

**STAFF REPORT:** 6/9/2021 MEETING  
**APPLICATION NUMBER:** #21-7311-407  
**ADDRESS:** 3934 W. LAFAYETTE  
**HISTORIC DISTRICT:** HUBBARD FARMS  
**APPLICANT:** DANIEL LOPEZ  
**PROPERTY OWNER:** THOMAS GALEA  
**DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION:** 05/10/2021  
**DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT:** 05/21/2021

**PREPARED BY:** D. RIEDEN

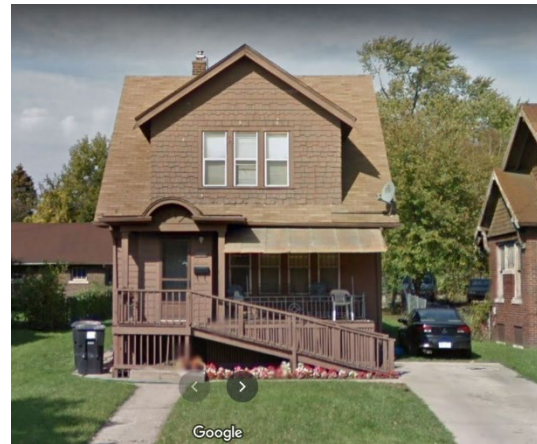
**SCOPE:** REPLACE FRONT PORCH, WORK COMPLETE WITHOUT APPROVAL

### **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Built in 1928, 3934 W. Lafayette is a 2-story single-family bungalow that features a shake-sided dormer, which dominates the side-gabled roof. The only brick feature visible from the front elevation is the chimney that peeks from the rear side of the roof. Three double hung windows are centrally placed on the second floor. On the first floor, an asymmetrical entrance protrudes from the face of the house clad in wood, clapboard siding and a ribbon of double-hung windows. The roofline once overlapped a metal awning that shaded these windows. Previous conditions also featured a modest porch metal railing with a circular frame detail. These previous conditions were replaced by the current conditions of the front porch's newly constructed front gable roof, the subject of this application. The yard is an open lawn with a sidewalk that appears to be the original walkway, centered on the front doorway. Foundation plantings skirt the foundation of the front porch.



*Site Photo 1, by Staff May 21, 2021: (Southeast) front.*



*Site Photo 2, by Google October, 2011: (Southeast) front side.*

The current owner purchased the property in 2017. As staff currently does not have access to some of the previous paper applications and approval letters, the Detroit Property Index is the only available information on the property. This property has an open violation for work done without approval for the front porch roof and deck. This property also has the following previous HDC approved work:

- September 30, 1999 COA – Replace existing asphalt shingle roof with new.
- January 11, 2006 COA – Construct a universally accessible ramp.



Aerial of Parcel 14000182.



Site Photo 3, by Google July, 2009: (Southeast) front elevation.

## PROPOSAL

The applicant provided an application, project narrative, and site photos for the following work completed 3 years ago: demolition of existing ramp, construct a new front porch roof, repair and replace front porch decking, and construct new staircase with new railing.

The applicant provided a narrative to describe the work completed on the porch as follows:

*Mr Thomas Galea bought this dwelling in 2017. The front porch and the roof over the front porch was in disrepair. He didn't know that this location was in a Historic District and that approvals from the HOC were required before starting repairs. He removed the porch roof, which was beyond repair. He installed a gable roof using common dimensional lumber, 2x6 and OSB and standard shingles. On the front porch, he removed and replaced the porch floor with 5/4x6' plank and installed new railings on porch stairs.*

## STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- Upon receipt of the application, Staff requested the following additional information from the applicant:
  - Construction drawings, if any of the work completed. The applicant confirmed with the owner that no construction plans were created and states that he just had repairs made.
  - Additional photos that detail the ceiling and roof construction of the front porch.
  - A description with photos (if available) of the original roof condition that demonstrates which roof was “beyond repair”, as stated in the applicant’s narrative was requested, but not received as of the posting of this report. However, Staff did receive clarification that the areas of concern were the front porch decking and awning.
- Staff visited the site on May 21, 2021. Staff photographed the property from the public right-of-way and observed the front porches of adjacent properties in the neighborhood.

- Staff was unable to locate the designation photo for this property. The earliest image is the Google Streetview, dated July 2009.
- Ramp was also an intervention approved by the HDC in 2006. This change likely affected the original porch skirting, and introduced a new design for the railing: the original railing is likely the metal railing shown in the July 2009 image.
- Staff observed the possibility that the arched porch cover may also be an addition to the front face of the house. However, ceiling photos of the structure under the porch roof indicate that roofline prior to 2018 is most likely the original roof form.
- It is the opinion of staff that the original porch roof with the Syrian arched eave, prominent projecting front gabled dormer, double-hung windows and overall simple form of the gabled roof are character-defining features of this house.
- Staff observed the following features as a result of the new rooflines of the front porch:
  - The pitch and scale of the gable match not only the house but also complement the pitch and angles of the adjacent property homes.
  - The new posts obscure the first floor windows, particularly the center post.
  - The roof appears to obscure a portion of the second floor windows, but does clear them.
  - The new roof creates two instances of odd overlaps with existing rooflines.
  - The original unelaborated square columns of the porch roof posts were increased in width, square pier detailing introduced, and in one instance to the right of the front door, doubled, by placing the new roof structure post behind the other.
- The spindles, railings and newels are not original to the porch's metal railing design.
- The clapboard skirt of the front porch is not original to the porch's design.
- The color, wood material and finish of the front porch elements are appropriate to the Hubbard Farms Historic District.



*Site Photo 3, by Staff May 21, 2021: (Southeast) front elevation with neighboring rooflines.*



*Porch Ceiling Detail 1, by Applicant: original ceiling.*



*Porch Ceiling Detail 2, by Applicant: original and new ceiling.*

## ISSUES

- While the material, color and scale of the constructed porch may have some appropriate applications as described in the Elements of Design for Hubbard Farms, the removal of other front porch features and the addition of the new porch roof does not follow several of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

### Section 21-2-78, Determinations of Historic District Commission

#### Recommendation #1: Removal of metal railing, construct new porch roof

Staff finds that the removal of historic metal railing and the addition of the new porch roof destroys the historic character of this property and removes distinctive features. The newly constructed roof, posts and railings overpowers the character-defining features of front elevation of the house.

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the proposed application, as it does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, specifically Standards:

- 2. The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*
- 3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.*
- 4. Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.*
- 5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.*
- 6. Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*
- 9. New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
- 10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.*

#### Recommendation #2: Demolition of ramp, deck repair, construct new stairs

It is staff's opinion that the removal of the ramp, and repair of existing decking, construction of new stairs, retains and preserves the historic character of the building, its site, and setting. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness as the proposed work meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.



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3934 W Lafayette Blvd

Detroit, Michigan



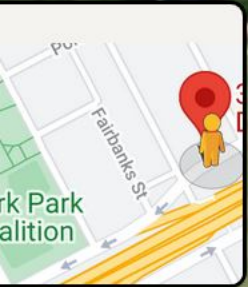
Google



Street View



©2019 Google



Google

3934 W Lafayette Blvd

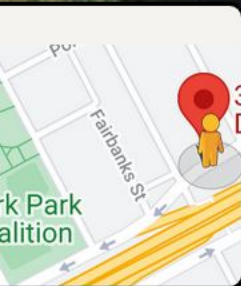
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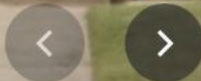
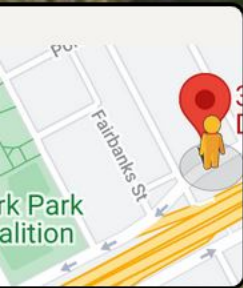
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Street View



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# HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION PROJECT REVIEW REQUEST

CITY OF DETROIT  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT  
2 WOODWARD AVENUE, ROOM 808, DETROIT, MI 48226

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

## PROPERTY INFORMATION

ADDRESS: 3934 W LAFAYETTE AKA: \_\_\_\_\_

HISTORIC DISTRICT: HUBBARD FARMS

SCOPE OF WORK:  Windows/Doors  Roof/Gutters/Chimney  Porch/Deck  Landscape/Fence/Tree/Park  General Rehab  
(Check ALL that apply)  New Construction  Demolition  Addition  Other: \_\_\_\_\_

## APPLICANT IDENTIFICATION

Property Owner/Homeowner  Contractor  Tenant or Business Occupant  Architect/Engineer/Consultant

NAME: THOMAS GALKA COMPANY NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: 151 W GRAND BLVD CITY: DETROIT STATE: MI ZIP: 48216

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_ MOBILE: 313 617 9527 EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

## PROJECT REVIEW REQUEST CHECKLIST

Please attach the following documentation to your request:

**\*PLEASE KEEP FILE SIZE OF ENTIRE SUBMISSION UNDER 30MB\***

- Completed Building Permit Application (highlighted portions only)
- ePLANS Permit Number (only applicable if you've already applied for permits through ePLANS)
- Photographs of ALL sides of existing building or site
- Detailed photographs of location of proposed work (photographs to show existing condition(s), design, color, & material)
- Description of existing conditions (including materials and design)
- Description of project (if replacing any existing material(s), include an explanation as to why replacement--rather than repair--of existing and/or construction of new is required)
- Detailed scope of work (formatted as bulleted list)
- Brochure/cut sheets for proposed replacement material(s) and/or product(s), as applicable

### NOTE:

Based on the scope of work, additional documentation may be required.

See [www.detroitmi.gov/hdc](http://www.detroitmi.gov/hdc) for scope-specific requirements.

Upon receipt of this documentation, staff will review and inform you of the next steps toward obtaining your building permit from the Buildings, Safety Engineering and Environmental Department (BSEED) to perform the work.

**SUBMIT COMPLETED REQUESTS TO [HDC@DETROITMI.GOV](mailto:HDC@DETROITMI.GOV)**

P2 - BUILDING PERMIT APPLICATION

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

PROPERTY INFORMATION

Address: 3934 W LaFayette Floor: 1 1/2 Suite#: \_\_\_\_\_ Stories: \_\_\_\_\_  
AKA: \_\_\_\_\_ Lot(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Subdivision: \_\_\_\_\_  
Parcel ID#(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Total Acres: \_\_\_\_\_ Lot Width: \_\_\_\_\_ Lot Depth: \_\_\_\_\_  
Current Legal Use of Property: \_\_\_\_\_ Proposed Use: \_\_\_\_\_  
Are there any existing buildings or structures on this parcel?  Yes  No

PROJECT INFORMATION

Permit Type:  New  Alteration  Addition  Demolition  Correct Violations  
 Foundation Only  Change of Use  Temporary Use  Other: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Revision to Original Permit #: \_\_\_\_\_ (Original permit has been issued and is active)

WORK COMPLETED 3 YEARS AGO. REPAIR/REPLACE/REBUILD EXISTING FRONT PORCH AND PORCH ROOF SO AS TO RESTOR TO A SOUND CONDITION

Description of Work (Describe in detail proposed work and use of property, attach work list)  
 MBC use change  No MBC use change

Included Improvements (Check all applicable; these trade areas require separate permit applications)

HVAC/Mechanical  Electrical  Plumbing  Fire Sprinkler System  Fire Alarm

Structure Type

New Building  Existing Structure  Tenant Space  Garage/Accessory Building  
 Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Size of Structure to be Demolished (LxWxH) \_\_\_\_\_ cubic ft.

Construction involves changes to the floor plan?  Yes  No  
(e.g. interior demolition or construction to new walls)

Use Group: \_\_\_\_\_ Type of Construction (per current MI Bldg Code Table 601) \_\_\_\_\_

Estimated Cost of Construction \$ \_\_\_\_\_ By Contractor \$ \_\_\_\_\_ By Department

Structure Use

Residential-Number of Units: \_\_\_\_\_  Office-Gross Floor Area \_\_\_\_\_  Industrial-Gross Floor Area \_\_\_\_\_  
 Commercial-Gross Floor Area: \_\_\_\_\_  Institutional-Gross Floor Area \_\_\_\_\_  Other-Gross Floor Area \_\_\_\_\_

Proposed No. of Employees: \_\_\_\_\_ List materials to be stored in the building: \_\_\_\_\_

PLOT PLAN SHALL BE submitted on separate sheets and shall show all easements and measurements (must be correct and in detail). SHOW ALL streets abutting lot, indicate front of lot, show all buildings, existing and proposed distances to lot lines. (Building Permit Application Continues on Next Page)

For Building Department Use Only

Intake By: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Fees Due: \_\_\_\_\_ DngBld?  No

Permit Description: \_\_\_\_\_

Permit #:

Current Legal Land Use: \_\_\_\_\_ Proposed Use: \_\_\_\_\_

Permit#: \_\_\_\_\_ Date Permit Issued: \_\_\_\_\_ Permit Cost: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Zoning District: \_\_\_\_\_ Zoning Grant(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Lots Combined?  Yes  No (attach zoning clearance)

Revised Cost (revised permit applications only) Old \$ \_\_\_\_\_ New \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Structural: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

Zoning: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Notes: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Notes: \_\_\_\_\_



**IDENTIFICATION** (All Fields Required)

**Property Owner/Homeowner**  Property Owner/Homeowner is Permit Applicant

Name: THOMAS GALEA Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: 151 W GRAND BLVD City: DETROIT State: MI Zip: 48216  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: 313 617-9526  
Driver's License #: G 400-792-291 694 Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**Contractor**  Contractor is Permit Applicant

Representative Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
City of Detroit License #: \_\_\_\_\_

**TENANT OR BUSINESS OCCUPANT**  Tenant is Permit Applicant

Name: ANDRZEJ DAWIDZ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

**ARCHITECT/ENGINEER/CONSULTANT**  Architect/Engineer/Consultant is Permit Applicant

Name: DAN LOPEZ State Registration#: \_\_\_\_\_ Expiration Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: 14338 POLK City: TAYLOR State: MI Zip: 48180  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: 313 415 9990 Email: DLOPEZ 683@YAHOO.COM

**HOMEOWNER AFFIDAVIT** (Only required for residential permits obtained by homeowner.)

I hereby certify that I am the legal owner and occupant of the subject property and the work described on this permit application shall be completed by me. I am familiar with the applicable codes and requirements of the City of Detroit and take full responsibility for all code compliance, fees and inspections related to the installation/work herein described. I shall neither hire nor sub-contract to any other person, firm or corporation any portion of the work covered by this building permit.

Print Name: THOMAS GALEA Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Homeowner)

Subscribed and sworn to before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20 \_\_\_\_ A.D. \_\_\_\_\_ County, Michigan

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ My Commission Expires: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Notary Public)

**PERMIT APPLICANT SIGNATURE**

I hereby certify that the information on this application is true and correct. I have reviewed all deed restrictions that may apply to this construction and am aware of my responsibility thereunder. I certify that the proposed work is authorized by the owner of the record and I have been authorized to make this application as the property owner(s) authorized agent. Further I agree to conform to all applicable laws and ordinances of jurisdiction. I am aware that a permit will expire when no inspections are requested and conducted within 180 days of the date of issuance or the date of the previous inspection and that expired permits cannot be

Print Name: THOMAS GALEA Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Permit Applicant)

Driver's License #: G 400 792 921 649 Expiration: 09-06-2024

Subscribed and sworn to before me this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_ 20 \_\_\_\_ A.D. \_\_\_\_\_ County, Michigan

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ My Commission Expires: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Notary Public)

Section 23a of the state construction code act of 1972, 1972PA230, MCL 125.1523A, prohibits a person from conspiring to circumvent the licensing requirements of this state relating to persons who are to perform work on a residential building or a residential structure. Visitors of Section 23a are subject to civil fines.

This application can also be completed online. Visit [detroitmi.gov/bseed/elaps](http://detroitmi.gov/bseed/elaps) for more information.



City of Detroit  
HDC  
Atten: Mr Cagney  
May 10, 2021

Mr Cagney

Re: 3934 W Lafayette

Mr Thomas Galea bought this dwelling in 2017. The front porch and the roof over the front porch was in disrepair. He didn't know that this location was in a Historic District and that approvals from the HDC were required before starting repairs. He removed the porch roof which was beyond repair. He installed a gable roof using common dimensional lumber, 2x6 and OSB and standard shingles. On the front porch, he removed and replaced the porch floor with 5/4x6' plank and installed new railings on porch stairs

Dan Lopez  
Consultant





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