

STAFF REPORT: 7/10/2024 MEETING

PREPARED BY: J. ROSS

ADDRESS: 1480 SHIPHERD

APPLICATION NO: #HDC 2024-00086

HISTORIC DISTRICT: WEST VILLAGE

APPLICANT/OWNER: DORRINE URRUNUGA/RD INVESTMENT GROUP LLC

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 6/25/2024

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 6/17/2024

SCOPE: ERECT NEW ADDITION, ALTER EXTERIOR OF BUILDING

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The building located at 1480 Shipherd is a Queen Anne style house that was erected within the West Village neighborhood ca. 1900. The building is 1 ½ stories in height and features a front gabled central/main mass with an intersecting, side-gabled wing at the south side. Recently, a new gabled-roof addition was erected at the building's rear, the original lapped wood siding and most decorative detailing has been removed from all facades, new asphalt shingle roofing was installed, and the original fascia and soffits have been replaced. Remnants of the original corner trim remain at the front façade. A shed roof, partial-width inset porch, located at the front elevation, retains its historic-age wood deck, turned posts and pilasters, and side handrail. The building's historic wood windows remain at the front facade. However, two windows at the building's north elevation roof dormers have been removed although the wood trim/casing at these units remains. Staff was unable to discern the material of the remaining windows at the side elevations and the window directly adjacent to the primary entrance because they are currently obscured by metal storm windows. However, it does appear that the trim/casing at these windows are covered by an aluminum colistock.



1480 Shipherd, current condition after the removal of most historic features. Compare to images on page 4. Staff photo taken on 6/25/2024

PROPOSAL

Per the submitted drawings and narrative, the applicant is seeking the Commission's approval of the following work items:

- Demolish rear wing (work completed)
- Erect a new two-story addition at the rear (work completed). The windows at this addition shall be vinyl clad, double-hung wood units. Exterior walls will be clad with lapped wood siding
- Remove the original lapped wood siding, fish scale shingles at the front gable ends, and decorative trim/dentils at the front facade (work completed)
- Install new lapped wood siding at all sides, new wood fish scale shingles in front gable ends, and decorative trim/dentils at the front facade to match those elements that were removed without HDC approval
- At roof, remove existing asphalt shingles and original decorative wood soffits and fascia (work completed)
- At roof, install new asphalt shingles (work completed), remove original chimneys (work completed) and new wood soffits and fascia to match those elements which were removed without HDC approval at front facade.
- At historic house, retain and repair existing windows

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The West Village historic district was designated in 1983
- Regarding the current violations:
 - On 2/20/2024, HDC staff was alerted that the siding and roofing were in the process of being removed at the property. Staff confirmed that the HDC had not approved this work and reported the violation to the Detroit building department.
 - On 2/28/2029, staff visited the property for a second time and noted that the framing for a new addition had been erected at the rear. Detroit building department records indicate that a stop work order was issued that same day. However, a third visit to the site, conducted by HDC staff on 3/1/2024, confirmed that OSB sheathing had been added to the new rear addition



1480 Shipherd, photo taken by HDC staff on 2/20/2024

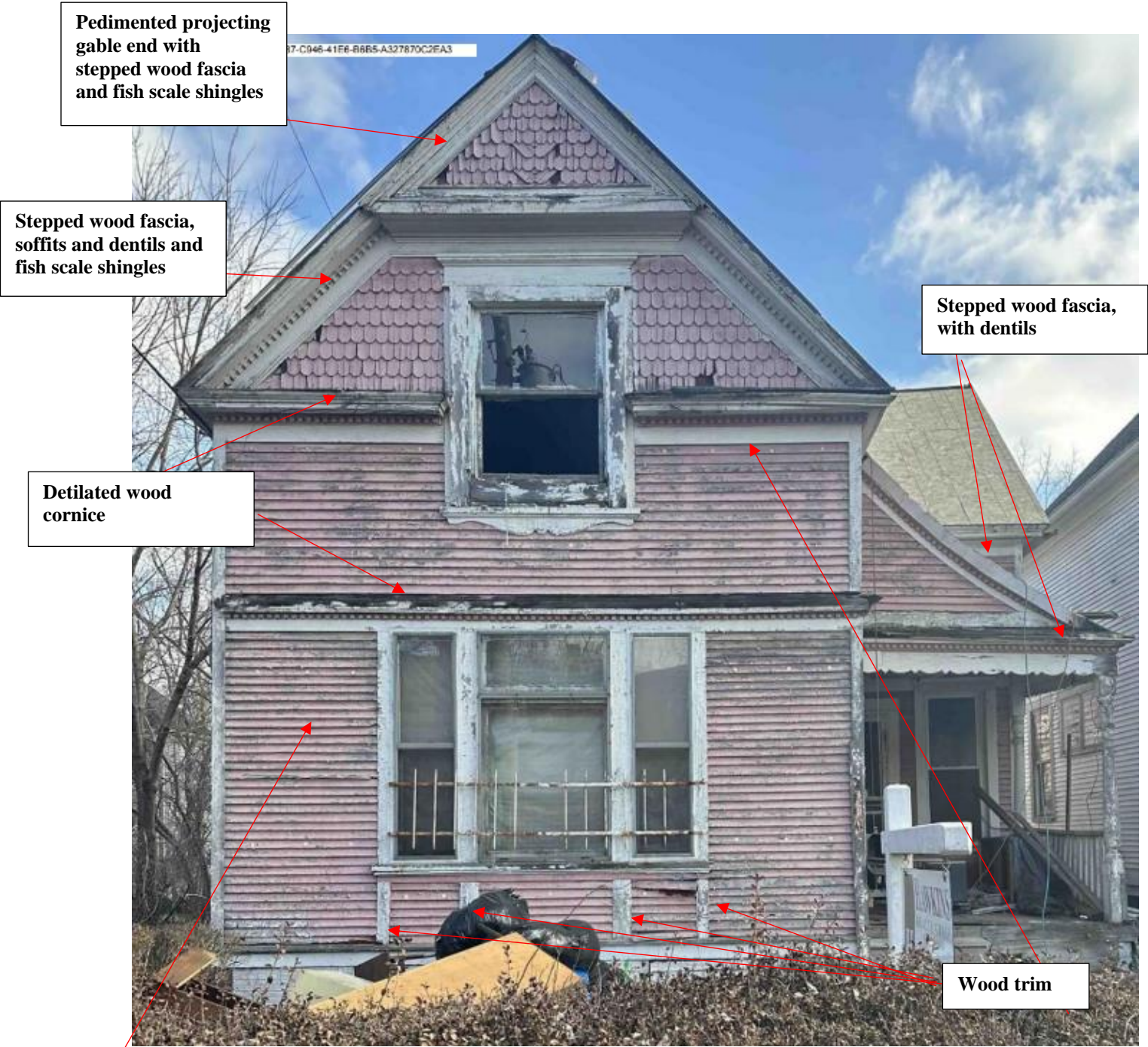


1480 Shipherd, rear addition. Photo taken by HDC staff on 2/28/2024



1480 Shipherd, rear addition. Photo taken by HDC staff on 3/1/2024

- Staff reviewed files maintained by the HDC and finds no applications for exterior work have been submitted for the property since the time of the district’s designation
- The following photos illustrate the significant, character-defining elements which were removed from the house without HDC approval as a result of the current project:



1480 Shipherd, prior to unapproved work. Photo provided by applicant

Narrow exposure wood clapboard siding

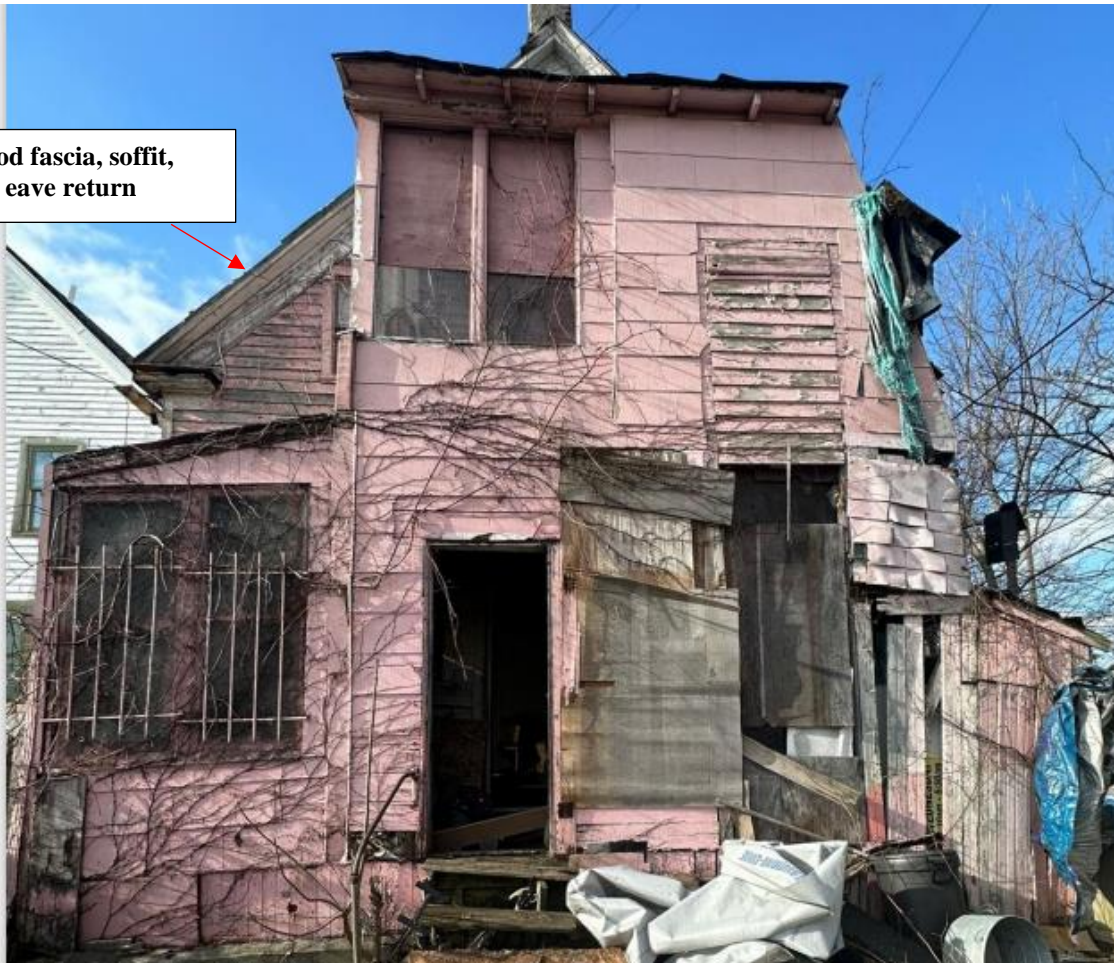


Pedimented gable end with stepped wood fascia sunburst patterned panels

Wood trim and soffits at side wall

Note that lapped siding at the side wall has a wider exposure than the lapped siding at the front facade

1480 Shipherd, Google Streetview 2019



Wood fascia, soffit, and eave return

1480 Shipherd, rear. Showing two-story wing that was removed without HDC approval/location of new addition which was erected without HDC approval. Photo provided by applicant



Wood panel siding at dormer

Two, double-hung windows and wood panel siding at dormer

1480 Shipherd, Google Streetview, 2013 showing north side wall



1480 Shipherd, designation slides. Photos taken by HDAB in 1983



1480 Shipherd, front façade. Current condition. Staff photo taken on 6/25/2024. Note that only small areas of corner board trim, the windows; and porch posts, pilasters, floor, steps, and railing remain at the front façade. All other siding and detailing at the walls and roof have been removed without HDC approval.



1480 Shipherd, south side wall. Current condition. Staff photo taken on 6/25/2024. Note that only the windows remain. All siding and detailing/trim at the walls and roof have been removed without HDC approval.



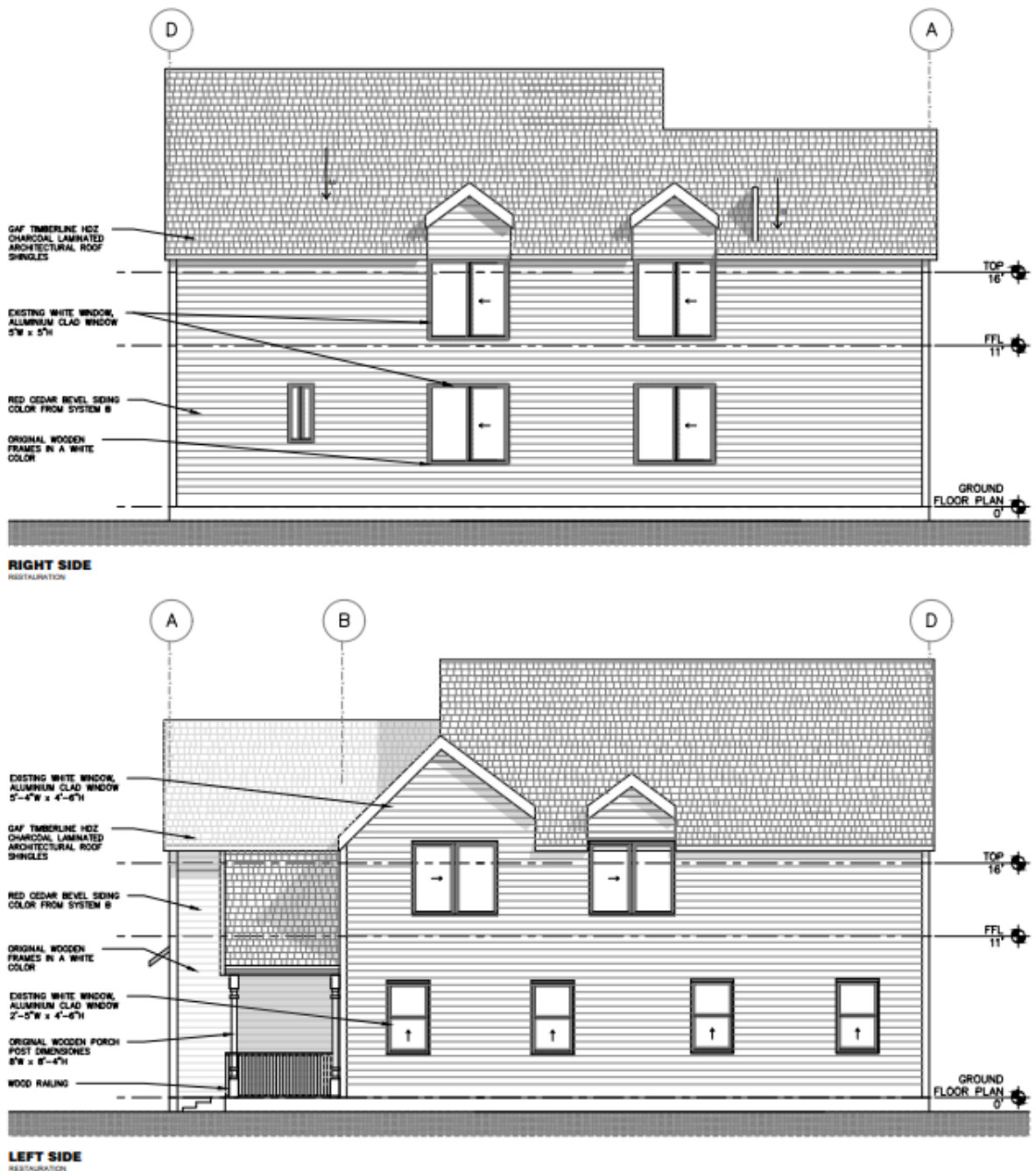
1480 Shipherd, north side. Current condition. Staff photo taken on 6/25/2024. Note that only 5 windows remain. The two windows in the western dormer and all siding and detailing/trim at the walls and roof have been removed without HDC approval

- The submitted drawings (see below) indicate the following regarding the historic, character-defining elements that were removed without approval:
 - The applicant is proposing to bring back some of the decorative detailing which was removed without approval at the front façade. However, staff would need to review enlarged drawings depicting dimension and detail to ascertain how closely the new decorative elements with match the old
 - The fish scale shingle treatment proposed for the east gable is not accurate to the sunburst panel siding that was historically located within the gable/removed without approval
 - The proposed treatment for the soffit/fascia areas at the side walls and the front façade porch do not appear to match the level of detail that was originally present/removed without approval
 - The application also appears to seek to replace the double-hung windows which were removed from the north elevation with new sliding units.
 - The exposure dimensions of the new lapped wood siding will not match that of the original siding/the siding that was removed without HDC approval.

It is staff's opinion that all distinctive, character-defining elements which were removed from the house, as outlined in the above annotated photos, should be replicated and resotred per their historic appearance as their removal does not meet the Standards.



West elevation, proposed condition

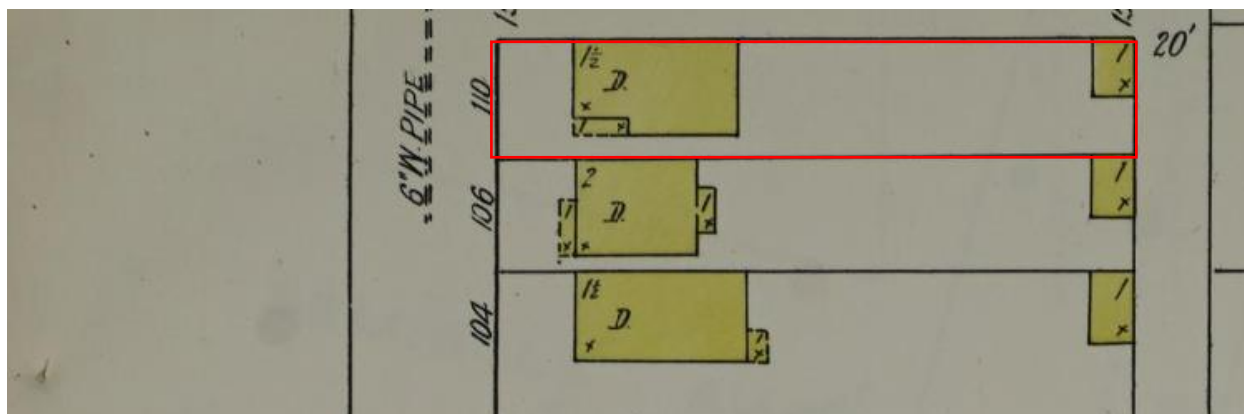


North (top) and south (bottom) elevation, proposed conditions

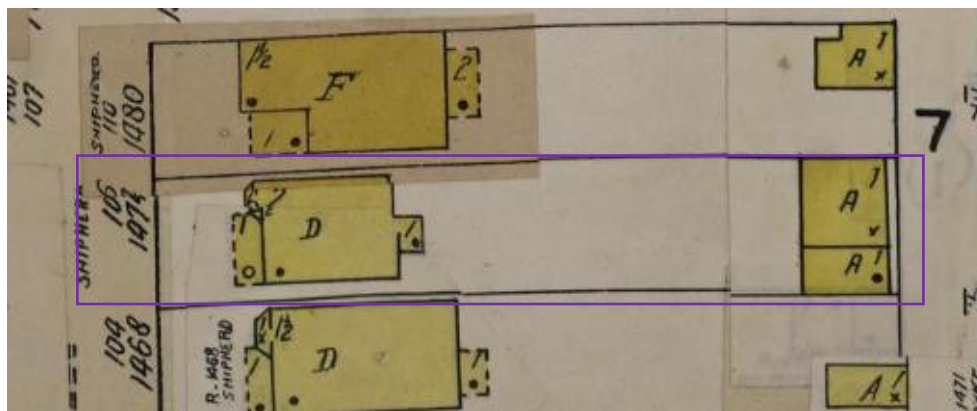
- As enlarged drawings depicting dimensions and materials for the front porch have not been included in the current application, staff is unsure if the current wood railing, posts, floor, ceiling, and pilasters will be kept. The drawings refer to original wood porch post dimensions and wood railing but it is not clear if new posts of the same dimensions of the original will be installed and if the railing reference is calling for a new railing or noting that the existing will be retained. Also, the elevation drawings do not depict the current historic wood pilasters, so it is unclear to staff if the applicant is proposing to remove them.
- The final treatment for the windows is unclear to staff for the following reasons:
 - A report of window conditions provided to staff in March 2024 did not provide a full accounting of each existing window (see property page on website). It also stated that “the property does not have half of the windows and the other half are vinyl,” however staff did note that only two windows are currently missing at the

building and the current elevation drawings state that all windows are aluminum clad wood units.

- The drawings included in the current application state that the existing “ aluminum-clad wood windows” at the front façade will be retained and repaired. However, the windows at the front façade are wood
 - The drawings indicate the presence of slider windows at the side walls, however all remaining windows at these locations appear to be 1/1, double hung units. Also, the drawings note that the existing windows will be retained, but staff is unclear if the notes are incorrect and the applicant is instead intending to install sliding units at these locations as depicted in the drawings.
 - Staff was unable to discern the of the material of the building’s side wall windows and the window adjacent to the primary entrance because they were not easily visible from the public right-of-way. The current application does not provide clear photos these windows and/or a full accounting of these units. Specifically, prior materials state that half of the windows are vinyl while the current drawings have indicated that they all are aluminum clad wood units and the operation of the windows as depicted in the elevation drawings are not consistent with the actual units. Staff is therefore unsure if the information included in the current application is accurate
- The below Sanborn Maps indicate that the rear wing that was removed without approval was built sometime after 1910. A review of photos taken of the rear wing prior to its demolition, at both the interior and interior indicate that it was in poor condition and was not at all compatible with the historic character of the original portion of the house. Staff therefore supports its removal.



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1910. 1480 Shipherd, outlined in red



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1921-1951. 1480 Shipherd outlined in purple.

- Per National Park Service Bulletin #14, entitled *New Exterior Additions to Historic Properties* [Preservation Brief 14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns \(nps.gov\)](#), new additions which meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation must accomplish the following:
 - Preserve significant historic materials, features and form
 - Be compatible
 - Be differentiated from the historic building

The guidelines also state that “a new addition should always be subordinate to the historic building; it should not compete in size, scale or design with the historic building. 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.” Furthermore The National Park Service’s *Illustrated Guidelines for New Additions* [The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings-New Additions \(nps.gov\)](#) do not recommend attaching a new addition so that the character-defining features of the historic building are obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

- It is staff’s opinion that the newly erected rear wing does not meet the Standards because it has been directly appended to rear of the building, resulting in the removal of its entire east wall at its distinctive character-defining elements (see below) and the extrusion/extension of the original roofline.



This character-defining gable end has been removed and the roof has been extended as a result of the current unapproved addition

1480 Shipherd, rear wall gable end which was removed as a result of the new rear addition. Photo by applicant

ISSUES

- The application does not propose to replicate all of the distinctive character-defining elements that were removed without HDC approval to include the following:
 - The fascia/soffits profile and detailing at the side walls and porch roof
 - The two, 1/1 wood windows that were located at the north wall dormers
 - The dentil detail that was present at the front façade gable end’s soffit
 - The sunburst pattern panel siding that was in the east gable end
 - The exposure dimensions of the original lapped siding (ie., narrow at the front and standard at the sides and rear)
- As the current application does not include enlarged drawings depicting dimensions and details of the proposed porch conditions and the replicated elements proposed for installation at the front façade, staff is unable to ascertain how closely the new conditions will match the historic

- Staff was not able to ascertain the material of all of the remaining windows from the public right-of way. As the current application did not include clear photos of all windows and the drawings appear to have some inaccuracies, staff is unable to fully understand both the proposed and existing window conditions
- It is staff's opinion that the newly erected rear wing does not meet the Standards because it has been directly appended to rear of the building, resulting in the removal of its entire east wall and its distinctive character-defining elements and the extrusion/extension of the original roofline.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation - Section 21-2-78. Determination of the Historic District Commission – DENIAL

It is staff's opinion that the proposal is not appropriate for the following reasons:

- The application does not seek to replicate all of the distinctive character-defining elements that were removed without HDC approval to include the following:
 - The fascia/soffits profile and detailing at the side walls and porch roof
 - The two, 1/1 wood windows that were located at the north wall dormers
 - The dentil detail that was present at the front façade gable end's soffit
 - The sunburst pattern panel siding that was in the east gable end
 - The exposure dimensions of the original lapped siding (both narrow and standard)
- The current application does not include enlarged drawings depicting dimensions and details of the proposed porch conditions and the replicated elements which will be installed at the front façade. It is therefore unclear how closely the new conditions will match the historic
- The proposed and existing window conditions are not fully outlined in the application as it did not include clear photos of all windows. Also, an inventory and the current application's drawings appear to have some inaccuracies
- The newly erected rear wing has been directly appended to the rear of the building, resulting in the removal of the entire east wall and its distinctive character-defining elements and the extrusion/extension of the original roofline.

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission deny the work because it does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, in particular, Standards #2, 5, 6 9, and 10 which state that:

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.*
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.*

10. New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.