**

**SCOPE: ERECT NEW DUPLEX BUILDING**

### **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The project site is a parcel at the northeast corner of Bagley and Tenth Streets. The lot is 50' wide and 130' deep, consistent with other nearby corner lots. Already erected on the parcel is a single-family dwelling, revived by this Commission in 2016, and of a stridently modern and contemporary design. This building, although reportedly designed to be a carriage house or "back house," sits aggressively forward on the parcel (towards Bagley, or southward) to allow on-site parking accessed from the alley. The remainder of the parcel, south of the existing dwelling and including the corner of the intersection, is currently maintained as a non-landscaped lawn. A wooden fence runs along Tenth enclosing the dwelling's "lot", then runs easterly to close off the northern section.

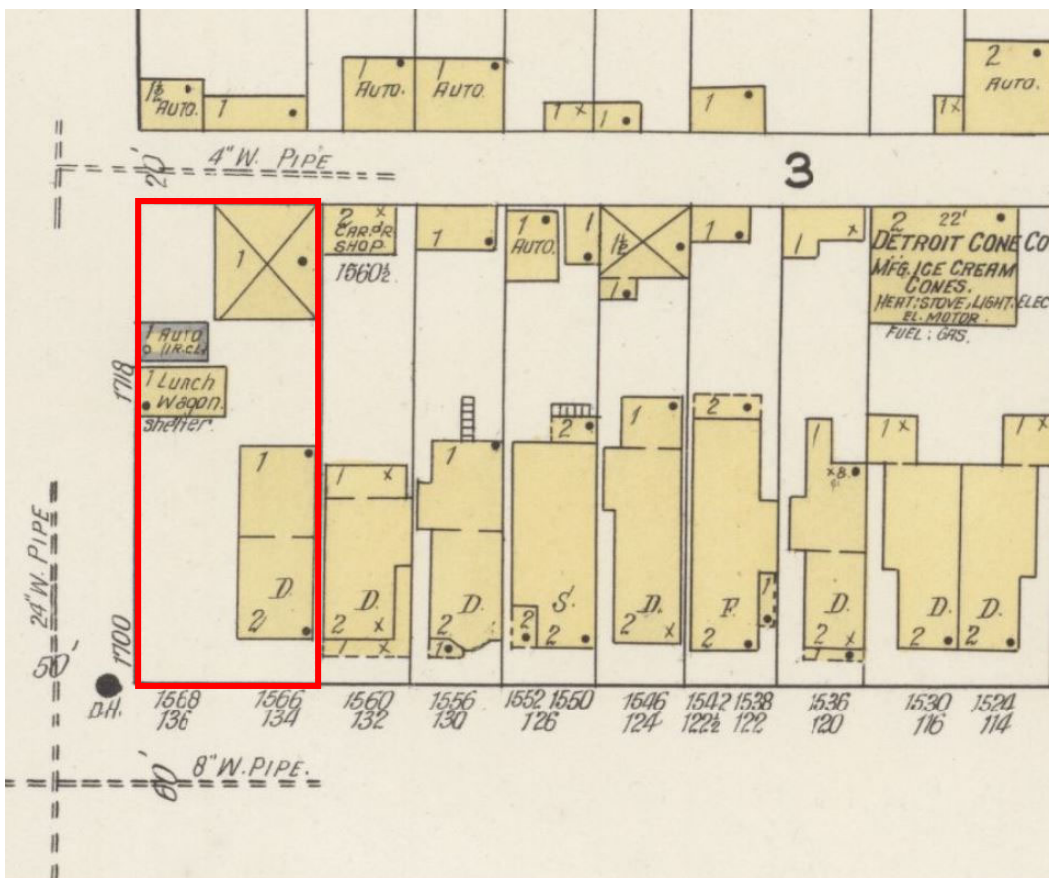


*View of existing conditions at 1566 Bagley, view to the northwest. Staff photo, February 26, 2021.*

It is staff's understanding that the intention to develop the southern portion of the site was discussed with the Commission during the 2016 approval of the "back house," though no design was submitted for review at that time. The current architect, for this application, did not design the previous structure, but used it as a prototype for the front house, to create a cohesive composition for the site.



Parcel view of vicinity, subject parcel outlined in yellow. Note that the “back house” takes up slight majority of the site. A fence divides the developed half (north) from the undeveloped half (south).



Sanborn map of vicinity, 1921. It is interesting to note that the site was addressed for two dwellings on Bagley, and more on Tenth, but had only one dwelling in the historic period.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Per the submitted drawings, the applicant is proposing to erect a new 2-unit duplex in a contemporary design, described by the applicant as such:

*The project proposes to construct a new 2-story 2-unit townhouse building at the corner of Bagley and 10th Streets. In 2016, the owners of the parcel constructed a single-family home with attached first-floor 2-car garage located at the rear (north) side of the site. Their vision always included eventually building rental units at the front of the property, with their unit acting as a carriage house off the alley. The design of the new townhomes takes cues from the existing home, replicating the gray metal siding, wood shiplap siding at the inset entries, and the overall simply massing featuring a single slope roof. The new townhomes introduce brick cladding on the first story along both Bagley and 10th Streets. The addition of brick provides additional durability along the sidewalk and adds visual weight to the base and allows the building to hold the corner. An existing stained wood fence currently encircles the owner's home at the rear of the site. The proposed project adds two off-street parking spaces accessed from 10th Street, and extends the existing fence to create a new shared exterior yard space at the rear of the new townhomes. Project Scope•Construct a new 2-unit Townhouse Building•Construct 2 new parking spaces off of 10th Street (including new curb cut)•Extend/modify existing stained wood fence as shown on site plan*



*View of existing conditions at 1566 Bagley, view to the east from Tenth. Staff photo, February 26, 2021.*

## STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Corktown Historic District was established in 1984.
- The applicant met with HDC and PDD design staff prior to submission of this application. During this consultation, recommendations were made to modify the design to “hold the corner” by turning some of the Bagley-facing elements (brick and wood around entrance areas) along Tenth Street. The architect modified the design to staff’s satisfaction; reference perspective rendering on submitted sheet A3.4.
- Staff notes that the “back house,” as designed and submitted, was not recommended by staff in the 2016 report, available on the website adjacent to this report. At the time, the Commission issued a COA, with conditions stating that “a different cladding material be selected.” Puzzlingly, this does not appear to have occurred, and the project was approved and permitted in its originally submitted form. Nevertheless, it is your current staff’s consensus that a quality metal panel product, as used here in juxtaposition with more traditional materials, is not incompatible with the eclectic quality of the District.
- Present staff recommendation, and guidance to the applicant concerning their design, places considerable emphasis on the already existing building as an appropriate prototype for the new “front” building. Staff suggests that sensitive and occasional introduction of modern materials as a foil to the historic context, similar to approved designs in the Brush Park district, may sometimes be appropriate, as long as the “one-off” nature of such designs do not begin to overwhelm or compete with the dominant character.
- In this particular, localized case, the proposed design properly and appropriately references its 5-year old neighbor, and additionally introduces more substantial areas of brick, which helps ground the back house back into the fabric of the district. The proposal completes the site and connects the back house more firmly into the district context.
- The proposed building sits substantially forward of the typical setbacks of neighboring historic houses to the east. However, other corner buildings, including the historic building immediately across Tenth Street, are zero lot line buildings at both streets, “holding” the corner in an urban design sense.
- As a guide to new construction, the [Elements of Design](#) for this district does offer the following (excerpted) relevant points:
  - **Element 1, Height:** *Most residential buildings in the district range from one (1) story to two and one half (2½) stories tall*
  - **Element 2, Proportion of buildings’ front facades:** *Proportion varies in the district, depending on the age, style and type of building*
  - **Element 3, Proportion of openings within the facades:** *Window openings are usually taller than wide, but there are also square openings and transom window openings which are wider than tall. Window openings are almost always subdivided...*
  - **Element 4, Rhythm of solids to voids in front facades:** *...post-1880s Queen Anne style buildings exhibit a greater freedom, with their bay windows and combinations of windows in gables...*
  - **Element 5, Rhythm of spacing of buildings on streets:** *The original pattern of spacing of buildings on streets was that of houses placed very close together.*
  - **Element 6, Rhythm of entrance and/or porch projections:** *Most houses in the district have projecting front porches, usually on one (1) side of the front façade and sometimes wrapping around to the side...some Victorian houses have a secondary porch on the side*
  - **Element 7, Relationship of materials:** *The great majority of buildings in the district are wood frame structures originally clad in clapboard with wooden skirting or brick foundations...There are some brick residential buildings in the district, the majority of these being duplexes and multi-unit dwellings*
  - **Element 8, Relationship of textures:** *...Detailed brickwork on brick buildings contributes to textural interest when it exists*
  - **Element 9, Relationship of colors:** *Paint colors in the district generally relate to style*
  - **Element 10, Relationship of architectural details:** *These generally relate to style...In general, Corktown is rich in its diversity and quality of architectural styles and detail.*
  - **Element 11, Relationship of roof shapes:** *Pitched roofs with frontal gables predominate in the district...commercial buildings generally have flat roofs.*
  - **Element 12, Walls of continuity:** *The major wall of continuity is created by the buildings...*

- **Element 13, Relationship of significant landscape features and surface treatments:** *The typical treatment of individual properties is a shallow flat front lawn area in grass turf, subdivided by a concrete walk leading to the front entrance and sometimes a concrete walk leading to the side entrance.*
- **Element 14, Relationship of open space to structures:** *Open space in the form of front yards to buildings is generally very shallow*
- **Element 15, Scale of facades and façade elements:** *The majority of buildings in the district are small in scale...Façade elements...are moderate in scale. Details within these elements are generally small in scale.*
- **Element 16, Directional expression of front elevations:** *Two-story Italianate and Greek Revival single-family residences are vertical in directional expression...two-story Queen Anne buildings are either neutral in directional expression or have vertically expressed front facades...*
- **Element 17, Rhythm of building setbacks:** *Setbacks vary from area to area...although they are usually consistent within blocks. In general, buildings have very shallow front yards...Buildings on the north-south streets and corners are very close to the front lot lines.*
- **Element 18, Relationship of lot coverage:** *Lot coverage ranges...the average residential coverage being approximately forty (40) percent.*
- **Element 19, Degree of complexity within the façade:** *Early buildings are simple and straightforward. Queen Anne buildings are more complex in massing and detail but are not overly complex.*
- **Element 20, Orientation, vistas, overviews:** *Garages are oriented toward the alleys...the general overview is that of small-scale mixed-use neighborhood...*
- **Element 21, Symmetric or asymmetric appearance:** *Most buildings in the district are asymmetrical in appearance, but result in balanced compositions.*
- **Element 22, General environmental character:** *The Corktown Historic District, with its narrow lots, shallow front yards, and small-scaled buildings, has a low-density, urban, mixed use character of a pre-automobile city...*
- The proposed townhouses are reasonably scaled and sited in a manner similar to historic structures in the vicinity, and are sensitively designed in quality, contextual materials of our own time. The proposed project restores some of the historically appropriate density which is a major characteristic of this district, according to both the designation report and the Elements of Design.

## ISSUES

- The proposed design goes further than the original “back house” in using textures and materials typical for the district, and restores historic character/density through the completion of an important corner property. The design also plays off and reinforces the modern character of the site, in what staff feels to be an appropriate localized and limited condition, which does not set a precedent for other areas.
- It is staff’s opinion that the proposed new construction retains the historic character of the property and district, is aligned with the district’s Elements of Design, and protects and preserves the integrity of the property and the surrounding district.



*View to the northeast across Bagley. Note historic corner building, far left. Staff photo, February 26, 2021.*

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### Section 21-2-73, Certificate of Appropriateness

The proposed new construction infills the location of a former dwelling with a structure built for the same residential purpose, compatible with the massing, size, scale and architectural features of its environment, and which does not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The design includes several features to add complexity and visual interest consistent with its historic context, and is compliant with the district's Elements of Design.

Staff therefore recommends that the proposal should qualify for a Certificate of Appropriateness, as it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and the Corktown Historic District's Elements of Design.