

**STAFF REPORT: JULY 12, 2023 MEETING**

**PREPARED BY: A. DYE**

**APPLICATION NUMBER: 20-6673**

**ADDRESS: 308 ELIOT**

**HISTORIC DISTRICT: BRUSH PARK**

**APPLICANT: THOMAS AND RENEE' TOFT**

**PROPERTY OWNER: ELIOT IN THE PARK**

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

**DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: JUNE 29, 2023**

**SCOPE: ENLARGE PREVIOUSLY APPROVED DECK**

**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The dwelling at 308 Eliot was erected in 1909. Due to the narrowness of the lot, the three-story house fills the width of the lot and the building's footprint is deeper than wide. The front elevation is dominated by a deep covered porch and a five opening, two-story bay window and a front-facing dormer. The solid red brick walls with narrow mortar joints creates an almost solid material effect and offers a contrast in color to the stone sills and headers, and the stucco and half-timber detail of the gable.



*Staff photo, June 29, 2023.*

**PROPOSAL**

Enlarge rear, three-story deck.

Manufacturer – Trex: Transcends decking system, Signature railing system.

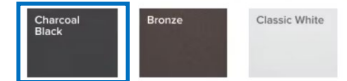
Colors:

- Deck Floor – Rope Swing; Border - Spice Rum
- Upper Fascia – Spice Rum
- Lower Fascia – Rope Swing
- Rail Posts – Rope Swing\*
- Post Skirts & Caps – Rope Swing\*
- \*Applicant narrative states black railing system

Premium Tropicals



Classic Earth Tones



Aluminum Railing

Color chart and railing photo from Trex website.

Deck colors:

Spice Rum circled in “Premium Tropicals”

Rope Swing circled in “Classic Earth Tones”

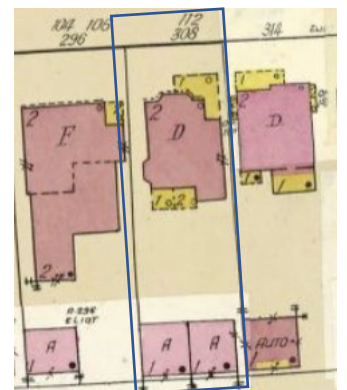
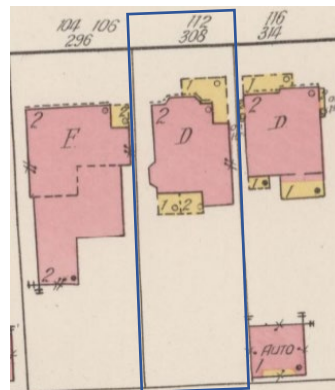
**STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH**

- The Brush Park Historic District was established in 1980.
- The Commission reviewed the rehabilitation of this property, which included window replacement and the erection of a three-story rear deck, at its July 2020 meeting. The 2020 staff report, applicant documents, Certificate of Appropriateness and Notice of Denial are posted on the July 2023 property page.



Google street view, November 2022. Star denotes 308 Eliot. This section of Eliot has an intact historic streetscape; new construction is at far right.

- The Sanborn maps for 308 Eliot show a small rear porch.
- The garage at 308 Eliot is not shown on the 1921 Sanborn map. The building permit for the garage was issued on August 11, 1921. The 1950 map shows how the garage expands across the entire lot and eliminates much of the view of the rear elevation, as shown in the below photo.
- The maps show 296 Eliot (to the west) had a large two-story rear addition in place by 1921.



Left: Sanborn Map, Vol. 3, 1921, #32

Right: Sanborn Map, Vol. 3, 1921 – Nov 1950, #32





*Staff photos, June 29, 2023.*

*Above: Photo taken in alley behind 296 Eliot looking northeast at 308 Eliot.*

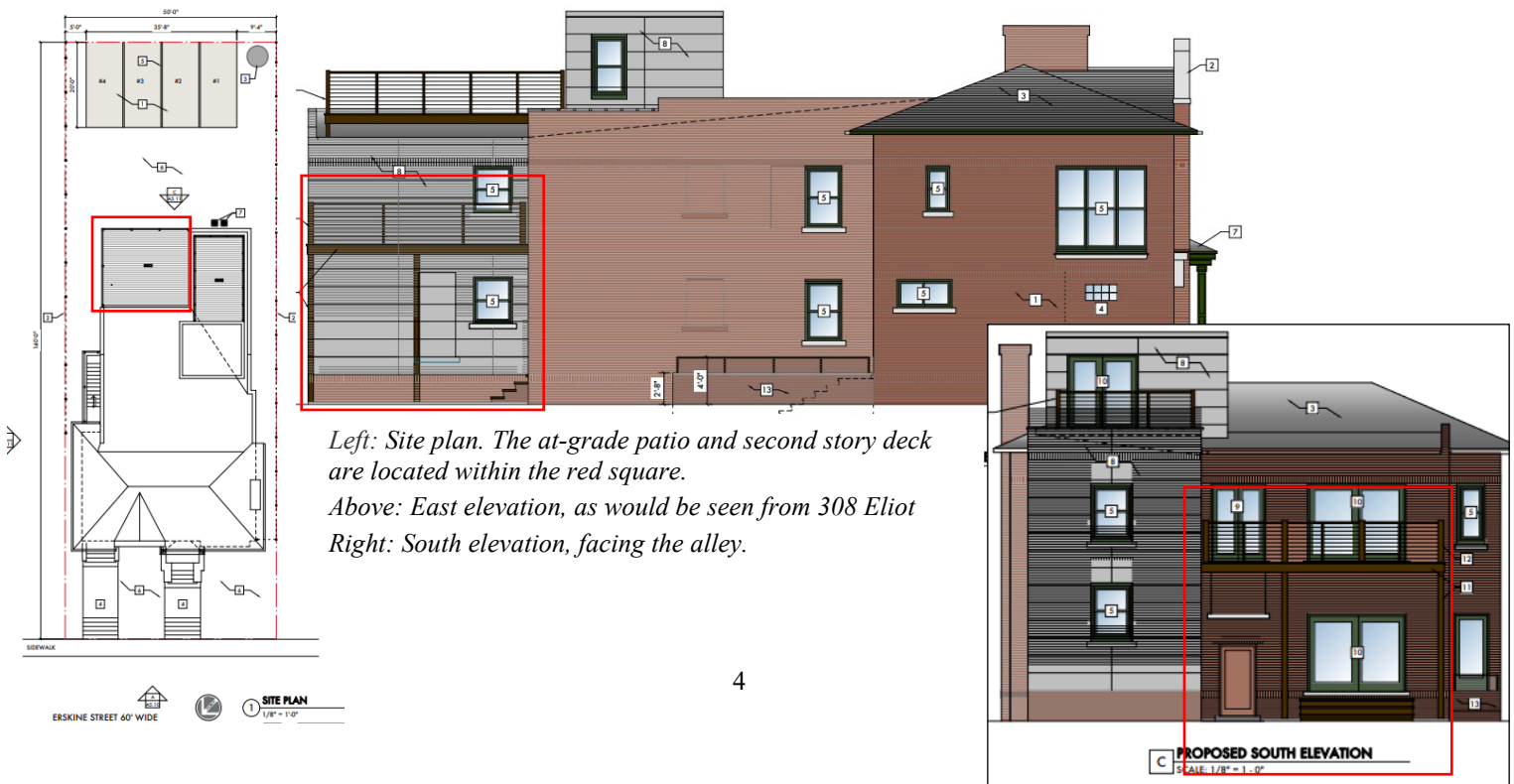
*Left: Photo showing the rear elevation of 208 Eliot as taken further west in the alley, at the middle of the lot for 296 Eliot.*





Staff photo, June 29, 2023. This zoomed-in view of 308 Eliot's rear elevation and yard was taken from the alley at the southwest corner of 314 Eliot.

- The above photograph shows the large massing of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century addition at 296 Eliot and how it impacts the inward and outward rear views of 308 Eliot. Upon seeing the construction railing at the third floor of 296 Eliot, staff researched the project and HDC's review of this property. Approval of the rehabilitation was granted by the Commission at its March 30, 2022 meeting. The decking material was specified as Trex. An overview of the 2022 drawings are copied below for context.



Left: Site plan. The at-grade patio and second story deck are located within the red square.  
 Above: East elevation, as would be seen from 308 Eliot  
 Right: South elevation, facing the alley.



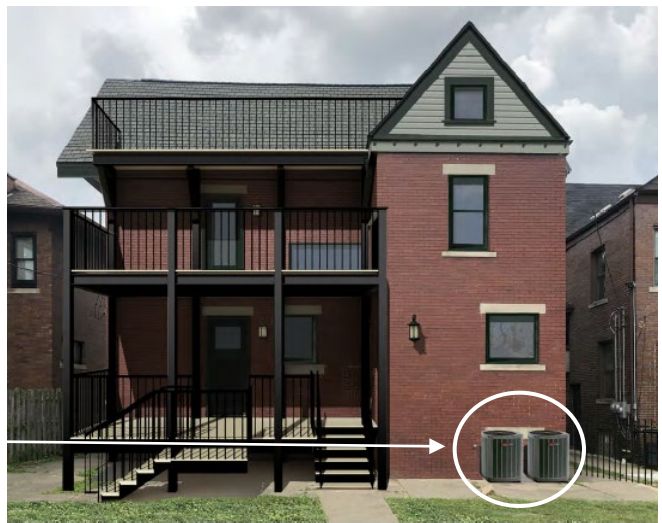
- As the applicant stated in an email, the condensing units, originally planned for the southeast location of the rear elevation, had to be moved due to connection limitations. The location was changed to the southwest area of the rear elevation. The adjacent photo shows the installed units.
- The elevations in the 2020 application showed a three-story metal deck, but the applicant requested, and received approval for, composite decks with a 42-inch guardrail; color: black.
- In the 2020 staff report, staff stated the opinion that the three-story deck, due to its rear elevation location and minimal attachment to the house, would not remove or alter distinctive features or finishes that characterize the property.



*Right: Staff photo, June 29, 2023.  
Condensing units are circled in yellow.*

**ISSUES**

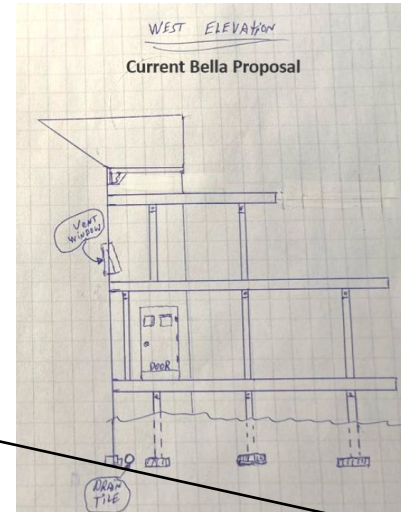
- In early 2021, BLD2020-05404 was issued for “Interior build into two units”. Staff learned a few weeks ago that the Building Department issued this permit without identifying Historic as a reviewer, even though the drawings included exterior work. The Certificate of Appropriateness was attached by the applicant/owner, but small exterior changes to the project and the Commission’s 2020 approval went undetected. Staff has since reviewed the 2020 permit application drawings. The only changes to the HDC approved drawings include the location change of the condensing units, and a slight redesign to the first story deck.
- Recently a permit application (RES2023-01080) was submitted for review, which is specific for the erection of a three-story deck. The applicant told staff that the southwest placement of the condensing units directly impacted the erection of the deck, which was to span the rear wall of the main structure. With the shortened width of the deck, the applicant is proposing to extend the depth of the deck.



2. PROPOSED RENDERING AT REAR

*Left: Existing condition and installed placement of condensing units. Staff photo, June 2023.*

*Right: Applicant rendering, July 2020, showing span of deck and initial location for condensing units.*



Above: Elevation drawing, BLD2020-05404.

Right: Applicant drawing to reflect footprint of extended deck against the side of the house.

- The comparison of approved and proposed depth of the three-story deck is shown below.

	Approved	Proposed	Change	
First floor deck	13'-7"	18'	Increase 4'-5"	The depth includes deck and adjacent stairs
Second floor deck	9'-8"	14'	Increase 4'-4"	
Third floor deck	4'-6"	10'	Increase 5'-6"	

- The structural analysis completed for the composite decks, and the increased depth, creates the need for additional supports posts, as shown in the above sketch. The proposed brace for the third floor, which allowed for a less impactful structural presence, is gone. However, staff does not believe the proposed deck is demonstrably inappropriate.
  - While the Commission always reviews projects specific to the property and structure on the lot, the Commission and staff often take into account the larger neighborhood context when reviewing site-specific work.
    - Brush Park was originally developed with extremely large and deep houses on narrow lots. The historic open space of rear yards for these lots, especially with the addition of carriage houses and garages, has been, and remains, minimal.
    - The distance between 308 and 296 Eliot is small, just over nine feet; the views to the rear yards from the public right-of-way from Eliot are almost non-existent. The public view from the alley is fairly well blocked by the carport at 314 Eliot and the full width garage at 308 Eliot.
  - The erection of the deck, as with the original application, will not remove character-defining features of the structure, nor alter the features and spaces that characterize the property.
  - The decks can also be removed without damaging the form and integrity of the historic property and its environment.
  - The deeper deck is not out of balance to the larger building mass and similarly designed and dimensioned composite second story deck of the neighboring property.
- Staff isn't clear on the proposed color for the railing, as noted in the proposal. It is staff's opinion, the multiple colors selected for visible components not only contrast each other, but also would offer a contrast against the dark solid-colored red brick and black sash windows on the structure. A darker monochromatic color palette for the fascia, railing and posts should be selected. As the decking is horizontal and won't be visible, a lighter color can be retained.

## RECOMMENDATION

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

It is staff's opinion the erection of the proposed three-story will not alter the features and spaces that characterize the property, and 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:*

- A single darker color for the vertical deck elements (railings, posts, fascia) will be submitted for staff review.