

**STAFF REPORT: MAY 11, 2022 MEETING**

**PREPARED BY: J. ROSS**

**APPLICATION NUMBER: #22-7798**

**ADDRESS: 1450 6<sup>TH</sup> STREET (WORKERS ROW HOUSE)**

**HISTORIC DISTRICT: CORKTOWN**

**APPLICANT: TIMOTHY MCKAY**

**OWNER: TIMOTHY MCKAY**

**DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 3/2/2022**

**DATE OF STAFF VISIT: 5/4/2022**

**SCOPE OF WORK: ERECT SCAFFOLDING AND CANOPY OVER BUILDING**

### **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The building located at 1450 6<sup>th</sup> Street, known as the Workers Row House, was erected ca. 1850 and is reported to be the oldest remaining wood-frame building in the City of Detroit. The building was moved to its current location in 1903-1904. This Greek Revival-style building is 2-1/2 stories in height and is topped with a front-gabled roof. Exterior walls are clad with lapped wood siding and windows, where present, are wood-sash, double-hung units. The building is vacant and currently sits in poor condition. The roof is covered with a tarp and windows and doors are largely boarded over with plywood. The building's mailing address is 1440 6<sup>th</sup> Street.



**1450 (1440) 6<sup>th</sup> Street, current appearance**

## **PROPOSAL**

With the current proposal, the applicant is seeking the Commission's approval to erect scaffolding and a canopy over the building. A tarp which is made of "an industrial outdoor material" will be secured to the building's roof via straps which will be affixed to the canopy/antenna trussing tower. Please see the submitted renderings and narrative for a detailed description of the project. The structure is proposed to be in place for "approximately 12 months."

## **STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH.**

- Per the applicant, the roof is actively leaking and, over the years, tarps have been installed on the structure. However, the existing roof shingles and remains of a brick chimney continually ripped the tarps. The applicant is proposing the current plans because the roof is deteriorated to the extent that it cannot sustain a new tarp.
- The applicant has stated that the proposed canopy/scaffolding will be in place "for approximately twelve months"
- The application does not specifically call out the materiality of the tarp which shall be installed by the current effort. Staff has reached out to the applicant to request a brochure/cut sheet for the tarp.

## **ISSUES**

- As previously noted, this structure is reported to be one of the oldest wood-frame buildings in Detroit. Per the submission materials, the building has been vacant for the past 30 years and is structurally sound, but in need of repair. The application has noted that the property owners are seeking to kick off a building rehabilitation campaign and are currently in the process of raising the \$360,000 necessary to rehabilitate the structure. The proposed scaffolding/canopy and tarp installation is the initial step in that effort and is necessary to stabilize the roof.
- As stated in 36 CFR 67.7 (b), the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation "are to be applied to specific rehabilitation projects in a reasonable manner, taking into consideration economic and technical feasibility." Considering the economic feasibility of this rehabilitation project, it is staff's opinion that the proposed work is a reasonable stabilization approach that limits further damage, protects the building from additional deterioration, and preserves enough of the historic fabric for future rehabilitation or restoration of the character-defining features. The structure as proposed is a necessary measure to preserve the building/secure a tarp to the roof in order to prevent water from infiltrating the roof and further damaging the building. Also, the structure is temporary. It is staff's opinion that the proposed temporary structure is appropriate and meets the Standards

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

It is staff's opinion that the project generally conforms to the Elements of Design for the Corktown Historic District and meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work with the following conditions:

- The structure, as proposed, may stay in place up to twelve (12) calendar months from the date of installation and shall be removed after that time. Should the structure need to remain in place

beyond 12 calendar months, the property owner shall provide a new application for the structure to the Historic District Commission for consideration/review and approval.