

STAFF REPORT: NOVEMBER 13, 2024 MEETING
APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2024-00619
ADDRESS: 1639 LEVERETTE

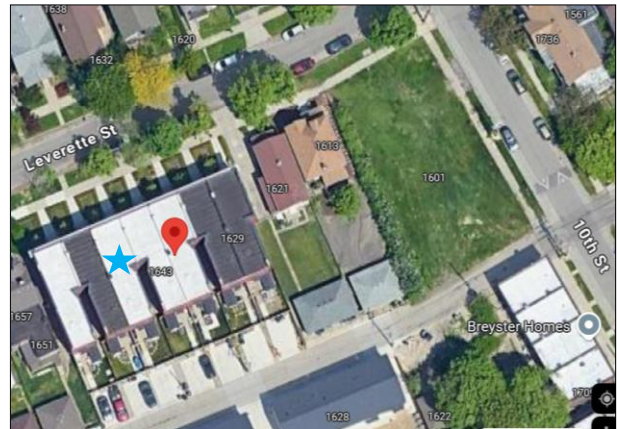
PREPARED BY: A. DYE

HISTORIC DISTRICT: CORKTOWN
APPLICANT: TIMOTHY ANDREW BRODOWSKI, CONSTRUCTION BY DESIGN, LLC.
PROPERTY OWNER: ANDRUS MCDONALD
DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: OCTOBER 21, 2024
DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: NOVEMBER 1, 2024

SCOPE: REPLACE AWNING WINDOW WITH EGRESS CASEMENT UNIT

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The residence located at 1639 Leverette is near the middle of a seven-unit rowhouse. The building is two stories in height and is clad with buff colored Roman brick. The horizontality of the brick is further emphasized by the narrow stone band separating the first and second floor and the uniformly spaced, raised single courses of brick spanning the distance between the stone band and grade. Each unit includes an inset porch and with a wood classical entry door surround. The roof is flat with a brick parapet which is covered on the façade with a non-historic, but compatibly designed cornice.



Above: Front entrance of 1639 Leverette. Star denotes window proposed for replacement with egress unit.
Above right: Google map aerial view of townhouse development and 1639 Leverette.
Right: View of townhouses looking southwest HDC staff photos, November 1, 2024.

PROPOSAL

- Remove existing at-grade/basement window and replace it with an egress window unit and window well.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Corktown Historic District was established in 1984.
- The Commission reviewed and approved work at this building at its April 2021 meeting (21-7194, 1627(1627-1639) Leverette). Work approved at the front elevation included replacement windows, replacement cornice, and new entrance porches/stairs/wingwalls.

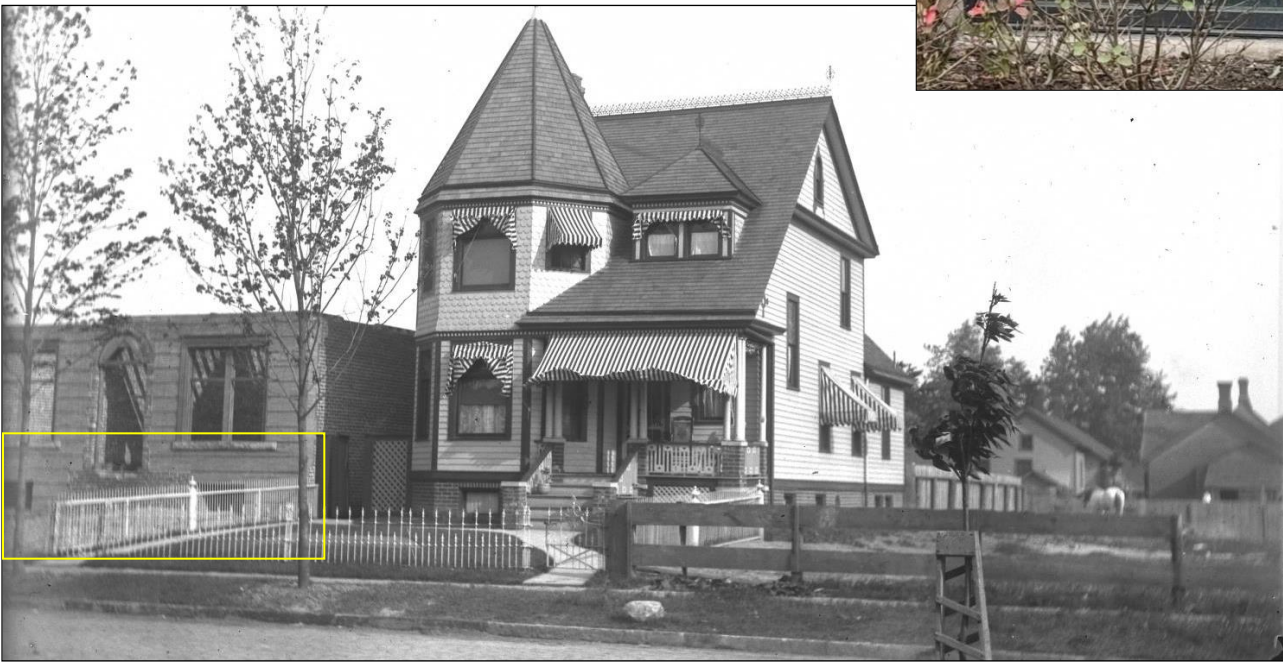


Existing conditions. Staff photo, November 1, 2024. Location of window.

- The location of the window is to the immediate right of the townhouse’s entrance. It is staff’s opinion the basement windows are minimal, utilitarian features on the façade. They are only visible when viewing the building straight on, unlike the detailed openings and features at the first and second floors and roofline. Additionally, the basement openings have concrete surrounds, which is a sharp contrast to the opulent details of the dominant features of the façade.
- The applicant states the need for the egress window is so a lower level bedroom can be constructed, and that the location of the interior stairs to the first floor precludes the possibility of locating the bedroom near the back of the building.

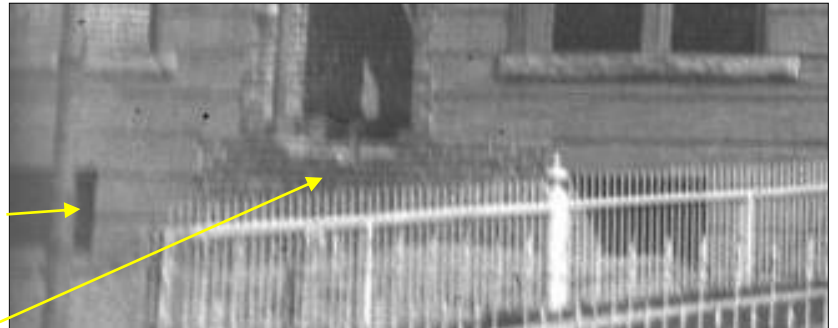


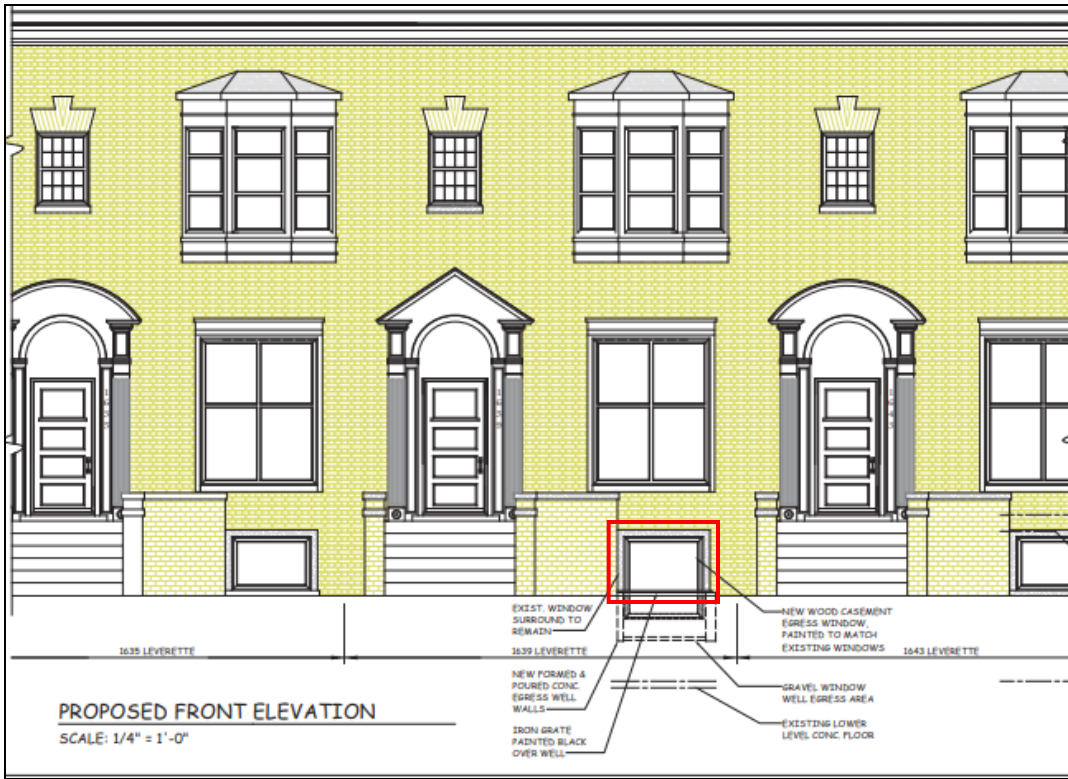
*HDC staff photos,
November 1, 2024.*



Above: This photo from the Burton Collection, dated 1895, shows the western end of the townhouse building in its early stage of construction.

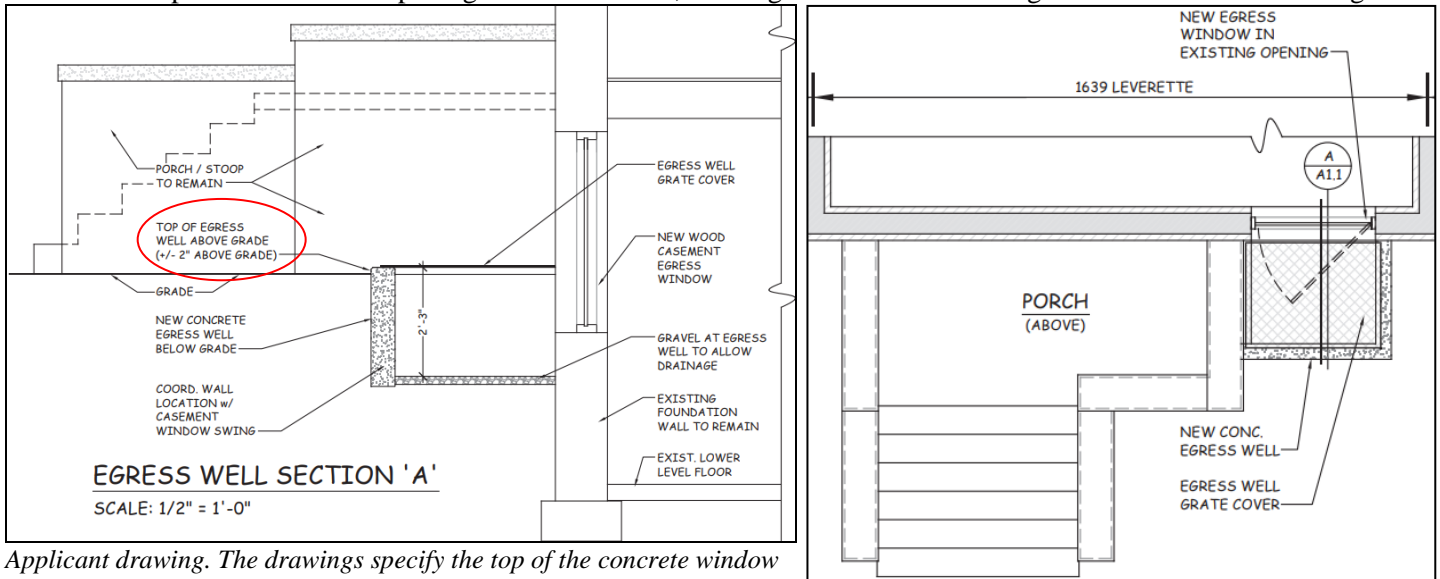
Right: The enlarged portion of the above photo is a bit grainy, however it appears to staff that the basement window openings originally did not have casings, which is very common for openings in masonry-clad structures. You can also see, by the use of common brick, the planned placement of the entry porches.





Applicant drawing

- This applicant's elevation drawing shows the proposed window opening will retain the width and height of the existing opening; the additional height of the egress window will be below grade. The existing window surround at the top and sides of the opening will also remain, offering minimal visual change to the wall of the building.



Applicant drawing. The drawings specify the top of the concrete window well walls will not exceed two inches above grade.



Location of proposed egress window/window well. Staff photo, November 1, 2024.



View of recessed yard areas at the eastern end of the townhouse building that have additional landscaping that further obscures the basement windows.



This view looking southwest shows how the basement windows are minimally visible from the dominant angles that pedestrians and automotive traffic will view the building. Staff photo, November 1, 2024.



View looking southeast. Window opening that is proposed to be altered for an egress window. Staff photo, November 1, 2024.

ISSUES

- A landscape plan wasn't submitted to show how the existing plantings will be moved, or if new landscaping elements will be planted to mitigate the window well.

RECOMMENDATIONSection 21-2-78, Determination of Historic District Commission

Staff recommends that the proposed work will not alter the features and spaces that characterize the property and therefore should qualify for a Certificate of Appropriateness, as it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and the Corktown Local Historic District's Elements of Design.

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

- A landscape plan will be submitted for staff review and will show how the existing plantings will be moved and/or additional landscaping elements will be planted to visually mitigate the window well.