

**STAFF REPORT: JUNE 14, 2023 MEETING**

**PREPARED BY: A. DYE**

**APPLICATION NUMBER: 23-8404**

**ADDRESS: 8022 KERCHEVAL**

**HISTORIC DISTRICT: WEST VILLAGE**

**APPLICANT: MICHAEL SKLENKA, SUBJECT STUDIO**

**PROPERTY OWNER: DAVID SPENCER, NATIONAL SOLUTIONS, INC.**

**DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: MAY 22, 2023**

**DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: MAY 30, 2023**

**SCOPE: REHABILITATE HOUSE, ALTER LANDSCAPE**

**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The 2-1/2 story structure at 8022 Kercheval is located on the south side the street, between Van Dyke and Parker. The wood frame, brick veneered building covers most of its narrow, deep lot and is faced with a variegated yellow/beige brick with narrow, dark mortar joints. The symmetrical façade with flanking front entrances at the east and west ends of the front elevation identifies the building as a two-family structure. A water table, designed with two courses of protruding brick, extends around the entirety of the building, separating the raised basement level from the upper floors. A two-story bay covers most of the front elevation and a deeply recessed gable with narrow wood clapboard siding tops the bay and obscures the structure’s front elevation hip roof.

The west front entrance porch is partially intact; mismatching grout joints at the wall shows where a porch rail once met the house. The east porch is missing and while the brick adjacent the front door appears intact, damage to the brick above the missing porch is visible.



*Staff photos, May 30, 2023.*





*Staff photo, May 30, 2023.*

The two-story bay element was repeated on the east-side elevation, is fully visible due to the demolition of the previously adjacent structures. The window openings on the structure retain wood sash and stone sills, however glass in a lower sash is occasionally missing. The dominant operation and pattern on the structure is one-over-one double-hung; the middle bay windows are transom over picture window, with a 1/3 to 2/3 division of openings. The raised basement allows for tall, almost square above-grade window openings and have stone sills; the basement windows are boarded over.



Upon close inspection of the site visit photographs, staff noticed that the vertical mortar joints are flush with the brick, while the horizontal mortar joint have a raked/recessed joint. This creates the effect of a traditional brick pattern when looking at a façade straight on and offering strong horizontal lines when looking at a wall from an angle.



*Staff photos, May 30, 2023*



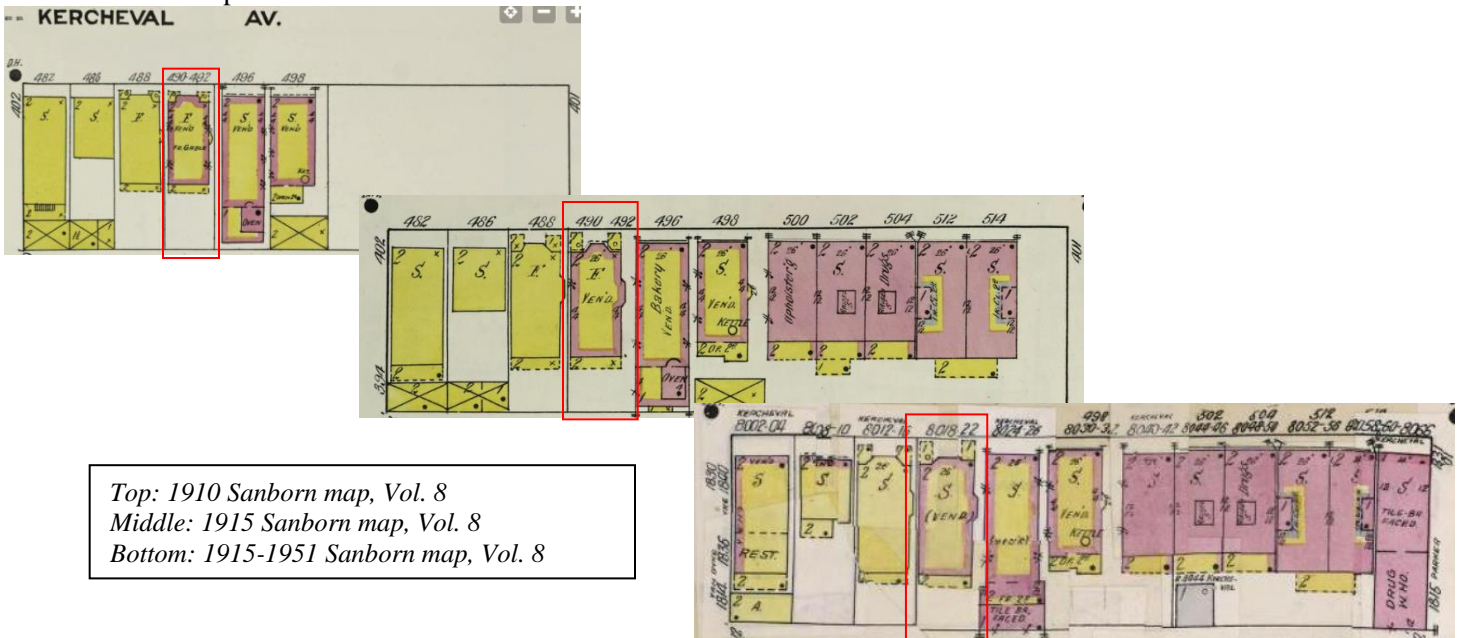
Wood porches and a gable extend across the rear elevation. Although much larger in size, the gable matches the design of those at the front and east side elevation. A wood double-hung window with wood sill is centrally placed, whereas the front and side gables have centrally placed vents.

## PROPOSAL

- Rehabilitate building – including, but not limited to a new roof, tuckpointing, replacing brick at the front elevation wall, building new entrance porches, replacing windows and doors, erect new rear porches. Elements to add include a dormer, skylights, wheelchair lift, dumpster enclosure, landscape and a paved parking spot.

## STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The West Village Historic District was established in 1983.
- The development story of the block of Kercheval between Van Dyke and Parker, as illustrated on the below Sanborn maps, shows that 8022 Kercheval (originally 490-492 Kercheval) and the neighboring structure to the west (8016 Kercheval, originally 488) were erected as residential two-story flats sandwiched between two-story commercial buildings. The block was built out by 1915; and all structures were identified as “stores” in the 1915-1951 map.



Top: 1910 Sanborn map, Vol. 8  
 Middle: 1915 Sanborn map, Vol. 8  
 Bottom: 1915-1951 Sanborn map, Vol. 8

- Not only were 8022 and 8016 Kercheval erected as the only two residential structures on this block, the footprint and design of the two buildings are almost identical - the difference being the exterior wall surfaces (brick vs. wood lap siding, respectively).



8022 Kercheval

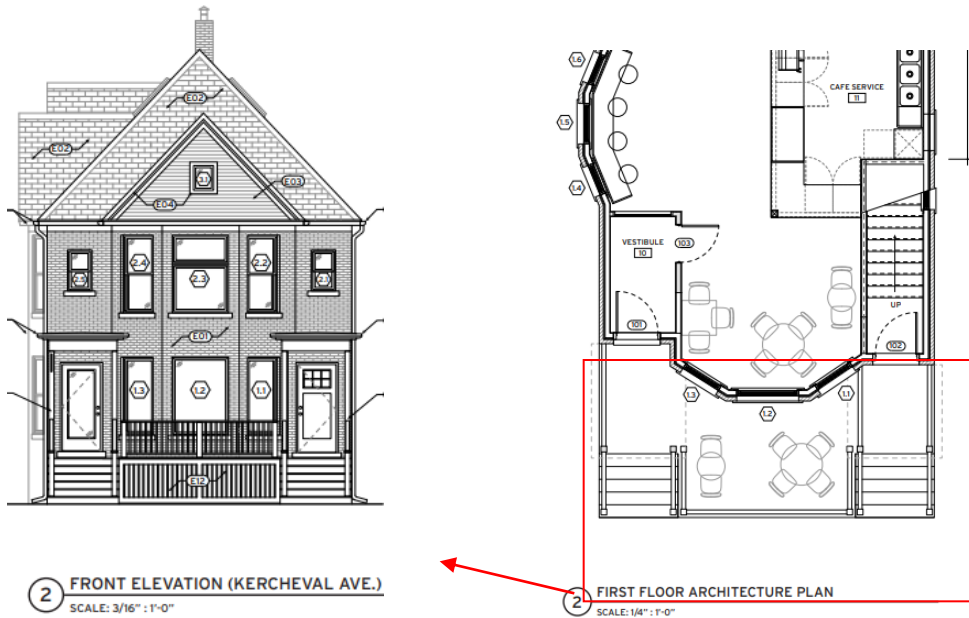


8016 Kercheval

District designation photos, 1983. Historic Designation Advisory Board



- The applicant states in the narrative: “The intent of the project is to retain as much of the building’s existing historic character that is practical and possible, while also allowing the renovated first level to express its new use as a commercial storefront”.
  - In 2017, the Commission approved a similar project, the erection of a new expansive front deck to join three former single-family dwellings at 8116 Kercheval. The applicant proposed the work to support the buildings’ new commercial uses. With the current submission, the applicant is proposing to install a deck of a smaller scale at 8022 Kercheval’s front elevation to join its two front porches to support the building’s new commercial/restaurant use. Although the new deck will be highly visible, it is staff’s opinion that it will not detract from the buildings historic design because the character-defining features of the structure won’t be removed or altered. Specifically, the two front entry porches will continue to read as separate elements that represent the building’s original multi-family use.
  - Also, as the historic front doors do not remain, the proposal of differently designed doors, as shown on the below elevation, is another way to identify the new uses of the building (left door is full glass=public space / right is mostly solid door=private, residential space) in a way that doesn’t alter the intact historic openings.



*Applicant drawings*



*Staff confirmed with the applicant that the side bay windows are drawn incorrectly on the rendering (transom and fixed window in central openings will remain)*

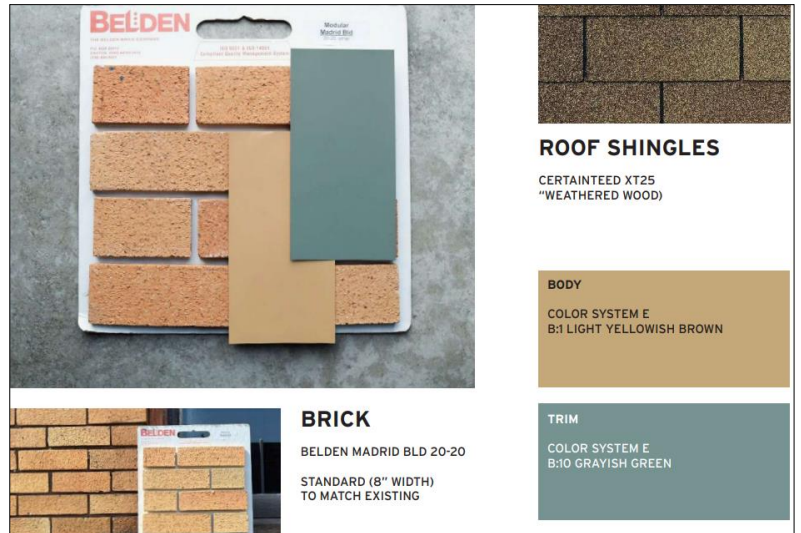


VIEW FROM REAR ALLEY

Applicant drawings and products, staff photo



- According to the applicant’s drawings, the erection of a dormer on the east elevation near the rear will allow stair access to the third floor which is to become additional living space. The proposed dormer will not remove character defining details of the historic structure. The proportion of the new gable is narrower than the historic gables, and its detailing: sitting above the roof line with a gable roof (but not an enclosed pediment) retains a similar triangular form but with less detailing, which may let it read as a contemporary element. The applicant selected the color B:1, light yellowish brown for the wood clapboard siding.
- A single skylight is proposed in the same location on the east and west roofs. A cut sheet hasn’t been submitted to confirm the exact dimensions, profile, color/finish and extension distance from the roof. However, the location and size, as shown on the elevation, won’t destroy historic materials that characterize the property, nor create a dominate feature on the structure. The west skylight won’t be visible due to the adjacent structure and the east skylight will be minimally visible due to the depth of the building and the large gable near the front elevation.
- The wheelchair lift proposed at the rear elevation won’t impact the features and spaces that characterize the property. The rendering shows the concrete block with an unfinished surface, so staff recommends it be painted the same paint color proposed for the new dormer.
- The restaurant will need to have an exhaust fan and it is proposed for the existing historic round opening at the basement level on the east elevation. The specifications for the venting haven’t been determined, so the impact on the existing opening and elevation isn’t known at this time.





## ISSUES

### Removal of historic brick at front elevation

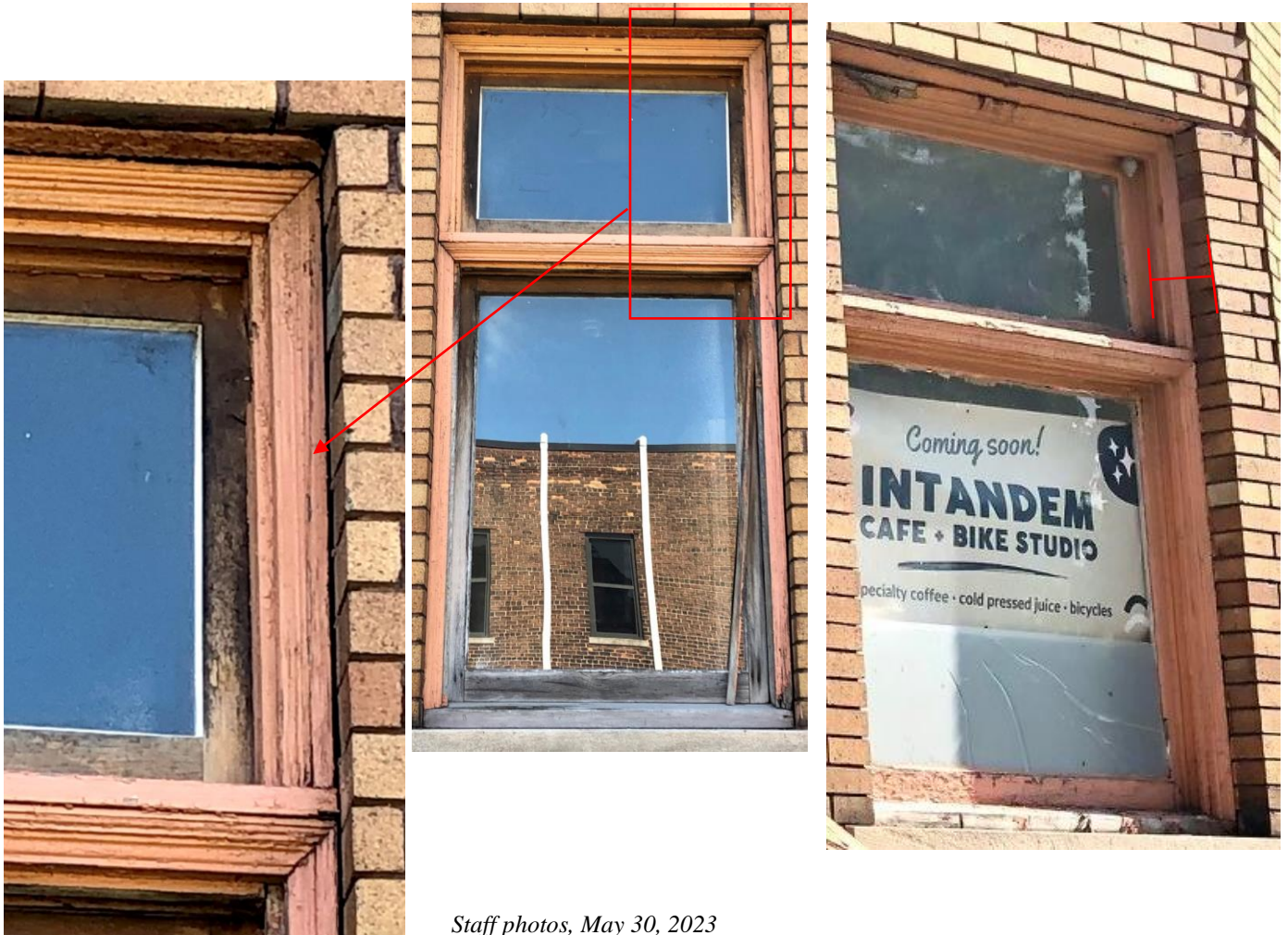
- Staff questioned the need to remove the historic brick veneer from the front elevation and the laying of new brick due to deteriorated masonry anchors. Staff inquired as to whether replacement masonry ties or anchors can be installed to reattach most of the existing bricks to the structure. Staff's reasons for retaining the existing brick facade are:
  - This structure doesn't have articulated corners (such as quoins or wood/stone pilasters), so the bricks wrap the corners of the building. Laying new brick on the front elevation to seamlessly fit into the existing condition would be challenging. The new brick would need to be identical in all details to the historic brick – a comparison of dimensions (including depth of each brick) hasn't been submitted.
  - The historic brick has a patina due to its age and exposure to weather and other elements; the new, brighter brick would create a distracting contrast against the historic structure.
  - The bay's angled corners have a unique break to them which may also be difficult to duplicate.
  - The brick and its method of installation, including the different mortar joint applications and broken corners at the bays are distinctive character-defining features of the structure.



*Staff photo, May 30, 2023*

### Replacement of windows and brickmold

- Like the staff concerns listed with the replacement of the front elevation brick veneer, the replacement of the windows and brickmold with aluminum-clad wood windows and metal brickmold will alter the historic architectural features of this structure. It is staff's opinion, the wood windows, due their deep setting within the openings, and exceptionally detailed brickmold, are distinctive character-defining features of this property.

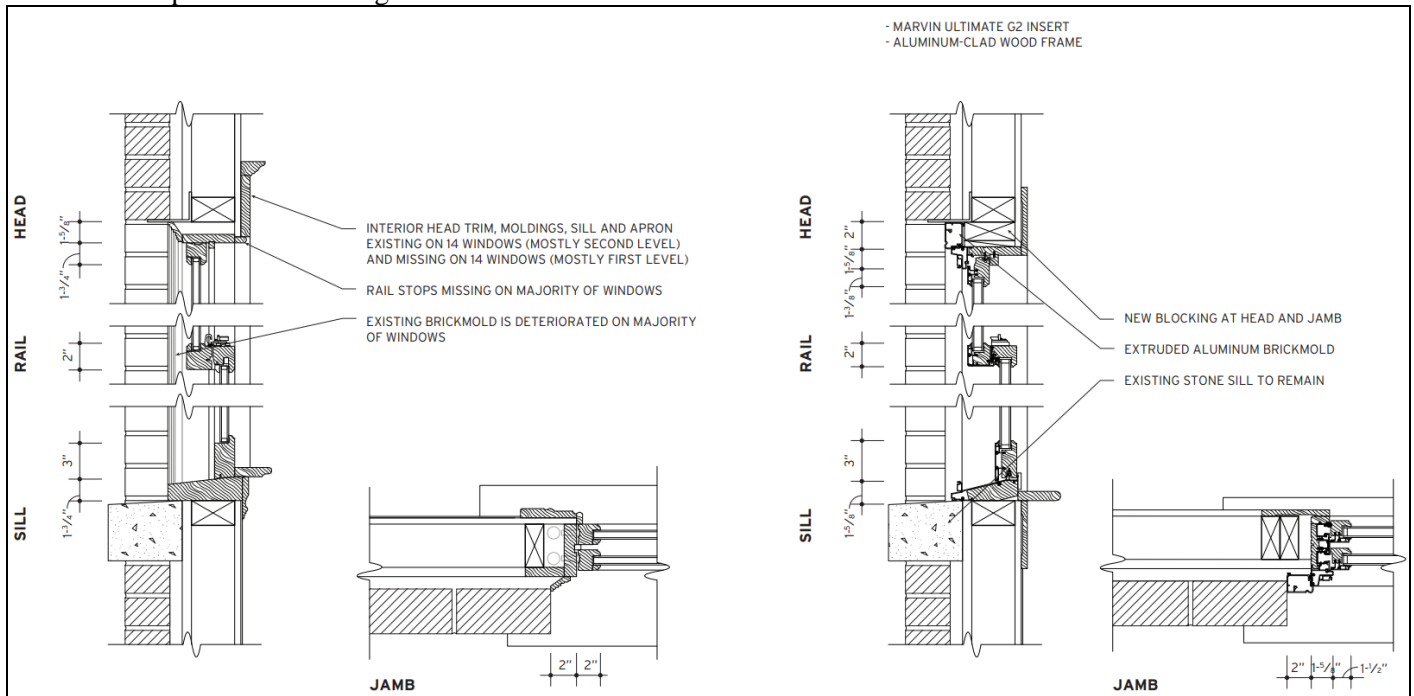


Staff photos, May 30, 2023

- Standard Six states, “*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.*”
  - It is staff's opinion that the only window that can match the existing windows would be wood windows set in the same recessed location with a custom wood brickmold. As the existing windows are likely the original pre-1910 windows, the wood sash and brickmold are fabricated from dense, old growth wood, which is much more stable and durable than contemporary fabricated wood windows. Many studies have been conducted to show that repair, and ultimately restoration, of old growth wood windows coupled with new storm windows can meet the energy efficiency of new insulated windows.
  - Staff requested a repair estimate so the Commission can understand the level of deterioration of the existing window sash. Most window openings retain upper and lower sash, a small number of sash require new glass.
  - At the time of writing the staff report, the applicant is working with Marvin to determine what profile can be achieved for an extruded aluminum brickmold.



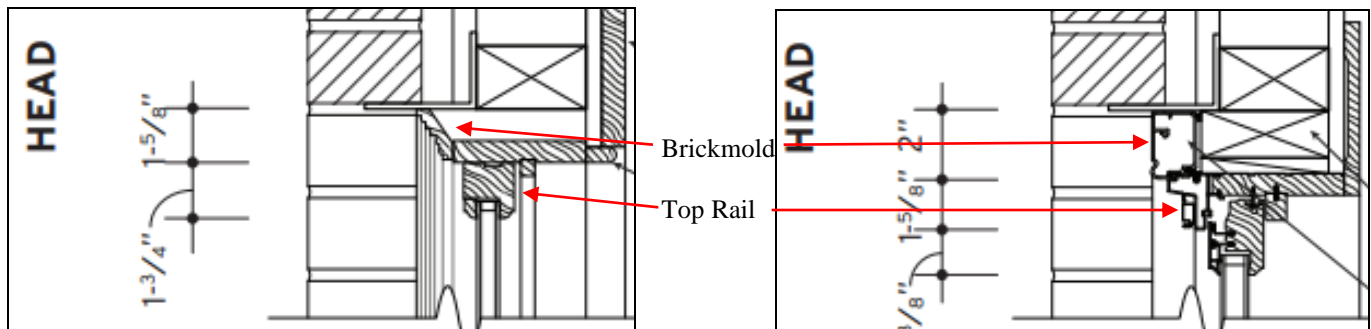
Comparison of existing to new



Drawings provided by applicant

Component-Horizontal	Existing	New	Change of new window	Comments
Brickmold	1-5/8"	2"	3/8" increase	
Top Rail	1-3/4"	3"	1-1/4" increase	New window breaks down the top rail with two dimensions due to multiple components (1 3/8 + 1 5/8)
Meeting Rail	2"	2"	0	
Bottom Rail	3"	3"	0	
Window Sill (stone sill to remain)	1-3/4"	1-5/8"		Existing sill has a thicker front portion, and less angle back to window (looks thicker and flatter)
Component-Vertical	Existing	New	Change	Comments
Stile	2"	2-1/8"	1/8" increase	
Brickmold	2"	2"	0	

- The most drastic increases in dimensions for the new window are with the brickmold (3/8" taller) and top rail (1-1/4" taller).
- The manufacturer's section shows a standard brickmold with only one small bend, so it has a mostly flat appearance, which is drastically different from the highly detailed existing brickmold. Although the applicant is working with the manufacturer to design a more detailed brickmold, staff is unsure if aluminum can be bent in such a way to match the existing profile and retain adequate strength.

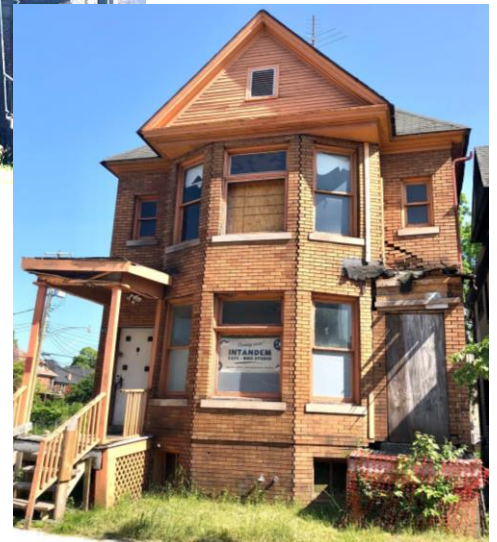


Alteration to first story front bay windows

- The two family house was designed as a cohesive structure. Patterning is found in the symmetrical window openings, horizontal raked mortar joints, water table, and decorative brick, all of which is found on each side of the building.
- The two-story bay windows are distinctive character-defining features; the uniformity and relationship between the bay window openings on each floor and elevation is an important historic component of the structure and offers a visual clue as to its original multi-family residential use and era of construction.



Staff photos, May 30, 2023



Applicant drawings



- Standard 1 “A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment”, and Standard 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”, relate directly to the importance of retaining the historic and architectural features, regardless of the property’s current use. The contemporizing of the front elevation with plate glass “storefront” windows is in direct conflict with these standards. As staff stated earlier, the erection of a front deck, offering dining area for the restaurant is a less invasive way to offer support for the new use. The deck can be removed without permanent change to the historic structure.



## **SECTION 21-2-78, DETERMINATION OF HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**

### **Recommendation One – Denial – Replacement of front elevation masonry veneer, alteration of bay window, window and brickmold replacement**

Staff finds that the proposal for the replacement of the historic brick at the front elevation, alteration of the front bay first floor windows and the complete replacement of the wood windows and brickmold do not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the following reasons:

- The two-story bay windows are distinctive character-defining features; the uniformity and relationship between the window openings on each floor and elevation is an important architectural component of the structure. The installation of storefront glass in the front elevation first floor bay windows would disrupt and alter the symmetry of these window openings.
- The existing wood windows are set deeply within the openings, and the wide brickmold has an exceptionally detailed profile. Replacement windows and aluminum brickmold will not offer the same dimensionality and placement.
- Replacing the historic brick on the front elevation with new brick will drastically alter the appearance and features of the structure, due to the loss of patina and the subsequent contrast between old and new brick. Additionally, it is not known if the new brick offers an identical dimensional product to seamlessly fit within the existing brick pattern and mortar joints.

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the work as proposed, as it does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, specifically Standards 1, 2, 5, and 6:

*1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.*

*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.*

*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.*

### **Recommendation Two – COA – Erection of front yard deck and entry porches, new doors, dormer, skylights, wheelchair lift, dumpster enclosure, asphalt shingle roof, painting of siding and trim, site work, exhaust vent.**

Staff finds that the proposal for the remaining work items will not alter the features and spaces that characterize the property and district and therefore recommends the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as proposed as it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and the Elements of Design for the district.

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

- The concrete block enclosing the wheelchair lift will be painted to match the color selected for the lap siding.
- A cut sheet of the proposed skylights, which lists all details, dimensions and finish, will be submitted for staff review.
- A cut sheet of the selected exhaust vent shall be submitted for staff review that offers a picture of its exterior appearance, in addition to the details, dimensions and finish of the product. Revised elevation drawings will be submitted for staff review should the selected vent require modifications to the existing opening.