

STAFF REPORT: 04/10/2024 MEETING
APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2024-00069

PREPARED BY: J. ROSS

ADDRESS: 3139-3153 WOODWARD

HISTORIC DISTRICT: PETERBORO CHARLOTTE

APPLICANT/ARCHITECT: MAUREEN DOYLE/DISBROWN, IANNUZZI ARCHITECTURE

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 3/25/2024

DATE OF STAFF VISIT: 3/26/2024

SCOPE OF WORK: ALTER FACADES OF COMMERICAL BUILDING

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The project area consists of three adjacent buildings which are located in the 3100 block of Woodward, to include 3139 Woodward, 3147 Woodward, and 3153 Woodward (see below).



Current conditions, facing northwest showing 3139 Woodward (left), 3147 Woodward (center), and 3153 Woodward (right). Photo taken by HDC staff on 3/26/2024

3139 Woodward

The building located at 3139 Woodward was built for the Walker Brothers Catering Company in 1920+ at an estimated cost of \$88,500. Per a 2008 National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Midtown Woodward District and the Walker Brothers lunch room occupied the center storefront The Detroit-based firm of Walsh and O'Dell served as the project architect. The building is two-stories in height and is clad with white terra cotta tiles at the front elevation while red brick and concrete is located at the sides and rear. Lozenge-patterned terra cotta frames the first and second stories. Modillion blocks support the cornice, which has shields at the corner of each bay and stylized floral decoration. The tall, paneled frieze above the cornice has ocular windows. Three non-historic-age, wood storefronts with metal light fixtures which are located at the building's front façade, first story were installed sometime around 2008. Non-historic age metal windows which are similar to Chicago windows were in the process of being installed at the time of the district's designation. Per the National Park Service "the other original occupants were the Goodman Brothers Recreation Co. billiard room; Morneau and Powers, printing; Thompson-Hudson Co., photographers; Spanos Brothers, shoe shiners; and Martin-Gibson Co., suppliers of lighting, tiling, and fireplace furnishings. The Walker Brothers lunch room operated at this location until the company went bankrupt in 1934. Most of the other businesses remained until the depression years; the billiard parlor lasted longer."

3147 Woodward

The commercial building at 3147 Woodward, known as the Wagner Building, is two stories in height and was erected in 1911. The building's front façade is clad with red brick and displays cast stone decorative detailing to include the arched window surrounds at the second story and paneled pilasters which frame the first-story storefronts. The second story windows are the original wood units while the first aluminum and granite story storefronts were installed in 2017. Per the National Park Service "in 1911 the property was deeded to John Wagner for \$16,000. Wagner's family owned the Wagner Bakery on Grand River. In 1912 the Read Auto Company and J. E. Smith, manufacturers' agents, occupied the south storefront; The Flower Men, Carey and Fell, florists, occupied the north storefront. In 1921 Aikins and Papa's restaurant moved into the south storefront, and W. K. Yunck Sales Company, auto accessories, occupied the north storefront. Marco and Belle Lazar opened the New United Restaurant in the building in the 1930s; in 1963 they purchased the building from the Wagner family."

3153 Woodward

The building at 3153 Woodward, known as the Pierce Building, was erected in 1911 and was designed by Pollmar and Ropes Architects. The building is two stories in height and features buff brick with cast stone detailing at the second story. Three long, narrow panels above the windows at the second story have stylized floral decoration with the name "Pierce Building" inscribed on the center panel. The frieze is decorated with squares formed of tiles and raised brick. Sheet metal marks the location of the former cornice. Non-historic windows and metal louvered vents, located at the second story, were installed to replace original wood units sometime between 1984/the date of the district's designation and 2007. Brick quoins frame the window. Historic-age cast stone pilasters frame the first-story storefronts. An historic-age transom which features prism glass is located within the building's central storefront. The remaining storefront material was added in 2014-2017. Per the National Park Service "the Pierce Brothers Company, specialty grocers, constructed the building for an estimated cost of \$18,000. It contained three stores on the first floor and eight apartments on the second floor. In addition to Pierce Brothers grocery, the original occupants were the Motor Wagon Sales Company and Mrs. M. Hollister's drugstore. Early apartment tenants included an autoworker, a floorwalker, and a reporter with R. G. Dun and Company. By 1921 CarVen Cafeteria had replaced the Motor Wagon Sales Company and the Green-Haag Drug Company had replaced Hollister's. Pierce Brothers closed their business in 1928 or 1929. Ed's Bookstore occupied the Pierce Brothers space in 1935, and the Good Will Bar was there in 1941."

PROPOSAL

Per the submitted documentation, the applicant is seeking the Commission's approval to rehabilitate the storefronts at 3139-3153 Woodward to include the following scope items:

- At all three buildings, replace the existing storefronts with new aluminum storefronts, finish color black. The new storefronts will be flush with the exterior wall surface and sidewalk, thus eliminating the inset at two openings at 3139 Woodward and the inset of one opening at 3153 Woodward. The current historic exterior tile thresholds at these three openings will also be eliminated as a result of eliminating the inset nature of the storefronts (see below photos)
- At all three buildings, install new custom fabricated awnings per the attached
- At 3147 Woodward, above second story windows, remove sheet metal and install a new Fypon (polyurethane) cornice, design based upon the original
- At 3153 Woodward, retain and repair existing non-historic windows as needed



Current conditions, facing southwest showing 3139 Woodward (left), 3147 Woodward (center), and 3153 Woodward (right). Photo taken by HDC staff on 3/26/2024. Areas outlined in orange indicate areas where entry insets will be eliminated/project forward, flush with the sidewalk.



Single remaining inset entrance at 3153 Woodward. The inset and historic hex/penny tile floor will be removed as the new storefront will be located flush with the sidewalk. The yellow line indicates where the new storefront will be located. Note that none of the actual storefront material is historic age. Only the flooring and the inset placement of the door is historic. Staff photo taken on 4/4/2024



North remaining inset entrance at 3139 Woodward. Yellow line indicates where the new storefront will be located. The inset and historic terrazzo floor will be removed as the new storefront will be located flush with the sidewalk. Note that none of the actual storefront material is historic age. Only the flooring and the inset placement of the door is historic. Staff photo taken on 3/26/2024



South remaining inset entrance at 3139 Woodward. Yellow line indicates where the new storefront will be located. The inset and historic tile floor will be removed as the new storefront will be located flush with the sidewalk. Note that none of the actual storefront material is historic age. Only the flooring and the inset placement of the door is historic. Staff photo taken on 3/26/2024

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Peterboro Charlotte district was locally designated in 1984. See the below to review the appearance of 3139-3153 Woodward at the time of the district's designation:



3153 Woodward, HDAB designation slide, appearance in 1984. Note that original wood windows are present at second story



3139 Woodward, HDAB designation slide, appearance in 1984. Note that windows are in the process of being installed at the second story and first-story storefront openings are covered with plywood and an overhead door



3147 Woodward (center), 3139 Woodward (left), and 3153 Woodward (right). HDAB designation slide, appearance in 1984. Note that new windows are in the process of being installed and storefront openings are covered.

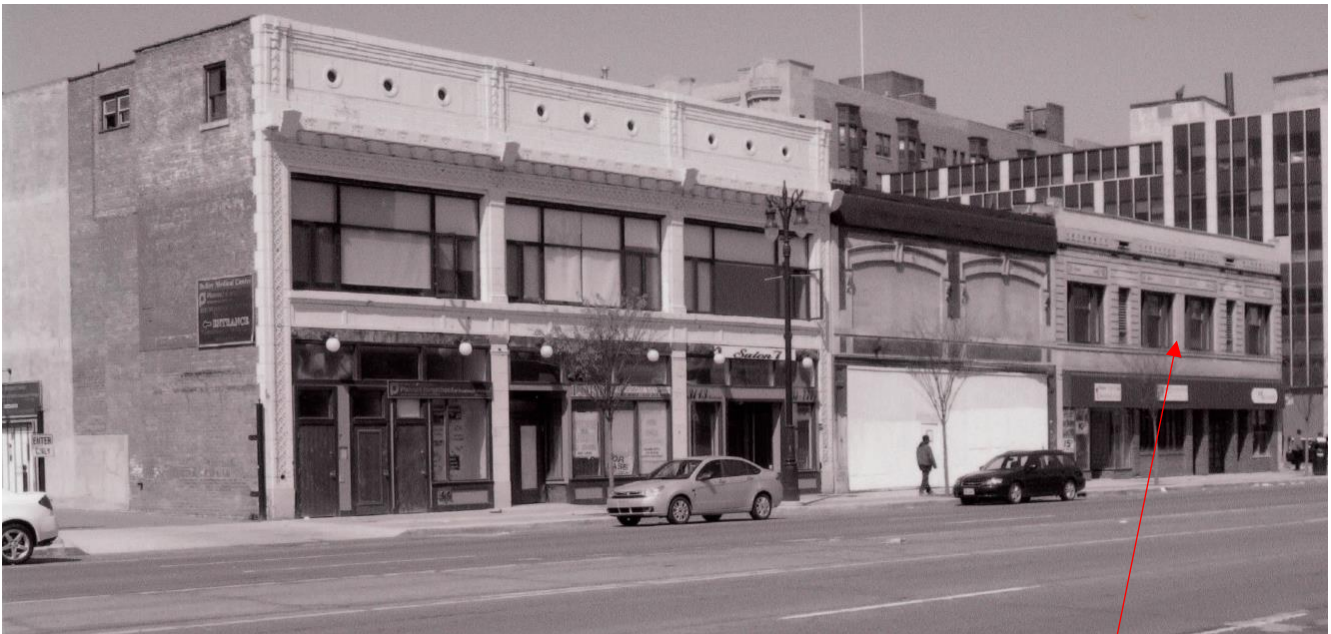


3147 Woodward (left) and 3153 Woodward (right). HDAB designation slide, appearance in 1984.



3153 Woodward. HDAB designation slide, appearance in 1984.

- Staff identified an application and associated COA, dated November 8, 2007, for 3131-3146 Woodward (currently addressed at 3139 Woodward) which approved the replacement of windows and the “installation of a storefront” in support of the building’s new use as a condominium.
- In 2008, the Midtown Woodward Historic District was listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The subject buildings were included within the boundaries and identified as Contributing to the district. See the below photo for the buildings’ appearance in 2008, at the time they were listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Note that the original wood windows at 3153 Woodward had been removed by this point. Staff was unable to identify a COA and/or application in the HDC’s files which indicate that the replacement of the original windows with the current windows and louvered vents were approved by the Commission.



Appearance in 2008 upon listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Source: United States Department of the Interior, National Park Service, National Register of Historic Places registration form for the Midtown Woodward Historic District. Note that the original wood windows at 3153 Woodward have been replaced (by a former owner).

- In 2013, a former owner submitted an application to the Historic District Commission for the replacement of the non-historic central storefront at 3153 Woodward's first story to include the following:
 - Remove the metal awning, aluminum-frame windows, single hinged door, and glazed brick
 - Install a new wood storefront with a black granite sill and limestone clad pilastersThe Commission issued a COA for the proposed work at its 11/13/2013 meeting. The owner attended the Commission's 4/9/2014 regular meeting and submitted a second/revised application which sought approval to revise the original design. Specifically, the owner noted that he had uncovered an original prism glass transom upon his removal of the non-historic metal awning. He therefore revised the 2013 application to retain and repair the prism glass transom. The application included a quote from Andrea Sevonty to repair the transom. He also sought to install an aluminum storefront versus the wood storefront which was originally approved in 2013. The Commission issued a COA for the revised scope and the work was completed per the application. Please see the below images.



3153 Woodward. HDC approved replacement of this storefront with a wood storefront (outlined in red) in 2013. Google Streetview image, 2013



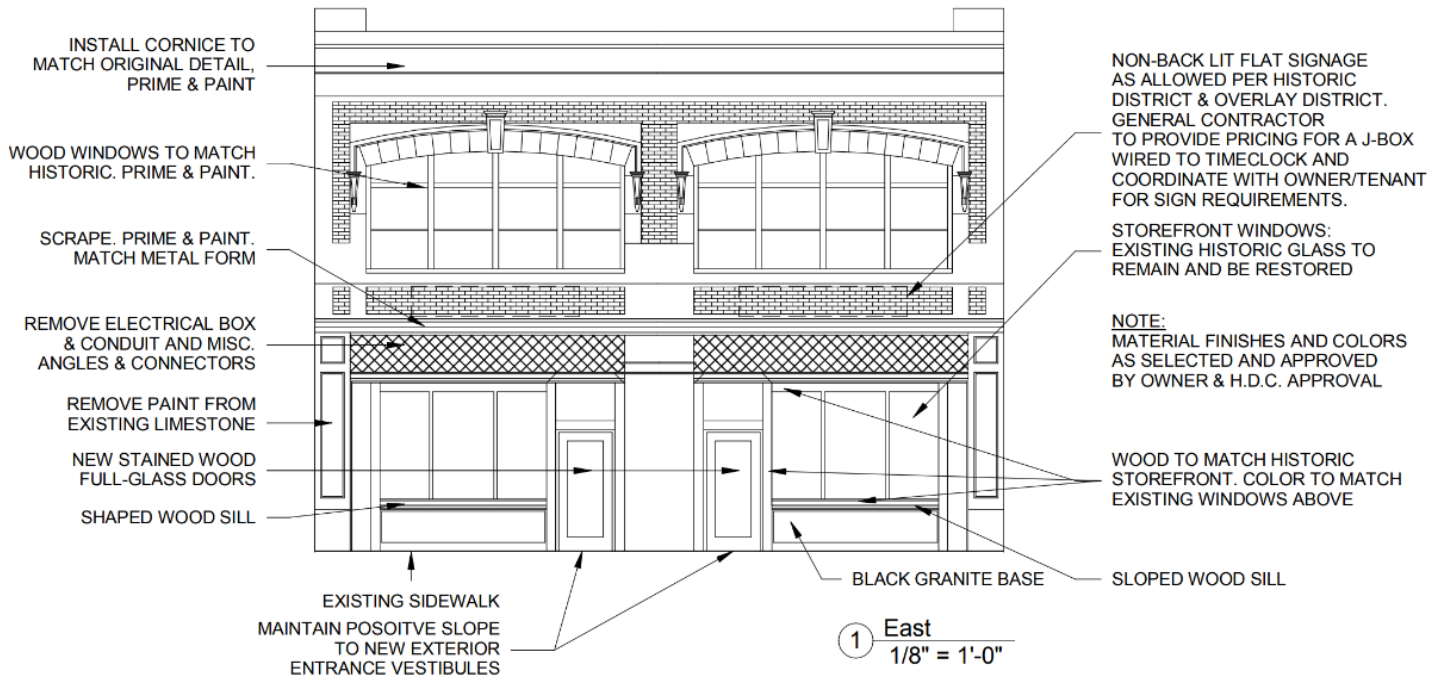
3153 Woodward. Applicant revised 2013 application in 2014 to include retain and repair of the original transom at this storefront (outlined in yellow). Google Streetview image, October 2014 to show completed project. Note that removal of red awning revealed the original transom at the storefront to the right of the targeted storefront



Prism glass above two storefronts at 3153 Woodward. This photo was taken in 2014, shortly as the removal of the non-historic awning, Staff believes that these transoms date from the building's original construction. Source, Joel Landy

- The current applicant has stated that they believe that the remaining prism glass transom at 3153 Woodward is not original to the building's date of construction and was recently installed. However, it is staff's opinion that the prism glass transom is original to the building after a review of the 2014 picture (see above) of the transom and the repair quote from Andrea Sevonty.
- In 2015, a former owner submitted an application to the Commission to rehabilitate the storefront at 3147 Woodward. Re: the storefront, the application proposed the following:
 - Retain and restore existing historic storefront. Where storefront is missing, install new wood storefront to match historic
 - Install new stained wood doors with full-length vision panel
 - Install new black granite sill
 - At first story transom, remove metal panel. If original transom is remaining and can be repaired, retain and restore. If original transom is not present or if it is extant but deteriorated beyond repair, install new wood, fixed single light transom above each storefront

The Commission issued a COA for the work at their 3/11/2015 meeting. However, the work was not completed as proposed/approved as a new wood storefront with a set of paired wood doors was installed. It appears that no portion of historic storefront was retained. See the below for the proposed/approved project scope and the work as completed. Note that staff is unable to determine/confirm what portion original storefront remained at the time of the 2015 application because it was covered with wood. The 1984 designation slide does not provide any clues as to the appearance of the storefront because it was covered with wood at that time.

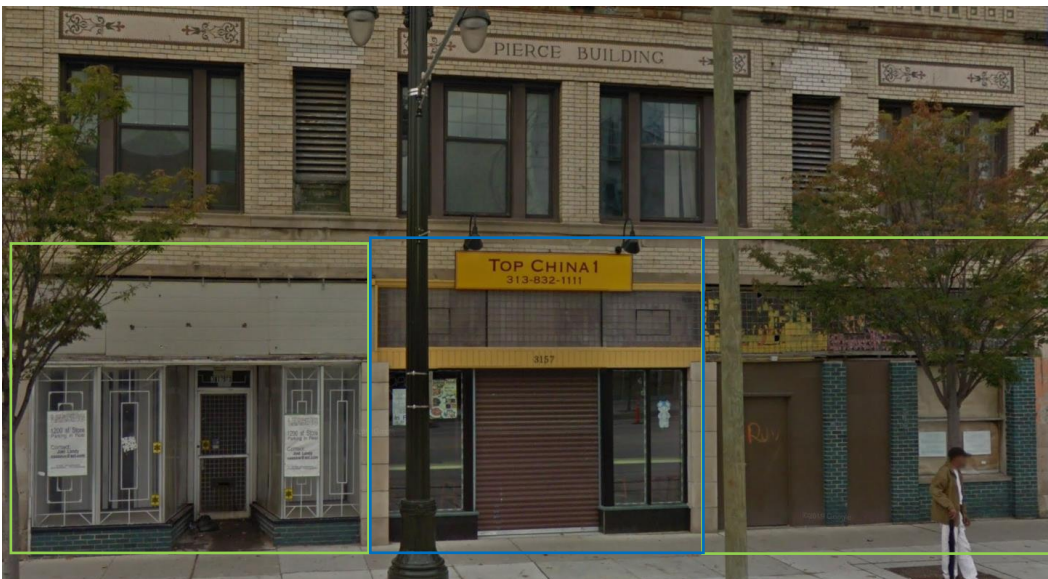


Proposal for rehabilitation of storefront at 3147 Woodward, approved by the Commission in 2015



3147 Woodward, current appearance. Note that all portions of the storefront are new and that the above elevation drawing refers to “existing historic glass to remain and be restored.” Also, the configuration of the storefront does not match the approved. HDC staff photo taken on 3/26/2024, facing southwest

- In 2017, a former owner submitted an application to the Commission to rehabilitate the north and south storefronts at 3153 Woodward as the central storefront rehab had been approved for replacement in 2013 and 2014. Specifically, the applicant attended the 2/8/2017 HDC meeting and proposed the following:
 - Rehabilitate the remaining two storefronts, along with the residential entrance to the second floor apartments (see below image). Two of the three prism glass transoms were identified by the owner as being historic/remaining (one restored in 2014), so this project included the restoration of the remaining transom at the northernmost storefront and the installation of the third transom using reclaimed prism glass to match the existing historic transom at the building’s other two storefronts. The new storefront below would be aluminum. See the below photos:



3153 Woodward, Google Streetview image, 2016. Appearance before 2017 storefront rehab. Note that the 2017 project only included the rehab of the storefronts outlined in green as the central storefront, outlined in blue, had been replaced in 2014. Also, note that the historic prism glass transom at the northernmost storefront/storefront to the right had been daylighted by the 2014 rehab of the central storefront.



3153 Woodward, current conditions. Note that the prism glass transom only remains over the central storefront. The prism glass transom which was located above the north storefront was approved for repair in 2017. However, it was removed without approval. A salvaged prism glass transom was approved for installation at the south storefront as well. However, a new aluminum transom was installed without approval. Staff photo taken on 3/26/2024, facing southwest

- Staff acknowledges that the current application will result in the removal of the historic inset and tile flooring at three openings, to include two entries at 3139 Woodward and one at 3153. However, staff does note that the storefronts do display a history of alteration and reconfiguration over time in order to accommodate new uses. As a result, the only remaining historic-age, highly-visible material is the single prism glass transom window at 3135 Woodward while the remaining storefront material is not of historic age and presents an appearance that is highly incompatible with the historic character of the three subject buildings. It is staff’s opinion that the prism glass transom is the only remaining distinctive, character-defining element of the storefronts and that the proposed new storefronts are generally compatible with the building’s historic character and will contribute to an historic sense of uniformity at each building’s first story which currently does not exist.



1949 Auto Golden Jubilee.



Building's appearance in 1967. Note storefront alterations.

ISSUES

- The transom glass proposed for replacement at 3153 Woodward is original to the building's date of construction and is the only remaining highly-visible historic-age element of the building's storefront. It is staff's opinion that the transom is a distinctive character-defining feature of the building. Therefore, its removal does not conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation
- A former owner replaced the prism glass transom at 3153 Woodward's northernmost storefront without COA sometime after 2016. As this element was removed without HDC approval, it is a violation of the Detroit City Code. Because no evidence exists which might suggest that its removal was merited, an in-kind replacement of the distinctive character-defining transom at this location is the proper course of action in staff's opinion.
- Per the submission, the project proposes to repair the existing non-historic windows at 3153 Woodward as necessary. However, as noted above, these windows were not present at the time of the district's designation and were installed sometime between 1984 and 2007. Staff was unable to locate any documentation that the window replacement received a COA. It is staff's opinion that the current windows are not an adequate replication of the original wood windows as they have muntins/grids between the glass, the operation of the current windows do not match

the original, and the profiles/dimensions of the current windows do not appear to match the original. It is therefore staff's opinion that the current windows do not meet the Standards. Staff is therefore unable to recommend approval of the proposed repair of the existing second story windows at 3153 Woodward as it would essentially equate to an approval of these incompatible units.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation # 1). Section 21-2-73 - DENIAL

It is staff's opinion that the proposed replacement of the existing prism glass transom and repair of the second story windows at 3153 Woodward is inappropriate to the building's historic character. The prism glass transom dates from the building's original construction and is a distinctive, character-defining feature of the property. The application has not indicated that the transom is deteriorated beyond repair/that it is infeasible to retain the transom and incorporate it into a new storefront. Also, the non-historic second story windows which were installed without HDC approval are not an adequate replication of the original wood windows as they have muntins/grids between the glass, the operation of the current windows do not match the original, and the profiles/dimensions of the current windows do not appear to match the original. Therefore, the proposed repair of the existing second story windows at 3153 Woodward equates to an approval of these incompatible units. For these reasons, staff recommends that the Commission issue a denial for these two work items because they do not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, in particular Standards#:

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 historic 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 # 2). Section 21-2-73 - CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS (COA)

It is staff's opinion that the remaining scope is appropriate to the property's historic character. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a COA for these work items with the following conditions:

- The applicant shall install a new prism glass transom at the northernmost storefront of 3153 Woodward to replace the unit which was removed without HDC approval/in violation of Detroit City Code ca. 2017. The new transom shall match the prism glass transom which exists at the building's central storefront. Staff shall be afforded an opportunity to review and approve the new proposal for the transom before the permit is pulled for the project.
- The applicant shall retain the existing new prism glass transom at 3153 Woodward's central storefront.