

STAFF REPORT: FEBRUARY 13, 2024 MEETING
APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2024-00031
ADDRESS: 1760 WABASH
HISTORIC DISTRICT: CORKTOWN
APPLICANT: GUSTAF ANDREASON, @PROPERTIES
PROPERTY OWNER: SHARIF AFFAS, DETROIT DEVELOPING PROPERTIES, LLC
DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: FEBRUARY 19, 2024
DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: FEBRUARY 21, 2024

PREPARED BY: A. DYE

SCOPE: ERECT ADDITION, DEMOLISH SHED

03/12/2024, 10:00 a.m. – report revised to include new fence and revised exterior design of addition

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The two-story wood-framed dwelling is located on the east side of Wabash Street, between Marantette and Bagley. The dwelling and rear additions were erected between 1889 and 1897.



Front wall.

Staff photos, Feb. 21, 2024.



Top: Google aerial view, above: side (south) wall looking from Wabash.

The cross-gabled structure features a 2-1/2 story front elevation and a one-story covered porch. The roofs on the main structure and front porch are steeply pitched, whereas the additions have low pitched hip roofs. The existing window openings on the front elevation are centrally placed, while the window openings on the remaining elevations are asymmetrical in placement. .

A concrete drive extends from Wabash to about half-way down the long, narrow lot. A small wood-sided shed is located directly behind the house in the rear yard and there is no garage. The double lot is mostly enclosed with a chain link fence and front gates; a new wood privacy fence extends from the northeast/rear corner of the house to the alley. The front door is accessed by a small raised, wood porch, and the rear door opens onto a raised wood deck.

The walls of the house are covered in vinyl siding and non-historic doors are at the front and rear of the dwelling. Double-hung vinyl windows are present on each elevation, with the exception of a multi-colored glass fixed window above the large first floor window opening. The trim of the window and door openings are covered with metal.

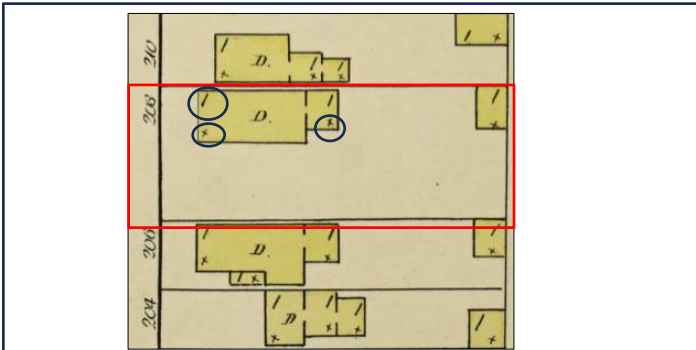
PROPOSAL

Per the application documents, the scope of work includes:

- Demolish shed in rear yard.
- Erection of a second-story addition at the rear of the house.
- Demolish raised deck and remove side entrance at south-side elevation.
- Remove concrete drive/parking pad.
- Remove centrally located chimney stack; rebuild rear elevation chimney stack.
- ~~Install vinyl siding on addition.~~
- ~~Paint siding.~~
- 3/12 - Remove vinyl siding on house.
- Remove chain link perimeter fence and install wood privacy fence, paint color: TBD.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Corktown Historic District was established in 1984.



Vol. 3 1889, Image 64

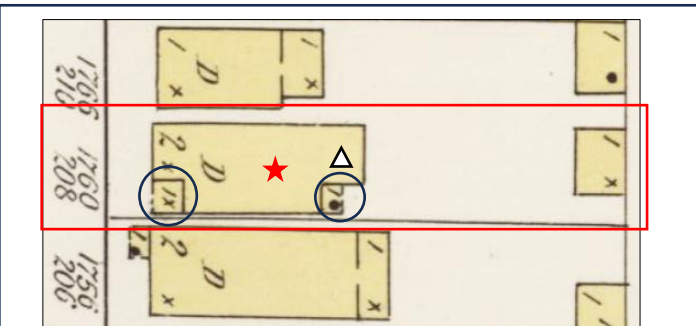
The original structure, erected between 1884 and 1889, was a single-story, wood-framed dwelling with wood shingle roofing. A single-story accessory structure was at the rear of the lot, which also had a wood shingle roof.

1 – identifies number of stories
x – identifies wood roofing material



Vol. 1 - 1897, Image 34

By 1897, it is staff's opinion that (based on the footprint shown here and the massing of the existing structure) this map indicates that an entirely new two-story structure with a setback front entrance had been erected, along with two, one-story additions. The accessory structure remained the same

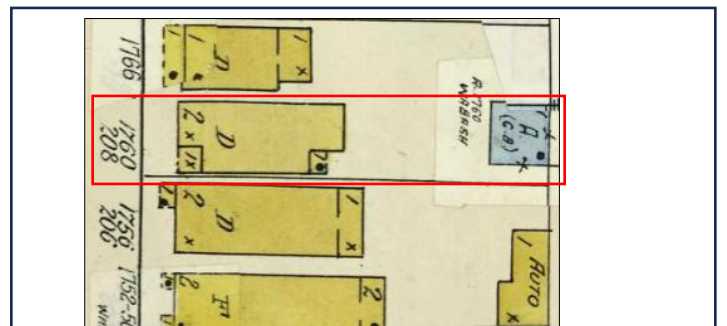


Vol. 1 - 1921, Image 34

By 1921, a one-story front porch and a small rear entry porch had been added. The wall lines inside the dwelling have disappeared. The erection of the second story may have occurred at this time. If so, this may have necessitated the exterior walls to be refinished, and the structure would now read as a single building component.

- Non-combustible roofing
- ★ Area that had previously been identified as one story.
- △ Area that remained one story, although not identified on the map.

The city's new street numbering system took effect: 208 Wabash is now 1760 Wabash.



Vol. 1, 1921-1950, Image 34

By 1950, the Sanborn company didn't note any changes to the dwelling, but the wood frame garage had been replaced with a one-story concrete block automotive garage. Staff located a permit for the garage dated 07-29-1934.



- Upon further examination of the property and HDC files, staff identified that the following alterations occurred after local designation, some of which was completed without HDC approval.
 - In July 2003, the property owner applied for interior and exterior work that would be funded through a Planning Department loan program. An administrative Certificate of Appropriateness was issued for the following scope of work:
 - Replacement of the existing wood windows with new wood windows at the second floor (8 windows).
 - Painting the house a color from Color System B.
 - Repave the existing driveway extending from public walk to rear deck.
 - At the time of designation, the large front window had two mullions and each opening had plate glass. The mullions were removed after September 2013 and undivided glass was installed. There is no record of this alteration being reviewed by the Commission.

The 1984 designation photo shows the window openings increased in number and width as they went from floor to floor: a single opening at the third floor became two mullioned openings at the second floor, and then three mullioned openings and a decorative transom at the first floor.

While operable windows were not in the three openings at time of designation, the alteration from a three-part window to an undivided opening destroyed the pattern and proportions of the window opening and altered this character-defining feature of the dwelling.



1984 Designation photo, HDAB.



September 2013

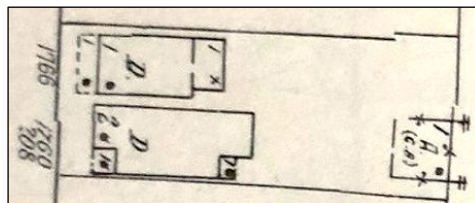


Google street view

July 2018

- There was no record of the HDC issuing a decision on the demolition of the concrete block garage. The demolition occurred after 1991, which is the date of the last Sanborn map staff found on file.
 - The garage is not visible in the designation photo.
 - According to Google street view, the garage has been gone since at least 2007.

1760	
Wabash	71
HOUSE NO. STREET	LOT NO.
44128	7-29-24
PERMIT NO.	DATE
USE	garage
CONS.	emt blk
REMARKS	O. K.



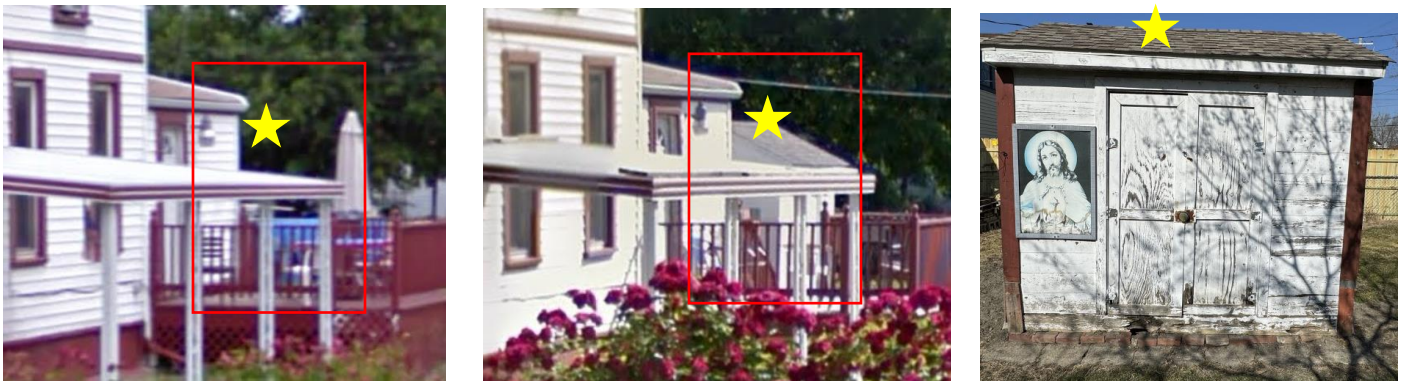
Left: BSEED permit card. Above: 1991 Sanborn map.

- The application proposes to remove the chimney stack that is in the middle of the house. The stack is not visible from the front elevation nor from an angled view at the sidewalk; it is only visible when standing in the middle of the adjacent vacant lot and from the alley. It is staff's opinion that, with its small width and depth, and low height, the stack is not a prominent feature and doesn't offer historic and architectural significance. The other chimney stack, on the outer rear wall, will be retained.



Far left and far right: staff photos, February 2024. Middle photo provided by applicant.

- The rear yard shed was erected between 2009 and 2011; there is no documentation that this shed was approved by the HDC. It is not a historic nor architecturally significant component of the property. The applicant is requesting demolition of this component.



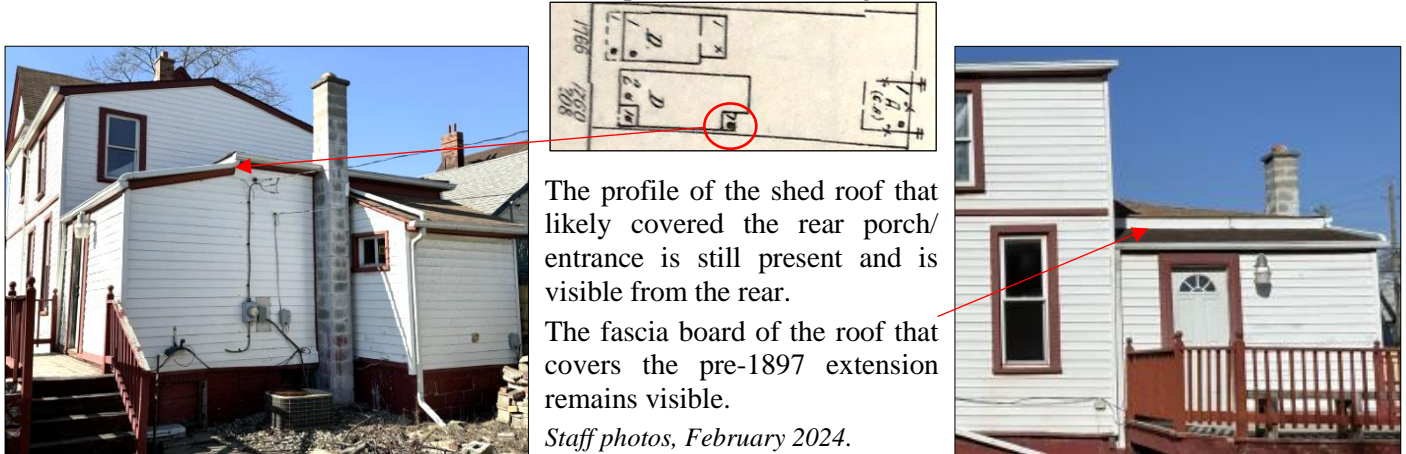
June 2009

Google street view

June 2011

Applicant photo – south side wall

- Another change that appears to have occurred after 1991 that did not receive HDC approval, is the enclosure of the covered rear entrance. (The deck was in place at time of designation.)



The profile of the shed roof that likely covered the rear porch/entrance is still present and is visible from the rear.

The fascia board of the roof that covers the pre-1897 extension remains visible.

Staff photos, February 2024.

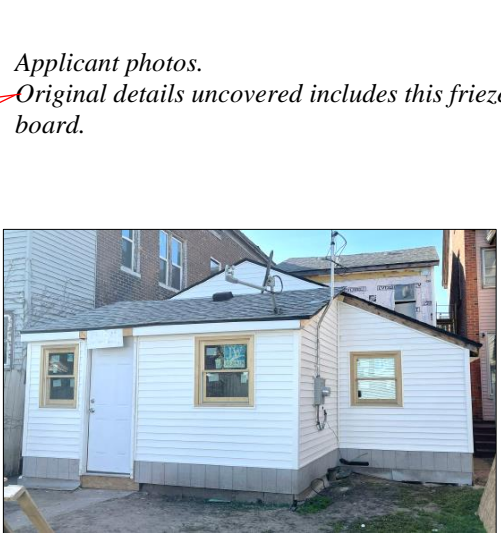
- Stepped down extensions at the rear of 19th century houses is a common condition in Corktown and it is, in staff's opinion, a distinctive character-defining feature of 1760 Wabash and the district at-large. Shown below are examples of similarly massed 19th century houses in the Corktown Historic District that proposed renovations and/or additions over the past few years. These projects successfully demonstrate ways to allow the original structure to maintain its physical and architectural dominance, while modifying or adding to the historic extensions in way that allows the property to retain a physical record of its changes over time while being modified for 21st century living.



Applicant drawings/photo

2245 Wabash – The 2023 application included the retention of the first historic extension and the erection of two additions (changes identified in pink).

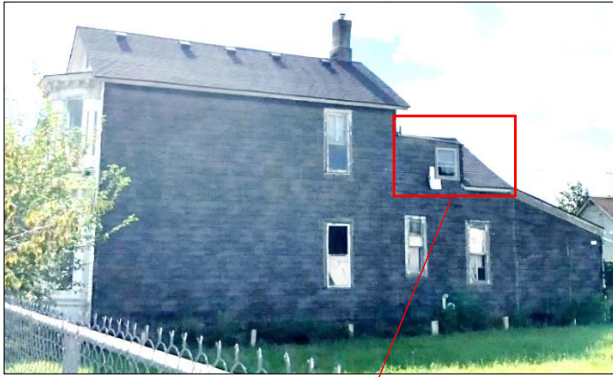
- The proposal retained deference to the original structure.
- The increased height of the historic extension remained below the ridge height of the house's roof.
- The two additions were designed to appear as separate extensions, in keeping with the historic pattern of building.



Applicant photos.
Original details uncovered includes this frieze board.

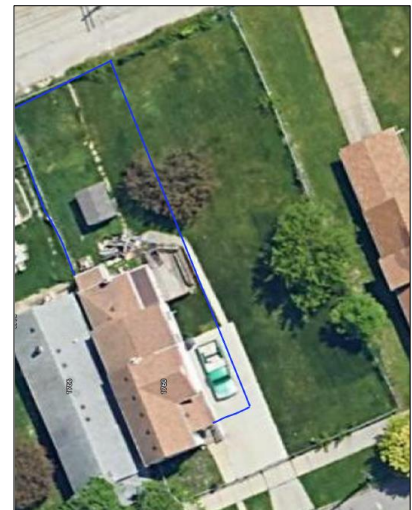
1409 Bagley – This dwelling's historic footprint didn't change, but the exterior appearance was altered.

- The Commission denied the applicant's 2021 proposal to replace the existing vinyl siding with new vinyl siding.
- The applicant instead restored the historic wood siding which reintroduced original details that had been hidden for at least 60 years.
- An architecturally compatible front porch replaced the highly deteriorated non-historic porch.
- The in-progress photo of the rear elevation shows stepped down additions, which according to the Sanborn maps, have been in place since the 1880s.



1556 Bagley – This 2022 application included an increased height for the second story historic extension (boxed out in upper left photo).

- The increased wall height remains below the original structure and retains the historic pattern of a stepped down eave. Similarly, the ridge of the new roof and its pitch are lower than the main house.
- Vertical board and batten siding installed on the new walls (arrows above) allows the new work to read as contemporary, yet compatible, elements.
- The existing chain link fence running the perimeter of the double lot is to be removed and a wood privacy fence will be installed closely following the historic/original lot line. The proposed fence location and design meet the HDC’s Fence and Hedge Guidelines, and the applicant agreed to paint the fence. Color to be determined.



*Applicant photos.
 Left: Footprint (red lines) of existing chain link fence.
 Right: New footprint (blue lines) for wood fence.*

ISSUES

- The dimensions of the existing second floor windows (and central mullion) are typical of late 19th century dwellings and are character-defining features of the dwelling. The drawing of the front elevation shows exceptionally wide windows, and a factory-installed mullion at the second floor, matching the width of the window opening at the first floor. The applicant noted this was not intentional and the existing window openings will remain. The elevation and floor plan will need to be revised with correctly sized openings, including the dimension and placement of the historic mullion.

3/12 – The applicant revised the elevation and second floor plan to reflect the existing second floor window opening.

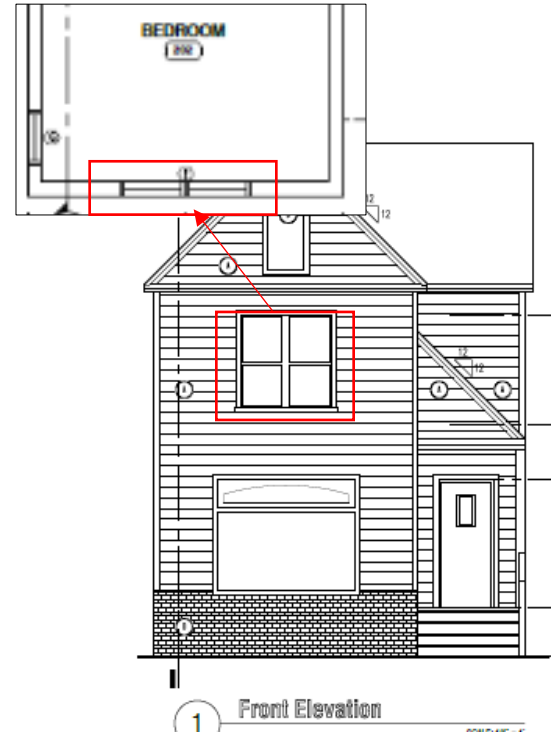
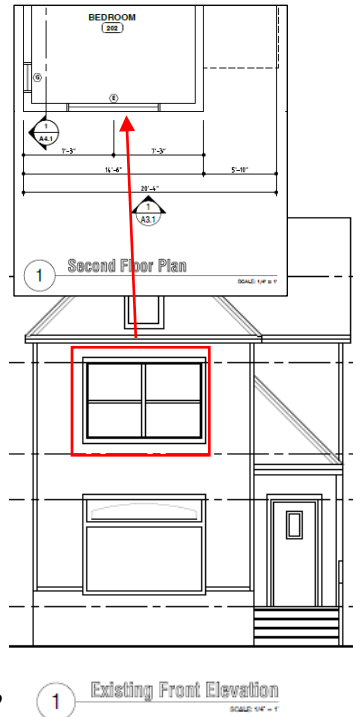


Staff photo.

Applicant Drawings.

Left: Previous elevation/plan.

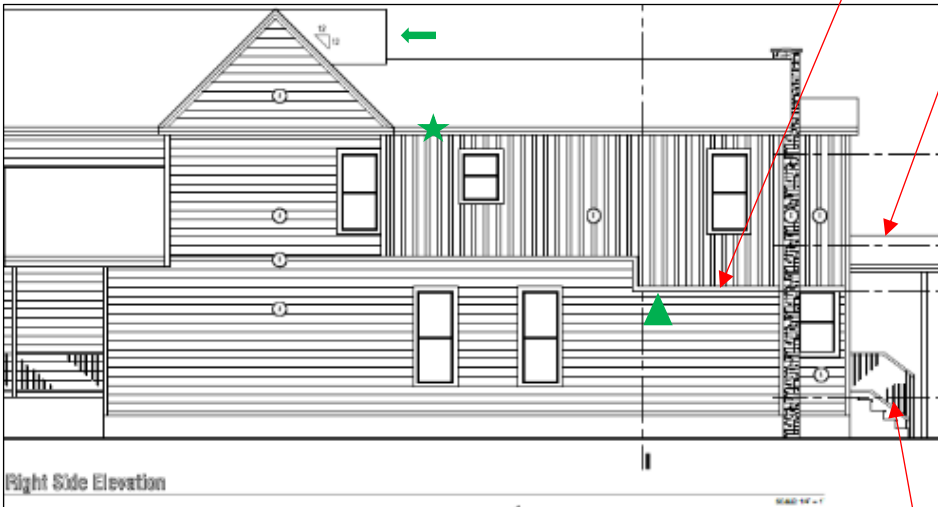
Right: Corrected elevation/plan to show retention 2nd floor window openings.



- The suggested design offers the boxy appearance of a 21st century dwelling and removes the historic massing of the original structure along with the stepped down composition of the 19th century extensions. As noted by the examples previously shown, there may be an opportunity for a new design that retains the wall setbacks and lower (than the historic house) ridge heights and eaves of the historic extensions.
 - The [National Park Service's Preservation Brief 14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings](#) states:
 - *In accordance with the Standards, a new addition must preserve the building's historic character. A new addition must retain the essential form and integrity of the historic property, but also be differentiated from the historic building.*
 - *A new addition should always be subordinate to the historic building; it should not compete in size, scale, or design with the historic building. Avoid designs that unify the two volumes into a single architectural whole. An addition that bears no relationship to the proportions and massing of the historic building—in other words, one that overpowers the historic form and changes the scale will usually compromise the historic character as well.*



Existing south wall.



Applicant's current elevation drawing of south wall.



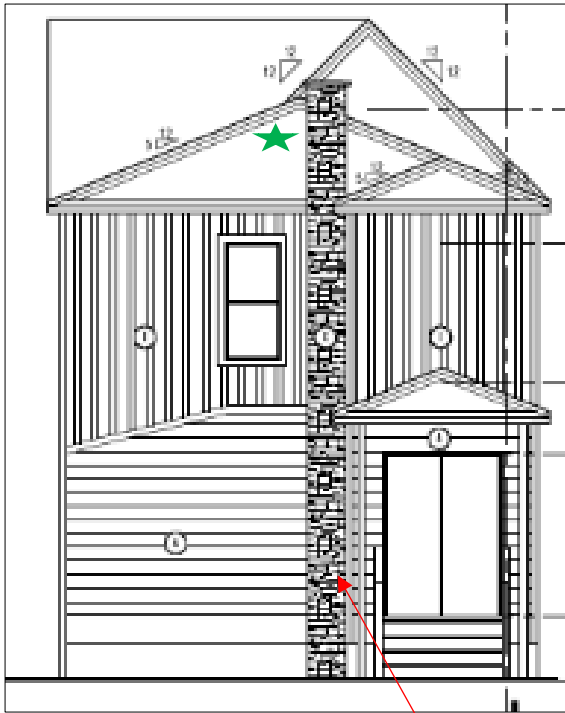
Applicant's previous elevation drawing of south wall.

New details for second floor addition:

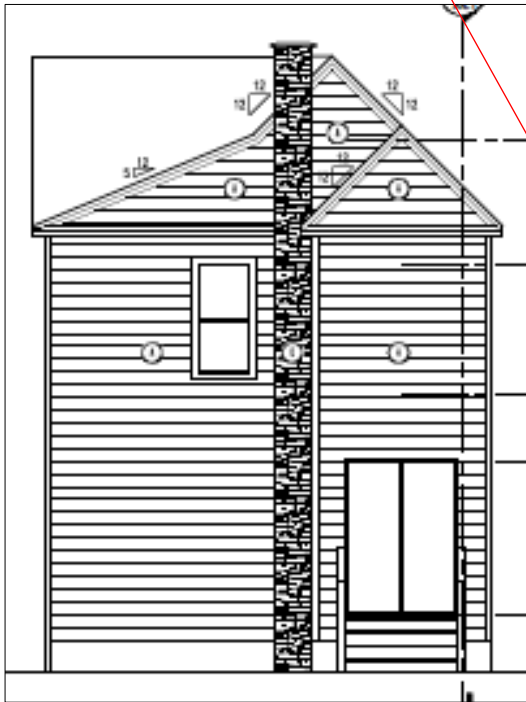
- Vertical siding is specified for the new second floor walls. The proposal shows a lower finish height of the vertical siding to suggest the historic eave height at this wall location.
- The ridge of the addition's roof has been lowered and is well below the ridge of the historic 12-over-12 pitch roof. (Original proposal extended the historic ridge height through the new construction.) ←
- A roof has been added to the rear entrance.

Staff concerns with revised design:

- The height of the eave of the new second floor wall remains in line with the historic house and removes the historic stepped down eave. ★
- The setback of the existing first floor addition hasn't been retained. ▲
The matching eave and solid wall plane of the south wall continue to create a large boxy massing for this highly visible area of the dwelling. As stated on page four, staff didn't find HDC approval of the rear porch expansion and enclosure. However the existing non-historic southern wall at this area retained a small setback from the main structure (see existing condition photo).
- Comparing the original and current application, the revisions of a lower roof height and siding change offer improvements to the design, but it is staff's continued opinion that the massing must be further modified for this project to meet the Standards.
- A separate drawing of the stairs and roof structure must be created to confirm the design, dimensions, materials and finishes of these elements.



Applicant's current design at rear



Applicant's previous design



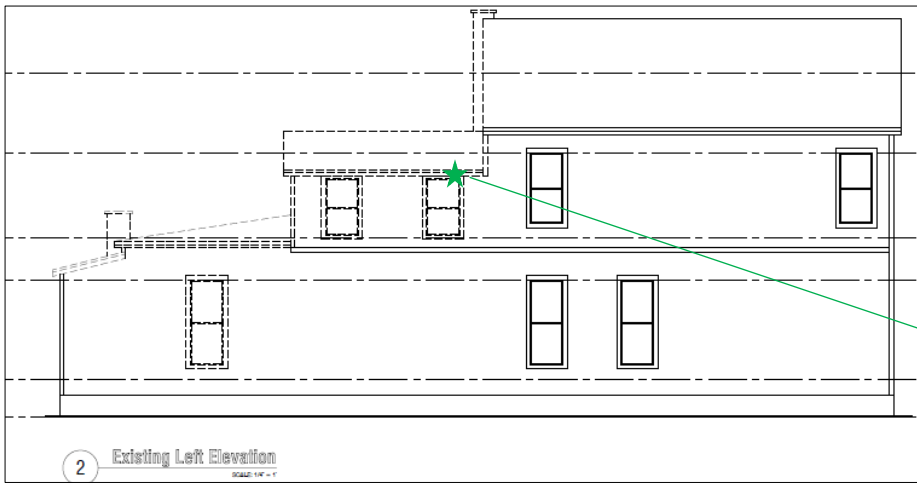
Above: Existing conditions at rear elevation.

New details for rear wall:

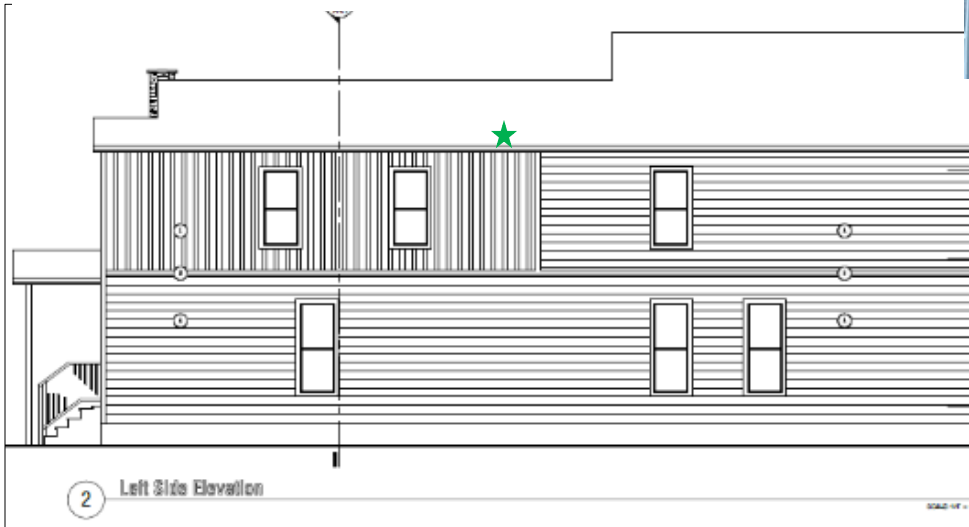
- *Vertical siding is specified for the new second floor walls. The proposal shows a siding detail to suggest an approximation of the former single-story extension's roof.*
- *This view shows how a lower and independent roof retains the essential form and integrity of the historic property, while being differentiated from the original steeply pitched roof. ★*
- *A roof has been added to the rear entrance.*

Staff concerns with revised rear wall design:

- *As staff mentioned on the previous page and earlier in the report, the historic massing of 19th century additions / extensions are distinctive character-defining features this property and the district.*
- *Lower roof heights (i.e. ridges, eaves, roof pitch) and at times recessed walls, allow additions/new construction to retain the essential form and integrity of the historic property.*
- *A material sample/cut sheet for the stone veneer at the chimney, confirming stone pattern, profile and color(s) must be submitted for staff review.*



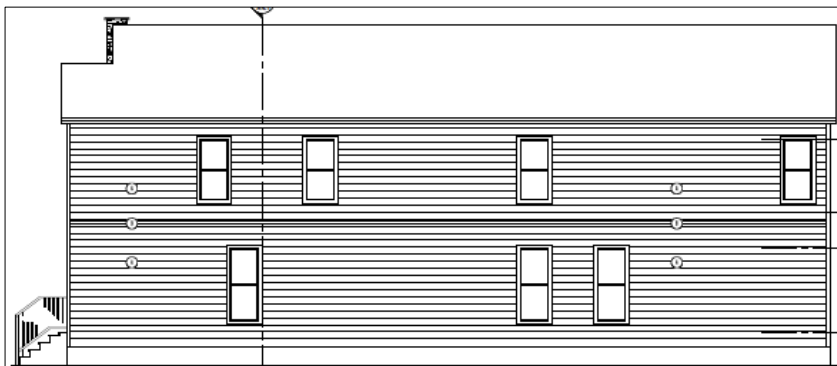
Above: Applicant drawing of existing north wall.
 Above right: Applicant's photo of the north wall. Due to the proximity of the neighboring property, this side isn't visible from the right of way. Also, the historic extensions at this wall were, and remain, in line with the original structure.
 Below: Applicant drawing of currently proposed design for the north wall.
 Bottom: Applicant's previous design for the north wall.



- New details for north-side wall:
- Vertical siding is specified for the new second floor walls.
 - A roof has been added to the rear entrance.

Staff concerns with revised rear wall design:

- Similar to the previously discussed south and east walls, a lower eave height should carry around from the other elevations. This would match the existing historic condition, as noted in the existing north wall drawing and photograph. ★



RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation One – Denial – Erection of two-story rear addition

Staff finds that the proposal for the erection of the proposed two-story rear addition will alter the features and spaces that characterize the property and does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the following reasons:

- The suggested **revised** design has the boxy appearance of a 21st century dwelling and removes the historic massing of the original structure along with the stepped down composition of the 19th century extensions.
 - In accordance with the Standards, a new addition must preserve the building's historic character. A new addition must retain the essential form and integrity of the historic property, but also be differentiated from the historic building.
 - A new addition should always be subordinate to the historic building; it should not compete in size, scale, or design with the historic building. Avoid designs that unify the two volumes into a single architectural whole. An addition that bears no relationship to the proportions and massing of the historic building—in other words, one that overpowers the historic form and changes the scale will usually compromise the historic character as well.
- ~~The use of vinyl siding on an addition does not meet the standards.~~
 - ~~The building materials should be harmonious and not be so different that they stand out or distract from the historic building.~~
 - ~~Vinyl siding offers a plasticity and unnatural wood appearance (i.e., raised grain finish).~~
 - ~~Vinyl siding lacks rigidity, it has prominent vertical seams as well as rounded edges that are not found on wood clapboard siding.~~

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 2, 5, and 9:

- 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.*
- 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.*

Recommendation Two – COA – Demolition of raised deck, demolition of rear yard shed, removal of concrete drive/parking pad, ~~replace chain link fence with wood privacy fence, removal of vinyl siding and restoration of wood siding on dwelling.~~

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 paint colors to be applied to the ~~existing siding and wood fence~~ will be submitted to staff for review.
- The applicant shall coordinate a site visit with HDC staff to assess the condition of the existing wood siding before any repair work is completed. The selected paint color will be submitted for staff review.

