

STAFF REPORT: FEBRUARY 9, 2022 MEETING

PREPARED BY: A. DYE

APPLICATION NUMBER: 22-7665, VIOLATION NUMBER: 543

ADDRESS: 715 VAN DYKE

HISTORIC DISTRICT: WEST VILLAGE

APPLICANT: ELLEN BARRETT & NICK ASSENMACHER

PROPERTY OWNER: ELLEN BARRETT & NICK ASSENMACHER

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 01/18/2022

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 01/21/2022

SCOPE: DEMOLISH (WORK DONE WITHOUT APPROVAL) AND REBUILD FRONT PORCH

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Erected ca. 1905, the building at 715 Van Dyke is a 2 ½-story, single-family dwelling. The building features a hipped-roof central mass with projecting gabled wings at the side elevations and a flat roof mass at the rear. Gabled-roof dormers top the front and rear roof. Decorative brackets are located within the roof's soffit. Flat roof dormers at the front and north elevations display decorative dentils at their cornices. A one-story, flat-roof wood porch with box columns wraps around the building's southeast corner. Windows at the front and side elevations are historic wood-sash units. Painted asphalt/insulbrick siding was present at time of district designation, but was more recently removed so that the historic wood siding could be restored.



HDC staff photo, January 21, 2022

PROPOSAL

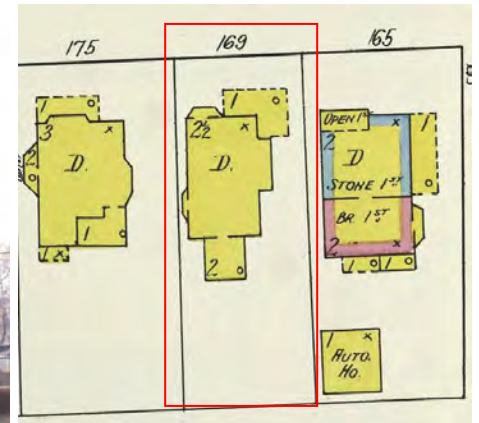
Demolish (already completed) existing porch and erect new porch, per applicant drawings and narrative.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

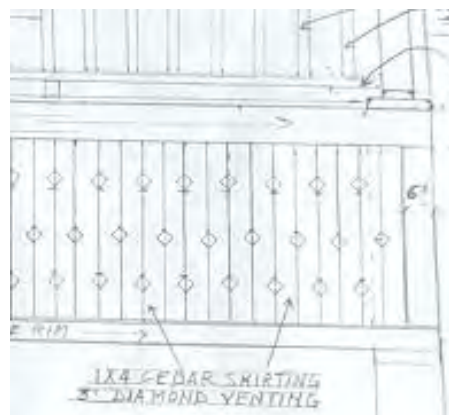
- The West Village Historic District was established in 1983.
- It is staff's opinion the character-defining features of the porch are its open-air design, shape and location against the house, and the placement and minimal adornment of the supporting elements. Staff agrees with the applicant's assertion that the original columns for the porch were likely round, due to the round pilasters with Tuscan capitals that remained against the house.



Left: Designation Photo, HDAB, 1983
Below: Sanborn Map, Vol. 8, 1910



- Much discussion was held (between the applicant and staff, and then amongst staff) about the existing (at the time of demolition) porch skirting. The skirting to the left of the stairs was the oldest portion of this element. It is staff's opinion it is not a character-defining feature as it wasn't constructed in the manner of historic skirting, and likely not original to the house: it was constructed of solid pieces of wood (rather than vertical boards with the pattern cut at the board edges), and it wasn't framed out with the skirting sitting behind the frame. Staff also feels the below left design would not be stable over time due to moisture wicking into the wood and causing warping of the large panels.



- The proposed cedar skirting is sympathetic to the era of the house and the diamond openings offer ventilation in a minimally detailed way.

ISSUES

- The best and most appropriate replacement would be a turned-wood column to match the existing prototype. However, it is staff’s opinion the replacement column, while not a perfect match, is similar to the design and proportionality of the historic column and therefore, is reasonable and feasible.

Photo and catalog images supplied by applicant.
 The original pilaster appears to have a slightly tapered smooth shaft.
 The proposed fiberglass column has a similar Tuscan capital (with slightly different dimensions) and a smooth tapered shaft. The diameter at its widest point will be 8”, similar to the wood pilaster’s width.



- The applicant submitted photographs of the pilasters noting most of the measurements, however the angle of the camera to the measuring tape that was near the pilaster shaft made the measurements confusing to read. The applicant submitted the additional photos listed below showing the tapered column ranges from 7” – 8” in diameter.



Diameter at the top of the pilaster – seven inches



Bottom diameter of pilaster – eight inches

- The application informed staff it hasn’t decided upon the paint scheme.

- The installation of the skirting as drawn offers a monolithic approach, and is counter to the age and design of the house. As stated under *Staff Observations and Research*, vertical boards comprising the skirting and its design, should be installed behind framing. Larger vertical boards should divide the skirting at the location of the columns/piers to continue the porch's vertical support line from roof-to-grade. The circa 1912 photo at the right gives a visual example of this method of construction.



NPS Preservation Brief 45 *Preserving Historic Porches*

RECOMMENDATION

Section 21-2-78, Determination of Historic District Commission

It is staff's opinion the replacement of the existing porch with the porch as proposed is compatible with the size, design and material of the previous porch and will not alter the features and spaces that characterize the property. Staff therefore recommends the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as proposed because it meets the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and the Elements of Design for the district.

Staff recommends the Certificate of Appropriateness be issued with the following conditions:

- The skirting design will be revised to include framing and vertical boards at column/pier locations and will be submitted for staff review.
- The paint color/finish for each porch component (including decking) will be submitted for staff review.
- The porch elements won't be painted until the wood members have dried out.



Height of the echinus (lower portion of the capital)



Width of the top of the pilaster shaft



Width of the abacus (the flat slab forming the uppermost member of the capital of the column).



shaft bottom

Width of









Front Porch Project 715 Van Dyke:

Description or project.

Before we purchased the house the porch was rebuilt (we think in the 90's)– it was not to code, not historically accurate, and structurally unsound. The lumber they used was untreated and built the columns using 1" x 4" wood without supports inside the columns. Due to the deterioration for the wood and the weight of the ceiling we braced the porch in case of a heavy snow / wind.

David Sperry came by to look at the braces on the porch and deemed the

Scope of project:

- Please see attached estimate

Historically accurate

- The footprint for the porch will remain the same.
- Replace the square columns with round columns that were original to the house.
- Install colonial spindles
- Using existing brick footing.

Drawings: See attached

Beginning Picture: Front Porch



Condition of original porch: Rotten Wood / Missing Footing



Porch braces:



Porch Rebound in the 1990's

I received these pictures from the previous owner (Cheryl Huff). She rebuilt a large section of this porch in the 1990s. There are some scanned images of the rebuilding of the porch. As you can see – nothing is up to historical accuracy, or code.





Columns – Round vs Square

These the original columns to the house.



Locations of the rounds on the porch.



Square Columns:

Here is one of the square columns that is currently sitting in my font yard. You can see that is only made of 1x4 boards and is starting to rot at the base.







Rotting of the porch. As you can see that is actually part of the house so with out taking a significant part of the porch to begin with, I am not sure how we could fix this.



You can see from this picture the framing was done incorrectly in the (1990s). Instead of replacing they just added boards onto each other.



This was from earlier this year where I had to do temporary fix because the wood had gotten so rotted.



Not that I am that worried about the skirting at this point but as you can see the “decorative” Victorian that was added.



2020 Skirting









1990s Skirting



1980s Skirting



Existing Pictures

Foundation:

Original brick piers: you can see from this pic that they are angled and are off centered



Here the pier is missing.



Here you can how bad the right side of the porch is off from the rest of the porch. We have estimated that is it 8" lower than the other part of the porch



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For the pillars:

In this picture you can see the pillars have no bases, are not connect to porch and are rotting at the base





Here you can see the columns are leaning and rotting. There are no base for the columns, so they are not attached to the porch. The center column on the south elevation is not connected to the roof .

Stairs:



You can see from the pictures the stairs are not to code missing handrails, risers at different heights, bricks use to level the stairs.



Skirting:



Rotting Wood:





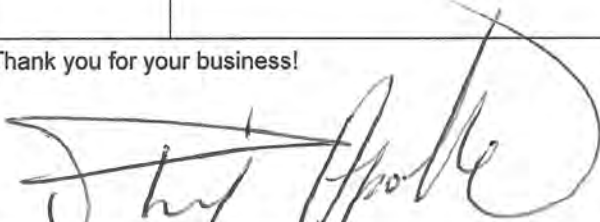




Estimate

DATE	ESTIMATE #
11/7/2021	1709

BILL TO
Nick Assembacker 715 Vandyke Detroit, mi 48214

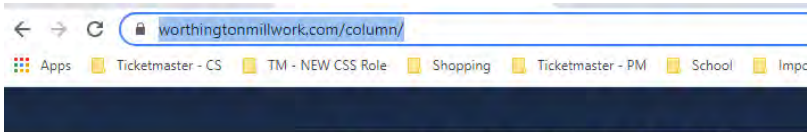
ITEM	DESCRIPTION	QTY	RATE	AMOUNT
	10. supply and install 2 1/4 " spindle x36" colonial style perimeter of porch and stairs with top and bottom rail with 4 nolls 4 "x4" top and botton of front stairs (pressure treated)			0.00
	11. supply and install 5/4" x6 "deck planks for perimeter skirting (Verticaly)			0.00
	12. final supply and install 6 Round 8" x 7" x 9' high columns (structural composite) with square Base/ Capital			32,500.00
	NOTE : PERMITS AND INSPECTION FEES NOT INCLUDED IN THIS ESTIMATE			
	THANK YOU PHIL APOLLONIO MEMBER OF APOLLONIO COMPANIES INC.			
	BUILDER'S LICENSE # 2101078002			
	DEPOSIT 50 % FOR SCHEDULING AND PRIOR START WITH MULTIPLE DRAWS DURING CONSTRUCTION PLEASE PAY BALANCE ON COMPLETION OF PROJECT .			
Thank you for your business!		Subtotal		32,500.00
		0% Tax		
		Total		32,500.00

From: [Nick Assenmacher](#)
To: [Audra Dye](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Re: [EXTERNAL]Re: 715 Van Dyke - update on review of HDC application
Date: Tuesday, February 1, 2022 10:39:31 AM
Attachments: [image.png](#)
[image.png](#)

Audra,

Here is the link to the columns - we are asking the board for approval for fiberglass columns. The ones we chose match what original was used on the porch when the house was built.

<https://www.worthingtonmillwork.com/column/>



Round Tapered

8" X 9

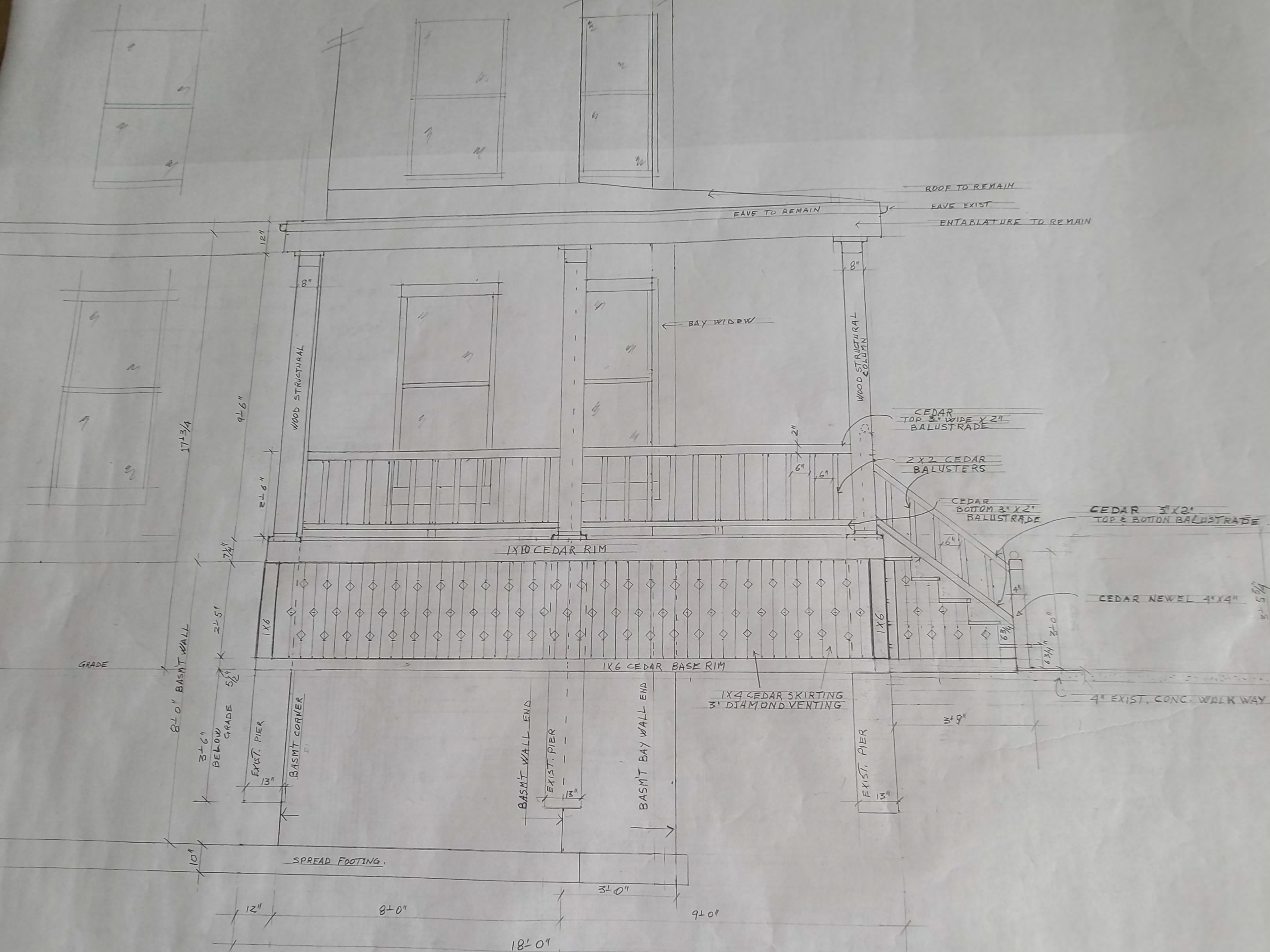
Fiberglass -

Tuscan

Plain Shaft

Tuscan Base – Fiberglass

Cut Plan D



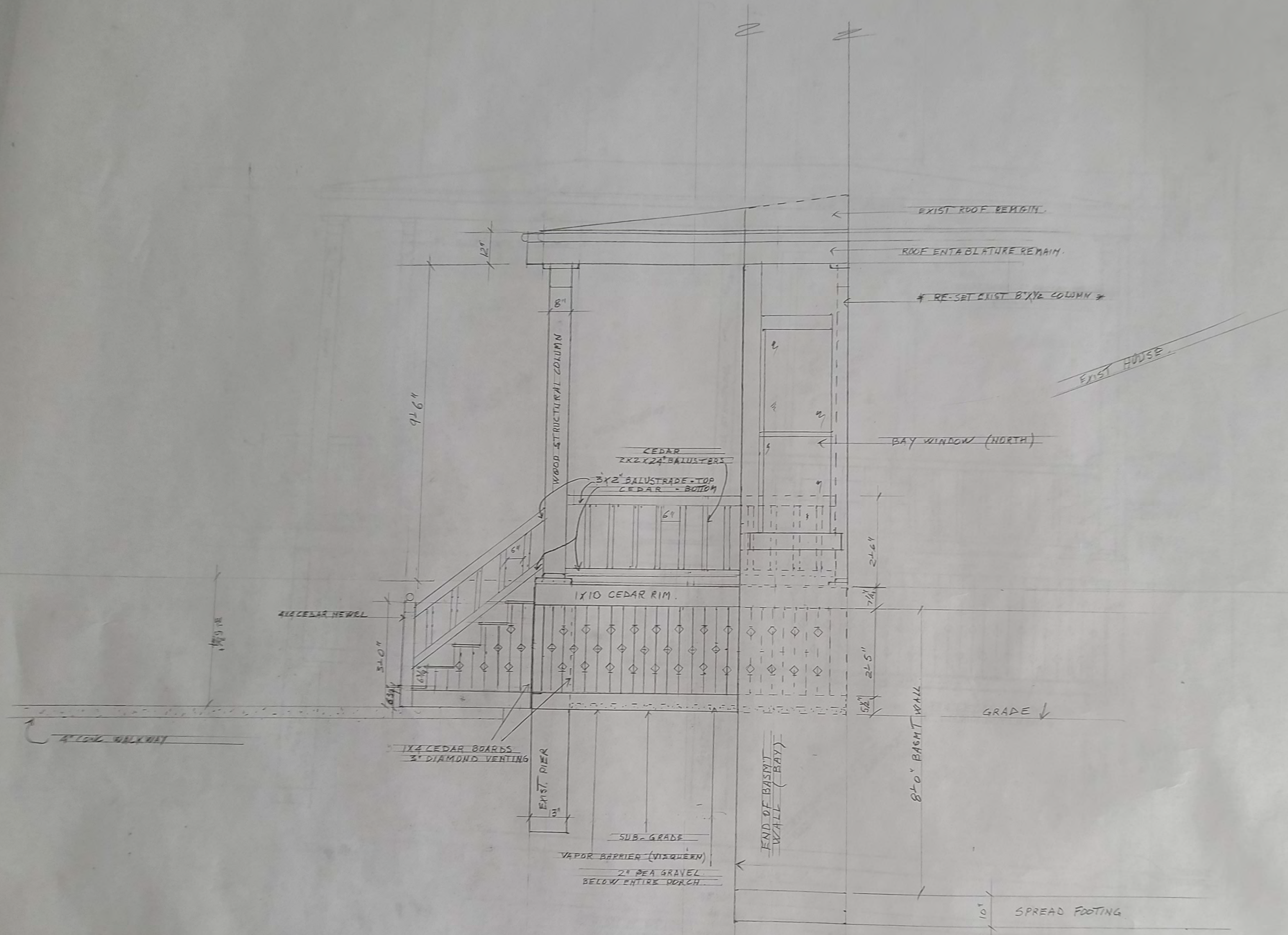
PORCH RE-DO
 SCALE: 3/4" = 1'

DATE: 12/28/21
 ADDRESS: 715 VANDYKE
 DETROIT MI. 48219

* SIDE VIEW *
 - DRIVEWAY SIDE
 (SOUTH)

DRAWING: PHIL APOLLONIO
 (586) 453-4466

* ALL BARE WOOD PRIME & PAINT *



PORCH RE-DO
 SCALE: 3/4" = 1'
 * SIDE VIEW *
 (NORTH)
 * ALL BARE WOOD PRIME & PAINT *

DATE: 12/28/21
 ADDRESS: 715 VANDYKE
 DETROIT MI.
 48214
 DRAWING: PHIL APOLLONIO
 (586) 453-4466

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