

MINUTES**DETROIT HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING**

August 13, 2025

*Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, Suite 808***I CALL TO ORDER****Vice Chair Machielse called the meeting to order at 4:48 p.m.****II ROLL CALL**

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION		PRESENT	ABSENT
Tiffany Franklin	Chair		X
James Hamilton (arrived at 4:50 pm)	Commissioner	X	
Marcus King	Commissioner	X	
Alan Machielse	Vice Chair	X	
William Marquez	Commissioner	X	
Adrea Simmons	Commissioner	X	
Katy Trudeau (arrived at 5:15 pm)	Commissioner	X	
STAFF			
Audra Dye	PDD	X	
Garrick Landsberg (Director)	PDD	X	
Jennifer Ross	PDD		X
Lise Saint James		X	
Bilqees Salie		X	
Ellen Thackery		X	

III APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**ACTION**Commissioner King moved that the agenda be approved.Commissioner Simmons: SUPPORTCommissioner Franklin: Not PresentCommissioner Hamilton: AYECommissioner King: AYECommissioner Machielse: AYECommissioner Marquez: AYECommissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED**IV APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES****ACTION**Commissioner Simmons moved to approve the February 2025 HDC Regular Meeting minutesCommissioner Hamilton: SUPPORTCommissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner King: AYE
Commissioner Machielse: AYE
Commissioner Marquez: AYE
Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED

V REPORTS

None

VI APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS SUBJECT TO CONSENT AGENDA

None

VII POSTPONED APPLICATIONS

None

VIII EFFECTS OF CITY OR CITY-ASSISTED PROJECTS (ADVISORY DETERMINATIONS)

None

IX APPLICATIONS SUBJECT TO PUBLIC HEARING

- A. 301-321 Edmund Place—HDC2025-00393—Brush Park HD—GL—Erect mixed-use building with accessory parking lot**

Director Landsberg presented staff report.

Applicant Reid Mauti present online and sworn in. Applicant team member Nevan Shokar also present online.

Public Comments:

Manuel Montes, 228 Edmund Place, supports project.

No more public comments online or in room.

Chair closed Public Hearing at 4:58 pm.

Mr. Mauti described how the applicant team has been working toward meeting staff-recommended conditions for approval. Added a horizontal mullion to a window. Also incorporating a thin-profile overhang/canopy to ground-floor commercial spaces to differentiate them from ground-floor residences.

ACTION

Commissioner King moved: having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00393 for 301-321 Edmund Place**, and having duly considered the appropriateness thereof pursuant to Chapter 21 Article II of the 2019 Detroit City Code, and MCL 399.205 of the Local Historic Districts Act, the Commission determines the proposed application WILL BE APPROPRIATE according to the standards of review set forth in the state and local legislation, and therefore ISSUES a CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS for the proposed work.

The Certificate of Appropriateness is issued with the following condition:

- The design be further developed by incorporating smaller scale texture and detail, including but not limited to subdivision of the large undivided windows. Upon receipt of an updated design, staff may approve the revisions for permit if consistent with the Elements of Design and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, or return the design to the Commission for further review if necessary.

Commissioner Simmons: SUPPORT

Director Landsberg sought clarification about condition—is commission satisfied that condition is being met? They are. That condition can be removed from the motion.

ACTION

Commissioner King revised his motion to remove that condition.

Commissioner Simmons still SUPPORTED.

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner King: AYE

Commissioner Machielse: AYE

Commissioner Marquez: AYE

Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED

B. 1516-1524 Vinewood—HDC202500453—Hubbard Farms HD—GL—Construct accessory parking lot serving existing historic building at 1516 Vinewood

Staff report presented.

Applicant Devon Caldwell present online. Sworn in. Appreciates staff's work and deep research. Has a new site plan with hydrangeas. Has 15 support letters from community supporting a surface parking lot.

Opened public hearing at 5:10 pm.

Theresa Zajac, immediate neighbor. Project reflects community's feedback. Is fine with hydrangeas. If commission has requested a tree, she is fine with that as well if there is room.

No more comments. Public Hearing closed.

ACTION

Commissioner Marquez moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00453 for 1516-1524 Vinewood**, and having duly considered the appropriateness thereof pursuant to Chapter 21 Article II of the 2019 Detroit City Code, and MCL 399.205 of the Local Historic Districts Act, the Commission determines the proposed application WILL BE APPROPRIATE according to the standards of review set forth in the state and local legislation, and therefore ISSUES a CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS for the proposed work.

The Certificate of Appropriateness is issued with the following conditions:

- A landscape buffer be added to the site plan prior to permit approval, screening the parking at least partially from Vinewood, with hydrangeas
- A trash enclosure structure may be approved by staff if added to the design

- A tree may be added as well.

Commissioner King: SUPPORT.

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner King: AYE

Commissioner Machielse: AYE

Commissioner Marquez: AYE

Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0

MOTION CARRIED

X CITY PROJECTS SUBJECT TO PUBLIC HEARING

2733 Second—Application HDC2025-00489—Cass Park Local Historic District—AD—Rehabilitate park

Staff report presented. [Commissioner Trudeau arrived.] Park has a high degree of integrity as per National Register criteria. Staff finds that the proposed work would not meet the Standards.

Applicants present online and sworn in: Juliana Fulton, Deputy Director, Parks Planner; Jeff Klein, Deputy Chief, Landscape Architecture; Rayshaun Landrum, Landscape Architect.

Public Comment:

Francis Grunow, Chinatown Vision Committee, has participated in several meetings facilitated by Parks Department. Seems like the plan's intention and circulation plan is in keeping with the original intention, he is generally in support of the plan, and looks forward to the park having investment, which it hasn't had in many years.

Manuel Montes, resident of Brush Park, a president of board at City Modern, that organization supports.

No more comments. Public hearing closed.

Applicant appreciates staff's work and research and has highest respect for staff, but disagrees on this particular recommendation. Their team is tasked with honoring the park's historic nature but also tasked with making sure it meets park users' needs. Focus on walks, removing invasive and unhealthy trees, planting more trees, reintroducing play elements, picnic tables, and benches, and replacing fitness equipment. Process included extensive community engagement. Presented historic plans and features and historic features they propose to bring back and how the entrances have changed. Mounds and asphalt. Deteriorated surfaces and not ADA accessible. This plan has corner entrances that converge at central node, mid-block entrances, keeps some historic feel but needs to serve modern uses, more green spaces is desired. Concerns were focused on vistas and symmetry. Team feels they are restoring the vista because the existing mound blocks it, and right-of-way trees would be added. Asymmetry: felt that the true symmetry limited use. Proposed is not symmetry but balance. Curvilinear paths are from the 1860 plan. There is space at the center of the park for a fountain, but that's beyond current scope and budget. Their job is to create spaces the public will use and enjoy. Their community engagement process engaged with many groups, including the PTSA at Cass Tech, Robert Burns Club, Food Distribution Club that

distributes food in the park every two weeks, Masonic Temple, Olympia Development, neighboring apartment building residents, and others. A lawn area was determined to be needed.

Discussion. Commissioner requested clarification regarding period of significance. How does the historic layout limit modern uses, vs existing layout of park? Modern users want to have space for play, plays, active uses. Current plan has the least area for open areas for play. Tried to clarify how much of the plans were ever built.

Director Landsberg clarified: there is no expectation that the 19th-century plan be restored. Instead, commission should identify historic features that still exist, and if those features are distinctive and important, those features should be protected in the rehabilitation. There was the Grand Circus Park redesign a couple years ago, which was a radical transformation. Here, the City Code states that Cass Park is highly symmetrical in nature with eight sidewalks converging on the center of the park from each corner and from the center of each of its four sides. This relationship is considered a significant feature of the park, written nine years ago by HDAB.

Commissioner doesn't see those historic features in this proposed plan. Missing the historic axial relationship—the central convening in the middle, a terminus—seems to be missing. The curved paths seem to serve the same purpose as the historic straight paths. He doesn't see the evidence of the diagram of the original park.

Considering the current state of the park, it is far from the historic plan and there are needs expressed that community members have engaged with. Commissioner considering the groups who have engaged. Letters of support? Has there been observations of park use? People looking for an efficient path through (like Masonic Temple or Little Caesars Arena) vs recreational users. Would like more info re people who use the park. There are two nearby apartment buildings—do those residents use the park? Commissioner asks if the changes are appropriate—this change is dramatic. Are the proposed changes consistent with the historic design and features of the park? Commissioner wonders if the needs of the park have shifted enough that a Notice to Proceed is in order. There must be enough evidence to support a Notice to Proceed. The north/south axis having been moved from center is one commissioner's biggest challenges; other commissioner agrees and says that the other challenge is the absence of a true converging/central gathering space. Commissioner would like to see more data—more evidence of participant observation and use that would justify the redesign. These new proposed spaces could bring more use and more traffic and more users, and this commissioner would like to see that these aspects have been considered. Commissioner would like to see an analysis of how the spaces have changed around the park. Changes in use around the park could perhaps justify a redesign of the park.

Applicant thinks that the proposed design provides a nicer experience of moving through the space and is softer, even though it would still be efficient. Still guided toward the center. Mounds gone. Lawn and clear view/site line to lawn. The openness would speak to the promenade—prioritizes the view. He thinks the view is better if you can get alongside the Burns statue instead of coming up to the rear of it. Also, applicant thinks students are important users—dropoff and pickup times are busy. Also want to accommodate the food distribution and keep heavy trucks out of the center of the park.

ACTION

Commissioner Marquez moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00489 for 2733 Second**, and having duly considered the appropriateness thereof pursuant to Chapter 21 Article II of the 2019 Detroit City Code, and MCL 399.205 of the Local Historic Districts Act, the Commission determines the proposed rehabilitation of the park and revision of its internal path layout WILL NOT BE

APPROPRIATE according to the standards of review set forth in the state and local legislation, and therefore ISSUES a DENIAL,

as the proposed work fails to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, specifically Standards:

- 1) *A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.*
- 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.*

And

Elements of Design # 20 and 21.

For the following reasons:

- The new design will remove the historic circulation patterns, including the central axis and placement of the historic paths and their relationship to the central open space, thus altering the features and spaces that characterize the property.
- The applicant has not demonstrated that a park design that is compatible with the existing circulation pattern cannot meet the interests and potential uses listed within the public engagement document.

Commissioner King: SUPPORT

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner King: AYE

Commissioner Machielse: AYE

Commissioner Marquez: NAY

Commissioner Simmons: ABSTAINS

Commissioner Trudeau: NAY

Ayes: 3 Nays: 2 Abstention: 1

MOTION FAILED

Commissioner Marquez thinks the Second Ave alignment with a path is character-defining. If there could be an homage to the historic plan, he could get on board.

[Discussion about procedure.] Commissioner thinks the cleanest procedure is to deny with the understanding that they could bring back a design that retains that central north/south axial path because that seems to be a main sticking point. Commissioner agrees that this project is too complex for an approval with conditions. Thinks the applicant should come back with a revised design.

ACTION

Commissioner Simmons moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00489 for 2733 Second**, and having duly considered the appropriateness thereof pursuant to Chapter 21 Article II of the 2019 Detroit City Code, and MCL 399.205 of the Local Historic Districts Act, the Commission determines the proposed rehabilitation of the park and revision of its internal path layout WILL NOT BE APPROPRIATE according to the standards of review set forth in the state and local legislation, and therefore ISSUES a DENIAL,

as the proposed work fails to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, specifically Standards:

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- The applicant has not demonstrated that a park design that is compatible with the existing circulation pattern cannot meet the interests and potential uses listed within the public engagement document.

Commissioner King: SUPPORT

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner King: AYE

Commissioner Machielse: AYE

Commissioner Marquez: AYE

Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Commissioner Trudeau: NAY

Ayes: 5 Nays: 1

MOTION PASSED

ACTION

Commissioner Simmons moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00489 for 2733 Second**, and having duly considered the appropriateness thereof pursuant to Chapter 21 Article II of the 2019 Detroit City Code, and MCL 399.205 of the Local Historic Districts Act, the Commission determines the proposed sign WILL BE APPROPRIATE according to the standards of review set forth in the state and local legislation, and therefore ISSUES a CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS for the proposed work.

The Certificate of Appropriateness is issued with the following conditions:

- Specifications for the sign including size, material, post(s) and placement be submitted for staff review.

Commissioner Hamilton: SUPPORT

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner King: AYE

Commissioner Machielse: AYE

Commissioner Marquez: AYE

Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Commissioner Trudeau: AYE

Ayes: 6 Nays: 0

MOTION PASSED

Chair thanks the applicant and hopes that they have gotten enough feedback to make some revisions and bring it back; the commission looks forward to seeing the plan again.

XI PUBLIC COMMENT

None

XII APPLICATIONS NOT SUBJECT TO PUBLIC HEARING

A. 2255 Oakman—HDC2025-00391—Oakman Boulevard HD--Replace vinyl windows

Applicant Brett Mahaffey, contractor, Renewal by Andersen
Homeowner Charles H. Smith. Both sworn in. Mr. Smith was the president of the neighborhood association and helped to persuade the neighborhood to support the local historic district designation. Discussion: Has lived here since 1955. Chair thanked Mr. Smith for his dedication to the city and the neighborhood and for keeping it vital and stable. Wood windows were replaced before designation with vinyl. Now seeks to replace vinyl with Fibrex composite, but wants the grilles between the glass. Are Fibrex compatible in this case? Director Landsberg clarified that since current windows are vinyl, Fibrex is a compatible material. It would not be compatible for wood windows. Commission's challenge is that the grilles need to be permanently adhered to the exterior to create the shadow lines historic windows have. Chair also asked about the glazing. Mr. Mahaffey brought samples. Old single-pane glass had no UV coatings, but manufacturers now have a tint to meet energy code. The commission needs the least amount of tint possible. A commissioner explains that the windows chosen now will serve as the prototype for the rest of the vinyl windows as they fail. There are no historic remaining windows here so a compatible window could be the Fibrex. Homeowner, however, wants the in-between glass grilles so the windows on the house are all consistent; he thinks having two kinds of windows on the house will hurt the house's value. Commissioners say that the windows need to move toward the grilles adhered to the exterior.

[Commissioner Simmons left meeting, 6:45 pm]

Commissioner Marquez moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00391 for 2255 Oakman**, and having duly considered the appropriateness thereof pursuant to Chapter 21 Article II of the 2019 Detroit City Code, and MCL 399.205 of the Local Historic Districts Act, the Commission determines the proposed application WILL NOT BE APPROPRIATE according to the standards of review set forth in the state and local legislation, and therefore ISSUES a DENIAL,

as the proposed work fails to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, specifically Standards:

- 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.*

For the following reasons:

- Installing replacement windows with between-the-glass grilles, which have a flat profile and are obscured by the sheen of the outer glass, do not match the profile/dimensionality and appearance

of true divided-light historic windows and are not consistent with the general characteristics of a historic window of the type and period and are not compatible with the overall historic character of the building.

- The transparency of the selected SmartSun glass is in question, but did review samples, and Commission agreed that the first one (the clearer one) is more appropriate.

Commissioner Hamilton: SUPPORT

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner King: AYE

Commissioner Machielse: AYE

Commissioner Marquez: AYE

Commissioner Simmons: ABSENT

Commissioner Trudeau: AYE

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0

MOTION PASSED

Chair encouraged the homeowner and applicant to continue to work with staff.

B. 1950 Trumbull—HDC2025-00427—Corktown HD--install solar panels

Applicant Emily Prehoda of Solar Faithful online, Bob Chapman, church representative, in person. Both sworn in.

Ms Prehoda explained that Solar Faithful helps faith-based organizations participate in the energy transition. Explained that they seek to preserve church's historic features but also allow the church to save on energy spending. Solar Faithful finds that congregations grow after solar panels have been installed and the savings realized after the solar installation allows them to better serve the community and accomplish the mission.

Mr Chapman explained that the Church wants to be on that corner. They've had offers but they want to stay there and be there, contributing to the neighborhood. He explained that for the church, this is more than economic—this is also environmental justice. The church is next to the most polluted zip code in Michigan. They seek to cut the carbon footprint and preserve the historic building. He believes the Guidelines has enough flexibility to allow the south-side panels as well. Applicant also wants to state that there are a lot of things that have happened in the neighborhood that are more egregious to historic character than solar panels.

Discussion: Commissioner doesn't see that the proposed locations are compatible with the church. Commissioner asks whether the new proposed installation will power the church in full. It will, and they will add a battery. Church is seeking to become a resiliency hub to serve the community through power outages. Are the panels on racks? They are, and the racks are attached to the roofs.

The designation of becoming a resiliency hub is in progress. Church was invited by the City to convene with other organizations to coordinate on their services they could offer during outages.

Is the array proposed sufficient to power what's needed? Applicants say yes—they have made many other modifications to the building to make them as efficient as possible, so these, along with their existing panels, are sufficient to power what they need.

ACTION

Commissioner Marquez moved:

Pursuant to the Act, an application for inappropriate work adversely affecting the exterior appearance of a resource, which work cannot be granted a certificate of appropriateness, shall be permitted by the Historic District Commission through the issuance of a notice to proceed if any of the following conditions prevail and if the Historic District Commission finds that the work is necessary to substantially improve or correct any of these conditions:

- (2) The resource is a deterrent to a major improvement program that will be of substantial benefit to the community. Substantial benefit shall be found only if the applicant proposing the work has obtained all necessary planning and zoning approvals, financing, and environmental clearances, and the improvement program is otherwise feasible;

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00427 for 1950 Trumbull**, and having duly considered the appropriateness thereof pursuant to Chapter 21 Article II of the 2019 Detroit City Code, and MCL 399.205 of the Local Historic Districts Act, the Commission determines the installation of solar panels on the roofs of the one-story bays between the buttresses on the church's south side WILL NOT BE APPROPRIATE according to the standards of review set forth in the state and local legislation, and therefore ISSUES a NOTICE TO PROCEED for the work proposed.

The Commission's reason for the notice to proceed is that:

- This resource will be a deterrent to a major public improvement program that will be of substantial benefit to the community. Substantial benefit shall be found only if the applicant proposing the work has obtained all necessary planning and zoning approvals, financing, and environmental clearances, and the improvement program is otherwise feasible.

Commissioner asks if the applicant has these other approvals and clearances. They don't have them yet.

Chair asks if there is support.

Commissioner Trudeau: SUPPORT.

Commissioner Hamilton: NAY

Commissioner King: AYE

Commissioner Machielse: NAY

Commissioner Marquez: AYE

Commissioner Trudeau: AYE

Ayes: 3 Nays: 2

MOTION PASSED

ACTION

Commissioner Marquez moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00427 for 1950 Trumbull**, and having duly considered the appropriateness thereof pursuant to Chapter 21 Article II of the 2019 Detroit City Code, and MCL 399.205 of the Local Historic Districts Act, the Commission determines the installation of 18 solar panels on the sloped and flat roofs at the southeast corner of the building WILL BE APPROPRIATE according to the standards of review set forth in the state and local legislation, and therefore ISSUES a CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS for the proposed work.

Commissioner Trudeau: SUPPORT

Commissioners

Hamilton: Nay

King: AYE

Machielse: AYE

Marquez: AYE

Trudeau: AYE

AYES: 4 NAYS: 1

MOTION PASSED

C) 1155 CLARK—HDC2025-00439—HUBBARD FARMS HD—Replace windows

Applicant: Anthony Kaled present. Sworn in.

Applicant is a co-owner with the homeowner who purchased it at auction in 2011. Mr. Kaled came on in 2015-2016. The home has been very altered over time—started out as four units and got denser and denser. By the time they purchased, many of the utilities didn't work and heating was happening by gas stoves. They have a lot of work ahead of them. Existing vinyl windows are cheap and deficient. Around 60 windows are in the building, three wood windows, not counting the attic windows. Front attic windows hinge inward and are in bad condition with significant rot. Most windows don't operate in most cases. 5 windows on house are wood; all others are vinyl. Of those 5 wood, two attic windows are in rough shape with plastic glazing, and three are wood double-hungs. They really need to save for the rebuilding of the front porch—it is in bad condition and big. Commissioner states that the chosen window selected will set the tone for the others to replace afterward. The new windows need to be compatible. Materiality, design matter. The windows on side are simple one-over-ones. Director Landsberg points out that the National Park Service guides the commission's work and there is a publication that will tell you what kinds of windows could be compatible replacements.

ACTION

Commissioner King moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00439 for 1155 Clark**, and having duly considered the appropriateness thereof pursuant to Chapter 21 Article II of the 2019 Detroit City Code, and MCL 399.205 of the Local Historic Districts Act, the Commission determines the proposed application WILL NOT BE APPROPRIATE according to the standards of review set forth in the state and local legislation, and therefore ISSUES a DENIAL,

as the proposed work fails to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, specifically 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.*
- 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.*

For the following reasons:

- The wood windows proposed for replacement are distinctive, character-defining features of the property.
- The current application does not provide documentation of each window proposed for replacement that demonstrates that they are deteriorated beyond repair.
- The existing historic windows proposed for replacement should therefore be retained and repaired in kind, where necessary.
- The proposed vinyl windows are not compatible with the building's historic materials, features, and proportions, even as replacements for the existing non-historic vinyl windows. Because of limits of fabrication and material, vinyl windows are not appropriate for historic districts.
 - Vinyl windows are poly-products that offer a plasticity and flat/thick appearance that does not adequately match the profile/dimensionality and appearance of historic windows, such as wood.
 - Consumer-grade vinyl windows weather poorly, deteriorate rapidly, and exhibit poor detailing and detracting color/sheen.
 - The framing material, glazing, and seals of vinyl windows break down more quickly in ultraviolet light than higher quality materials, introducing condensation and other degradation to the insulated glass unit in a few years' time.
 - Vinyl also lacks rigidity and can expand and contract more than wood and steel during exposure to weather. This can result in discoloration and warping of the frames and failure of window elements.
 - For these reasons, and because vinyl windows fail to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Sustainability, vinyl windows are not compatible with historic buildings and they don't protect the integrity of the property or its environment.

Commissioner Hamilton: SUPPORT.

Commissioners

Hamilton: AYE

King: AYE

Machielse: AYE

Marquez: AYE

Trudeau: AYE

AYES: 5 NAYS: 0

MOTION PASSED

C. 8715 Woodward—HDC2025-00113—St John C.M.E. Church HD—Replace historic wood & steel windows

Applicant not present.

Discussion regarding incompatibility of the proposed vinyl. Some of the steel windows look like they are in poor condition. Some of the windows, however, look like they are in good, repairable condition. The

windows on the front all need to relate to each other because they are on the front, close together, and of similar appearance/design.

ACTION

Commissioner Hamilton moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00113 for 8715 Woodward**, and having duly considered the appropriateness thereof pursuant to Chapter 21 Article II of the 2019 Detroit City Code, and MCL 399.205 of the Local Historic Districts Act, the Commission determines the proposed application WILL NOT BE APPROPRIATE according to the standards of review set forth in the state and local legislation, and therefore ISSUES a DENIAL,

as the proposed work fails to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, specifically 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.*

And

Elements of Design # 7 & 10

For the following reasons:

- The historic leaded glass, wood and steel casement windows are distinctive, character-defining features with the leaded glass, wood windows not proven to be beyond repair.
- Though the existing historic steel windows appear to be deteriorated beyond feasible repair, the proposed windows are not in-kind matches to the historic windows at this property.
- Due to limitations in material quality and fabrication, vinyl windows are not appropriate for use in historic districts.

Commissioner Marquez: SUPPORT

Commissioners:

Hamilton: AYE

King: AYE

Machielse: AYE

Marquez: AYE

Trudeau: AYE

MOTION PASSED.

D. 1485 Burns—HDC2025-00418—Indian Village HD—Replace storm window with casement windows

Applicant:

Kati Willemse, contractor rep, present online.

Thomas O'Hara, contractor, present online. Both sworn in.

Discussion:

Casement window proposed to serve as a storm window. Proposal is to make this window on back of house consistent with other windows on the back. Proposal is to install a vinyl casement but it would be painted to match. The historic windows would stay.

Commissioner confused as to why a vinyl casement is being proposed to use as a storm. There is an existing storm window. Is that storm window wood or aluminum? Is that work that's been done compatible? Vinyl is not typically approved. There is not enough information here to fully understand the proposal. Commissioners agree that they need to see a drawing or a section that shows how the windows work together and fit in the opening.

ACTION

Commissioner King moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00418 for 1485 Burns**, and having duly considered the appropriateness thereof pursuant to Chapter 21 Article II of the 2019 Detroit City Code, and MCL 399.205 of the Local Historic Districts Act, the Commission determines the proposed application WILL NOT BE APPROPRIATE according to the standards of review set forth in the state and local legislation, and therefore ISSUES a DENIAL,

as the proposed work fails to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, specifically Standard:

- 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.*

And

Elements of Design # 7

For the following reasons:

- A vinyl casement window is not a compatible replacement for an aluminum storm window or whatever storm window exists.
 - Vinyl windows and poly-products offer a plasticity and flat/thick appearance that does not adequately match the profile/dimensionality and appearance of historic windows, such as wood.
 - Consumer-grade vinyl windows weather poorly, deteriorate rapidly and exhibit poor detailing and detracting "bright white" color/sheen.
- There is no historic precedent for installation of another full window outbound of an existing historic window. Either a compatible replacement storm window should be considered, or, if the applicant would like the Commission to consider a second, full window outbound of the original window, that the applicant come forward with adequate detailing and information for Commission to evaluate that condition.

Commissioner Hamilton: SUPPORT.

Commissioners:

Hamilton: AYE

King: AYE

Machielse: AYE

Marquez: AYE

Trudeau: AYE

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0

MOTION PASSED.

Chair encourages the applicants to continue to work with staff regarding compatibility and they will look for another application in the future.

E. 3290 Sherbourne—HDC2025-00458—Sherwood Forest HD—Landscaping

Applicant Chris Mueller, landscape architect, present in person, sworn in.

Two main points regarding staff report:

Staff report indicates that lawn is a character-defining feature of “all” properties in the district.

Elements of Design mention generally covered with turf, but there is variation--would not have been on all properties. It is his opinion that there would not have been universal lawns—there appears to have been a variety of plantings at the time of the designation.

Submitted plan generally is to cover lawn area with plants that mimic lawn; consistent with appearance of a traditional lawn. The proposed is a uniform green lawn, just with sustainable plants. This is also in line with environmental stewardship. These plants were selected because of their lawn-like appearance—the result of this would not be a “garden.”

The visual character proposed is substantially equivalent to a lawn of traditional turf grass.

Discussion: How tall do these species get? All 6-12” range and that includes the occasional see spike. Color, texture is equivalent to a traditional lawn. These are selected be no-mow species.

This house does have a lawn. Could some portion of the front lawn be no-mow? To have a lawn that is broken by this longer grass in the center would not be aesthetically pleasing.

House has a sophisticated style; plantings should reflect that.

What is driving replacement of lawn? The client does not want to maintain a lawn, habitat and bird enthusiast, reduce chemical inputs.

Commissioner understands desire; searched for examples. Landscape architect expects plants to fill in to create a green carpet—the variety of species selected is to ensure success, not a varied appearance. Commissioner found some samples and thinks it looks shaggy and like a lowland forest, similar to the Sherwood Forest name—Pennsylvania sedge looks like a forest groundcover.

ACTION

Commissioner Hamilton moved that:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00458 for 3290 Sherbourne**, and having duly considered the appropriateness thereof pursuant to Chapter 21 Article II of the 2019 Detroit City Code, and MCL 399.205 of the Local Historic Districts Act, the Commission determines the installation of a “no-mow lawn” WILL NOT BE APPROPRIATE according to the standards of review set forth in the state and local legislation, and therefore ISSUES a DENIAL,

as the proposed work fails to meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards, specifically 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.*

- 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.*

And

Elements of Design #13

For the following reasons:

- The front lawn is a distinctive, character-defining feature, as there is no evidence confirming that front yards weren't primarily lawns at the district's period of significance. Removing it in its entirety is inconsistent with the district's protected character.

Commissioner King: SUPPORT

Commissioners:

Hamilton: Aye

King: Aye

Machielse: Aye

Marquez: Nay

Trudeau: Nay

MOTION FAILED.

Commissioner thinks the appearance looks comparable to a front lawn; offers a sustainable solution that is in keeping with the fabric of the neighborhood, seemed interchangeable with a standard lawn and not equivalent to a garden—once it grows in, it will appear like a lawn.

Commissioner wanted clarification about the fully grown-out planting—will it look like a continuous lawn or individual plants? Commissioner agrees—wants clarification on this installation. How long til a continuous carpet? 1800 plants + seed whole area. Individual plants close plus overseed—install this fall and by early next year is that it would be quite dense. Avoiding a visible mulch bed—seeks 100% coverage. Photos in application perhaps misleading because they'd seek a green carpet. The images in the application are misleading to commissioner; text and discussion has helped.

How about neighborhood context? This would stand out. Commissioner thinks if they're well maintained, they look good. Director explains that staff researched and tried to find evidence that Sherwood Forest wasn't always neat lawns but couldn't find that evidence. Staff commented that Sherwood Forest was very intentional about winding roads, not grid, and it doesn't feel as rigid as other historic districts do. Commissioner noted that this neighborhood does have curbs, however, unlike, say, Palmer Woods. Commissioner thinks the intentionality of the sedges to take over whole lawn is key—he wants to make sure that happens, so a certain amount of coverage within a time period seems appropriate, depending on the applicant's intention.

ACTION

Commissioner King moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00458 for 3290 Sherbourne**, and having duly considered the appropriateness thereof pursuant to Chapter 21 Article II of the 2019 Detroit City Code, and MCL 399.205 of the Local Historic Districts Act, the Commission

determines the work WILL BE APPROPRIATE according to the standards of review set forth in the state and local legislation, and therefore ISSUES a CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS.

This approval is subject to the following condition:

- That the vegetation identified in the no-mow lawn fills the entire identified area of growth within a 12-month period from planting.

Commissioner Marquez: SUPPORT

Commissioners

Hamilton: Aye

King: Aye

Machielse: Aye

Marquez: Aye

Trudeau: Aye

MOTION PASSED.

F. 2200 Chicago—HDC2025-00422—Boston-Edison HD—Erect fence.

Applicant Mario Moore present on Zoom and sworn in.

Applicant explains that he and his wife are from Detroit and moved away for a while but wanted to come back home. Always want to get work approved by the Commission. They got their porch work approved, for example. Their car was broken into two years ago. They need to remove the bushes to install the fence, but they'll replant bushes for privacy. They still want privacy, which is why they have selected a different gate from the fence. The fence will be replanted with bushes for privacy but the fence if it was the aluminum gate would still be transparent. Regarding the window, previous owner installed it. Current owner doesn't know if it was vinyl or composite. Staff flagged this window as part of the site visit.

Discussion: the majority of fence is aluminum. Little walk gate—could a black metal gate be found that could provide privacy? Maybe a panel insert that provides some screening. Commission seeks a cohesive material.

Homeowner asked if he could have the fence company do an aluminum gate that matches the rest of the fence and then he could work on modifying it/adding a privacy panel etc in the future. Commission agreed that he could do that.

ACTION

Commissioner King moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00422 for 2200 Chicago**, and having duly considered the appropriateness thereof pursuant to Chapter 21 Article II of the 2019 Detroit City Code, and MCL 399.205 of the Local Historic Districts Act, the Commission determines the installation of the vinyl window WILL NOT BE APPROPRIATE according to the standards of review set forth in the state and local legislation, and therefore ISSUES a DENIAL,

as the proposed work fails to meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, specifically 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.*
- 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.*

And

Elements of Design #7

For the following reasons:

- The original wood windows over the porch were a distinctive, character-defining feature and were replaced without documentation confirming that they were beyond feasible repair, as required by Secretary of the Interior Standards #5 and #6. As such, it should be restored to its pre-violation condition, that of a true wood window with simulated (or true) divided lites.
- Even if proved to be beyond feasible repair, the window, per NPS Standards (#6) and related Guidelines, may only be replaced by a window that "shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials." Vinyl windows are not good matches for historic prototypes.
 - Vinyl windows are poly-products and offer a plasticity and flat/thick appearance that does not adequately match the profile/dimensionality and appearance of historic windows, such as wood
 - Consumer-grade vinyl windows weather poorly, deteriorate rapidly and exhibit poor detailing and detracting "bright white" color/sheen.
 - The framing material, glazing, and seals break down more quickly in ultraviolet light than higher quality materials, introducing condensation and other degradation to the insulated glass unit in a few years' time.
 - Vinyl also lacks rigidity and can expand and contract more than wood and steel during exposure to weather. This can result in discoloration and warping of the frames and failure of window elements.
 - Between-the-glass grids, as used in this instance, were not used in the historic era and are not compatible with or convincing matches for an authentic divided lite configuration. At a minimum, simulated divided lites should be specified to preserve the original historic expression.

Commissioner Hamilton: SUPPORTED.

Commissioners:

Hamilton: AYE

King: AYE

Machielse: AYE

Marquez: AYE

Trudeau: AYE

MOTION PASSED.

[Commissioner Machielse appoints Commissioner Hamilton temporary chair and temporarily excuses himself.]

ACTION

Commissioner King moved that:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00422 for 2200 Chicago**, and having duly considered the appropriateness thereof pursuant to Chapter 21 Article II of the 2019 Detroit City Code, and MCL 399.205 of the Local Historic Districts Act, the Commission determines that the remaining work will be appropriate according to the Standards of review set forth in the state and local legislation, and therefore ISSUES a CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS.

The Certificate of Appropriateness is issued with the following conditions:

- A compatible wrought iron-style fence and gate system will be selected instead of a wooden gate;
- Cut sheet confirming all details associated with the wrought iron-style aluminum gate will be submitted for staff review and approval.

Commissioner Trudeau: SUPPORT

Commissioners

Hamilton: Aye

King: Aye

Marquez: Aye

Trudeau: Aye

MOTION PASSED.

G. 4291 Cortland and 4510 Cortland, Russell Woods-Sullivan HD

Applicant: Robert Saxon and Victor Valbuena, present online and sworn in.

[Chair Machielse returns and returns to chair position.]

Discussion: Applicant clarifies that these houses are part of the Rehabbed and Ready program, part of the Detroit Land Bank. Motivations are to stabilize neighborhoods, promote ownership, preserve housing stock, and raise property values around the properties. They spend more than the houses will sell for. Have several houses in the neighborhood. Regarding the front steps at 4510 Cortland, contractor changed design without consulting anyone. Would cost \$12-14,000 to remove and redo. Regarding the railings at both houses, the original railings were removed/stolen, and those originals were a foot shorter. They are concerned that lower balcony railings could be unsafe. Regarding windows, they are committed to doing windows properly to demonstrate how they can be done. At five houses, have spent over \$117,000 on windows and restore wood windows wherever possible. Window here is about \$1600 and they're hoping to reduce the trim and keep it.

Commissioner concern about balcony railing height and proportion. The transparency helps but proportion off. Re steps, redesign seems more durable. Re replacement window, replacement window is aluminum-clad wood windows.

Commission thanked Robert Saxon and team for their hard work subsidizing and preserving these for families. Balcony railings proportion off; lowered with a booster could have worked.

Staff clarified re discrepancies between new building code and Michigan existing buildings code, which has a chapter that allows the building official to allow identified historic features like porch railings to remain at their historic configurations.

ACTION

Commissioner Marquez moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00485 for 4510 Cortland & Application HDC2025-00486 for 4291 Cortland**, and having duly considered the appropriateness thereof pursuant to Chapter 21 Article II of the 2019 Detroit City Code, and MCL 399.205 of the Local Historic Districts Act, the Commission determines the proposed application WILL BE APPROPRIATE according to the standards of review set forth in the state and local legislation, and therefore ISSUES an APPROVAL.

Commissioner Hamilton: SUPPORT.

Commissioners:

Hamilton: Aye

Machielse: Aye

Marquez: Aye

Trudeau: Aye

MOTION PASSED.

XIII CITY PROJECTS NOT SUBJECT TO PUBLIC HEARING

None

XIV OLD BUSINESS

None

XV NEW BUSINESS

Site Plan Review: 1100 St Aubin, adjacent to Lafayette Park/Mies van der Rohe HD

Director clarified that the commission is participating as a member of the site review team and explained project. Reminded which motion style commission would use.

Commissioner noted that the design has a flat-looking façade/lacks dimension, shadow, depth. Even adjacent to a historic district, could have negative effect on historic district. Does it have a demonstrable impact on the district? Applicants in attendance, Anthony Toth and Michael Darga, representing development. Director notes that typically applicants for advisory reviews are not in attendance and do not normally address the commission. Chair acknowledges but encourages applicants to clarify project. They've owned since 2018, have full site plan approval from 2018 but have reduced number of units and density by about half. Have been working with City. This is just a site plan AMENDMENT, not a whole new site plan.

ACTION

Commissioner Trudeau moved that the Commission finds that this proposed project will have a demonstrable effect on the adjacent Lafayette Park Historic District and that such demonstrable effect is likely to be beneficial due to the addition of new residential housing and the rehabilitation of a currently vacant lot.

Commissioner King: SUPPORT.

Commissioners

Hamilton: Aye

King: Aye

Machielse: Aye

Marquez: Aye

MOTION PASSED.

Historic Designation Advisory Board CPA BUILDING HD Ordinance and Designation Report—Advisory Review

Director clarified commission's role—to assess and judge re elements outlined in ordinance. Staff reported. HDAB has already incorporated some of staff's feedback into the Elements of Design.

HDAB staff Lisa DiChiera attended by Zoom and clarified. Entire block is up for sale.

Draft resolution was prepared, and director noted that the bullet points could be eliminated as per the discussion here. The resolution gets sent to Council.

ACTION

Commissioner King moved to adopt Resolution #25-02 concerning the proposed CPA Building Historic District.

Commissioner Marquez: Support.

Commissioners:

Hamilton: Aye

King: Aye

Machielse: Aye

Marquez: Aye

Trudeau: Aye

MOTION PASSED.

XVI ADJOURNMENT

ACTION

Commissioner King moved to adjourn.

Commissioner Hamilton: SUPPORT

MOTION CARRIED

Chairperson Machielse adjourned the meeting at 9:52 p.m.