

**MINUTES****DETROIT HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING**

December 10, 2025

*Coleman A. Young Municipal Center, Suite 808***I CALL TO ORDER****Vice Chair Machielse called the meeting to order at 4:40 p.m.****II ROLL CALL**

<b>HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION</b>		<b>PRESENT</b>	<b>ABSENT</b>
Tiffany Franklin	Chair	X—arrived at 6:00	
James Hamilton	Commissioner	X	
Marcus King	Commissioner	X—arrived at 5:00	
Alan Machielse	Vice Chair	X	
William Marquez	Commissioner	X	
Adrea Simmons	Commissioner	X	
<b>STAFF</b>			
Audra Dye	PDD	X	
Garrick Landsberg (Director)	PDD	X	
Jennifer Ross	PDD	X	
Lise St James	PDD	X	
Bilgees Salie	PDD	X	
Ellen Thackery	PDD	X	

**III APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA**

Staff announced that the application for 3116 Park, Peterboro-Charlotte, was withdrawn.

**ACTION**Commissioner Hamilton moved to approve the agenda.Commissioner Simmons: SUPPORT**ROLL CALL:**Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner Machielse: AYE

Commissioner Marquez: AYE

Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 4 Nays: 0

**MOTION PASSED 4-0****ACTION**Commissioner Hamilton moved to amend the agenda to move the application for 84 Edmund Place to the consent agenda.Commissioner Simmons: SUPPORT

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE  
Commissioner Machielse: AYE  
Commissioner Marquez: AYE  
Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 4 Nays: 0

**MOTION PASSED 4-0**

**ACTION**

Commissioner Hamilton moved to approve the amended agenda.  
Commissioner Simmons: SUPPORT

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE  
Commissioner Machielse: AYE  
Commissioner Marquez: AYE  
Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 4 Nays: 0

**MOTION PASSED 4-0**

**IV APPROVAL OF MEETING MINUTES**

**ACTION**

Commissioner Hamilton moved to approve the November meeting minutes.  
Commissioner Simmons: SUPPORT

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE  
Commissioner Machielse: AYE  
Commissioner Marquez: AYE  
Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 4 Nays: 0

**MOTION PASSED, 4-0**

**V REPORTS**

Director Landsberg shared an annual report.

Approximately 800 applications were submitted for work in historic districts since January 2025. Approximately 250 of those were sent to this body (the Historic District Commission) for review. The remainder were reviewed at the administrative level.

The number of applications has doubled in the few short years he has been here.

All of the applications sent to the Commission and all violations reported to staff are available to the public on the website—a step towards transparency that has been a constant goal.

In 2026, we will continue to advance public knowledge of the operations and work of this commission, including the real-time posting of all administrative approvals, which has been a long-time request of many of our neighborhoods. We have other enhancements planned as well.

We have also turned over 50% of our small staff and onboarded three new preservation planning professionals since spring. We've often struggled to keep up with the volume of work and beg for forgiveness of the public and the commission as necessary, but we will continue to work hard and figure out quicker ways to get applications approved and roll out new processes.

Building better communication and paths to successful permitting will continue to be a priority of the HDC staff as we transition to a new mayoral administration. The Commission was formed in 1978 and over that time has served six different mayors; Mayor-elect Mary Sheffield will be the seventh. The Planning and Development Department keeps good records and the records are full of documents and meeting minutes spanning all these years—slides from the 1970s, public hearing transcripts from the 1980s, and thousands and thousands of applications for every conceivable type of work. Our files reflect the dutiful, unending work that the Commission has achieved. Director Landsberg is hopeful to compile, prior to this Commission's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2028, a complete list of all the citizen commissioners who have served on this body since its establishment. Commissioners have never been paid. They cover their own parking, and are rarely remembered at the other end of the process, when a rehabilitated house is complete, or a new building opens to the public. More often than not, the Commission is seen as a burden, an obstacle. Yet it is these men and women who sit here, who have curated and perhaps in some sense created today's dynamic, progressive, and proud city, as much as any architect or planner. Today, there are nearly 160 local historic districts all across Detroit, together holding more than 10,000 individual properties. So, while our historic districts are not locked in time, and never should be, the management of changes in our districts is the statutory mission and privilege of this body. The Commission's service over the decades has managed that change in service of historic preservation, often in tandem with other municipal and planning goals, including economic development, street activation, and neighborhood revitalization.

There is a vacancy on this Commission. The nomination for the current vacancy, and all subsequent nominations, will come from the mayor's desk, so this nomination will be coming from the new mayor's desk. In other administrations, the planning department has been asked to nominate candidates to the mayor's office. The department will be ready to do that if asked. As such, the Planning Department is interested in hearing from neighborhood associations, stakeholders, and the general public for candidates to be commissioners on this body. Candidates must be citizens of this City, and qualified and interested in public service and historic preservation. Thank you to the Commissioners and staff for the hard work this year.

## **VI APPROVAL OF APPLICATIONS SUBJECT TO CONSENT AGENDA**

### **ACTION**

Commissioner Hamilton moved to approve the application on the consent agenda.

Commissioner Simmons: SUPPORT

Chair clarified that the approval would be subject to any conditions staff recommended in their staff report.

### **ROLL CALL:**

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

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

Ayes: 4 Nays: 0

**MOTION PASSED, 4-0**

## **VII POSTPONED APPLICATIONS**

None

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

None

## **IX SITE PLAN REVIEWS (per Section 50-3-204 of the 2019 Detroit City Code)**

### **655 Willis—SLU2025-00140—Willis-Selden HD—JR**

Staff report.

#### **ACTION**

Commissioner Hamilton moved that no comments be returned in response to HDC involvement in the site plan review for 655 Willis (SLU2025-00140).

Commissioner Simmons : SUPPORTED.

#### **ROLL CALL:**

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE  
Commissioner Machielse: AYE  
Commissioner Marquez: AYE  
Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 4 Nays: 0

**MOTION PASSED, 4-0**

### **1308 Broadway—SLU2025-00112—Breitmeyer-Tobin Building HD—JR**

Staff Report

#### **ACTION**

Commissioner Simmons moved that no comments be returned in response to HDC involvement in Site Plan Review for 1308 Broadway, SLU2025-00112, the Breitmeyer-Tobin Building.  
Commissioner Hamilton: SUPPORT.

#### **ROLL CALL:**

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE  
Commissioner Machielse: AYE  
Commissioner Marquez: AYE

Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 4 Nays: 0

**MOTION PASSED, 4-0**

**9636 and 9602 E Jefferson—SPR2025-00076—within and adjacent to the Berry Subdivision HD—JR**

Staff Report

*[Commissioner King arrived at 5:00 PM.]*

**ACTION**

Commissioner Hamilton moved that the following comments be returned in response to HDC involvement in Site Plan Review for 9636 and 9602 East Jefferson (Site Plan Review 2025-00076):

The proposed project is likely to have a beneficial effect on the Berry Subdivision for reasons of making the Racks Building less monolithic.

Commissioner Marquez: SUPPORT.

**ROLL CALL:**

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner King: ABSTAIN

Commissioner Machielse: AYE

Commissioner Marquez: AYE

Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 4 Nays: 0 with one abstention

**MOTION PASSED, 4-0**

**X APPLICATIONS SUBJECT TO PUBLIC HEARING**

**\*709-729 Seward—HDC2025-00521—New Center HD—JR—Construct parking lot, install fence\***

Staff report.

Applicant Garrity Guenther-Langs, present online, sworn in. Clarified application and responded to staff report. Wants to place gravel on this lot, not asphalt.

Public hearing opened. Stephan Bobalik is a neighbor and stated that this applicant appears to make changes without approval as part of a pattern. He does see an increased need for parking and asks for consideration of fence color, non-glaring, non-polluting light, and appropriate landscaping to screen parking lot from Seward.

*[Discussion about the fence should be in line with the neighboring houses' setback so parking cannot occur in the front yard, lighting, drawings showing asphalt vs applicant's verbal assertion of gravel]*

**ACTION**

Commissioner King moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00521 for 709 – 729 Seward**, 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:

- The applicant shall submit to staff for review and approval a legible site plan of the proposed parking lot that identifies: lighting locations, parking stalls, vegetation, and whether the parking lot is proposed to have a one-way or a two-way drive aisle.
- Also, the applicant shall move the line of the north metal fence in line with the front edge of the two adjacent single-family houses, and the applicant submit the color or stain of the fence to staff for staff review and approval.
- Also, there will be no parking north of the fence, except for the drive aisle access off Seward.

Commissioner Hamilton: SUPPORTED.

Vice Chair Machielse closed the public hearing at 5:45 PM.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner King: AYE

Commissioner Machielse: AYE

Commissioner Marquez: AYE

Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0

**MOTION PASSED, 5-0**

Staff clarified that the commission approved asphalt as per the drawings submitted, and that, north of the fence, the only paved surface is the drive aisle, so the lot at 719 will have a front yard. Commission confirmed.

**899 Edison – HDC2025-00495 – Boston-Edison HD – ET –Demolish two-story rear wing, erect two-story rear wing**

Staff report.

Applicant Matthew LoRusso, homeowner, Gaspar Salvaggio, contractor, present and sworn in. Homeowner responded to staff report, noting that the addition's joists run both north/south and east/west and that originally, homeowner wanted to jack up the addition and level out the foundation, but that was not possible because the joists go in opposite directions and there was some water damage to some of the joists. He did not take pictures underneath because there are hazardous materials under there and he did not feel safe. The homeowner also noted that about five years ago, he had to have some stucco repair done

and during that repair, it was noted that there was significant water damage and fire damage inside the wall on the east side of the second story. He does not have pictures of that damage.

Vice Chair opened public comment at 5:56 PM, no comments were received, public hearing was closed.

*[Discussion: Vice Chair outlined that he doesn't have enough evidence that the addition is beyond repair and he doesn't have enough information demonstrating that the proposed new construction would sufficiently replicate the original. Commissioner asked if stabilizing the historic addition would be possible. Contractor stated that he does not believe so. He stated that there is a lot of rotten wood under the floor of the first floor, the floor of the first floor is leaning three inches, and the stairs are crooked. That whole back corner has gone down. Contractor stated it would be cheaper to save it and reuse it, but it's built on pads and not a foundation. The pads are independent instead of a continuous foundation, and that's probably why it is sinking—the pads can't pull weight from one pad to another. Contractor described how he tried to jack up the addition using 3 40-ton jacks, but when it began to move, it began to move away from the house. If he could have jacked it up and fixed it, he would have done that and it would be done already. Commissioner states that he doesn't have enough photos/documents to show condition deteriorated beyond repair; applicant asks what kinds of photos the commission would need. Commissioner states that as many pictures as possible would be helpful, but certainly needed are pictures that support the structural engineer's assertions. So needed are visualizations and information that document the key defects that both the applicant and the structural engineer are espousing. There was some conversation regarding whether it is necessary to open walls of second floor if the foundation can be shown to be beyond repair. Commissioner also stated that also really important is detailed drawings of the planned new construction. The Commission needs to understand what the district would be getting in place of this historic portion of this building being demolished. Commissioner stated that they'll need detailed drawings for both the first and second floors, and that the first floor needs to be compatible. The nonhistoric windows and door at the first floor don't need to be duplicated in their existing locations, but they need to be compatible with the house.]*

## **ACTION**

Marquez moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00495 for 899 Edison**, 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.*
- 4 *Most properties change over time; those changes that have acquired historic significance in their own right shall be retained and preserved.*
- 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.*

For the following reasons:

- The materials submitted did not provide sufficient evidence that the historic rear addition was deteriorated beyond repair.
- With respect to the proposed new addition:
  - The new design eliminates the deep eave which is a character-defining feature of the historic addition.
  - The submitted drawings are not sufficiently detailed to fully understand complete construction details.

Commissioner King: SUPPORTED.

*[Chair Franklin arrived at 6:00 pm.]*

ROLL CALL:

Commissioner Franklin: Abstain

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner King: AYE

Commissioner Machielse: AYE

Commissioner Marquez: AYE

Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 5 Nays: 0, one abstention

**MOTION PASSED, 5-0 with one abstention**

Commissioner clarified whether the applicant and contractor could perform some selective probing/investigation with staff approval. Director Landsberg clarified that yes, they could apply and staff could approve some small-scale selective demolition.

**3116 Park—HDC2025-00693—Peterboro-Charlotte HD—GL—Construct parking lot  
WITHDRAWN**

**1455 Centre (292 Gratiot) and public alley between Gratiot, Broadway, E. Grand River and  
Randolph/Centre – HDC2025-00696 – Broadway Avenue Local HD and Madison-Harmonie HD –  
AD – Alter, rehabilitate alley**

Commissioner Machielse recused himself.

Staff report.



Applicant Rainey Hamilton, Jr. attended in person and was sworn in. Stated that he's excited to get this project underway.

Chair Franklin opened the public hearing at 6:18 PM, no comments received, closed the public hearing.

### ACTION

Commissioner Simmons moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00696 for 1455 Centre (292 Gratiot) and public alley between Gratiot, Broadway, E. Grand River and Randolph/Centre**, 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:*

- The material/finish color of the trash enclosure poles will be listed, and the height of the interior poles be reduced to match the height of the outer poles. The applicant's drawings will be revised and submitted to staff for review. Staff also will have administrative approval to approve the pavement colors.

Commissioner King: SUPPORTED

### ROLL CALL

Commissioner Franklin: AYE

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner King: AYE

Commissioner Machielse: RECUSED

Commissioner Marquez: AYE

Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 5                Nays: 0, and one recusal

**MOTION PASSES 5-0 with one recusal**

Commissioner Hamilton recognized applicant Rainey Hamilton as a former Historic District Commissioner.

**761 Whitmore – HDC2025-00674 – Palmer Park Apartment Buildings Local HD – ET – Erect trash enclosure, install fence**

Staff report.

Applicant Kevin Brandon present virtually, sworn in. He agreed that the fence along the sidewalks along Whitmore and Third would be disruptive to the neighborhood character, but proposed fencing in select places on the property instead. He proposed keeping the drive gate near the trash enclosure, attaching it to the fence at the building, along Whitmore between 761 and its next-door neighboring property, and to fence across the courtyard. He also mentioned that he'd like to work with staff to cage and then screen the AC units.

6:29 PM: Chair Franklin opened the public hearing, no comments received, closed the hearing.

*[Commissioner discussion. Scattered fencing seems appropriate; courtyard fencing, however, would need to be lower than 6' to be compatible with the building. Placement with courtyard porch discussed. Commissioner also suggested landscaping to help with security as well. Combination of strategically placed fence and some vegetation would help with security.]*

## **ACTION**

Commissioner Machielse moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00674 for 761 Whitmore**, 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 remaining work items 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:*

- All air conditioning units installed along Whitmore Road and in the courtyard along Third Avenue will be fully and continually screened by vegetation or a constructed screen wall, and the screening will be submitted to staff for review and approval.
- Secondly, that instead of a 6-foot-tall perimeter fence as proposed, the following is approved:
  - a 4-foot-tall steel fence may be erected in the courtyard along Third Avenue between the porch and the south side of the north wing
  - a 6-foot-tall fence may be installed: between the northeast corner of the subject building at 761 Whitmore and the brick abutment of the adjacent building to the east; southward along the east property line to the trash enclosure; and then a gate across the parking lot; then northward and circling back and enclosing that parking area with a man gate.

Commissioner Hamilton: SUPPORTED

## **ROLL CALL**

Commissioner Franklin: AYE

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner King: AYE

Commissioner Machielse: AYE

Commissioner Marquez: AYE

Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 6            Nays: 0

**MOTION PASSES 6-0**

**8029 Coe, 1500-1532 Van Dyke – HDC2025-00706 – West Village HD – GL – Demolish two houses, erect multi-family building--WITHDRAWN**

## **XI CITY PROJECTS SUBJECT TO PUBLIC HEARING**

**2585-2603 W. Grand Blvd (Martin Luther King, Jr. Park) – HDC2025-00730 – West Grand Boulevard African American Arts and Business Historic District HD – AD – Expand, alter, and rehabilitate park**

Commissioner Hamilton recused himself.

Staff report.

Applicants Theresa McArleton, Jeff Klein, and Rayshaun Landrum, all with the city’s General Services Department, participated by Zoom and were sworn in. Two made brief statements. Table has been updated and also addressed staff report concerns.

6:50 PM: Public hearing opened and closed without comments.

*[Discussion.]*

### **ACTION**

Commissioner Simmons moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00730 for 2585 – 2603 E. Grand Blvd.**, 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:*

- The concrete aggregate trash bins are returned to appropriate locations within the park.
- Physical samples of the proposed aggregate concrete and tile pavers be submitted to staff, at which time a site visit will be conducted to confirm the match in the field.
- A fully dimensioned layout plan, similar in detail to the historic layout plan, will be submitted for staff review, and include dimensions and placement of the replicated and new concrete and tile ground surfaces/pathways, resized tree pits, and lamppost locations.
- A final tree plan will be submitted to staff for review, noting the trees that will remain and the trees to be planted, with all species listed. Should the species of trees change from what was included in this application; the following conditions will be met:
  - The selected trees will offer a spring bloom, which was a key feature to the original tree selection.
  - The Bradford Pear trees will be replaced with a monoculture tree that will retain the wall-like effect within the planters; and will all be replaced at the same time, so the height and massing remains consistent within the planters, i.e., a “same age/same species” characteristic.
  - A specimen tree will be planted in the raised planter adjacent to the MLK Jr. bust.

Commissioner King SUPPORTED

ROLL CALL

Commissioner Franklin: AYE

Commissioner Hamilton: RECUSED

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

Ayes: 5            Nays: 0  
**MOTION PASSES 5-0 with one recusal**

## **ACTION**

Commissioner Simmons moved that the Commission find that the proposed project at 7342 – 7458 W. Rosa Parks Boulevard and 1843 W. Bethune will have a demonstrable effect on the W. Grand Blvd. African-American Arts & Business Historic District, and;

That such demonstrable effect is likely to be beneficial, due to increased usability and function of the park, subject to the conditions previously provided; and

That the determination of the Commission be reported to the Mayor and City Council for their consideration.

Commissioner Marquez: SUPPORTED

## **ROLL CALL**

Commissioner Franklin: AYE  
Commissioner Hamilton: RECUSED  
Commissioner King: AYE  
Commissioner Machielse: AYE  
Commissioner Marquez: AYE  
Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 5            Nays: 0  
**MOTION PASSES 5-0 with one recusal**

**4825 Fullerton – HDC2025-00XXX – Russell Woods-Sullivan HD – LSJ – Demolish rear two-story porch, erect rear two-story porch--WITHDRAWN**

## **XII PUBLIC COMMENT**

6:58-6:58 PM: Online hearing opened; no comments; closed  
6:59-6:59 PM: In-person hearing opened; no comments; closed

## **XIII APPLICATIONS NOT SUBJECT TO PUBLIC HEARING**

**2984 Iroquois – HDC2025-00666 – Indian Village HD – BS – Install gate**

Mark Reynolds, applicant and homeowner, present, and sworn in. He provided a letter and some photos. He responded to the staff report. He is open to installing a black wrought iron-style gate across the drive, but he can't manage a wood gate with ice.

*[Discussion.]*

## **ACTION**

Commissioner Simmons moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00666 for 2984 Iroquois**, 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.*

And

*Elements of Design # 7*

For the following reasons:

- The proposed modern chain-link gate is not compatible with the parged masonry stucco wall at this property with rustic and picturesque features.

Commissioner Hamilton: SUPPORTED

## **ROLL CALL**

Commissioner Franklin: AYE

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner King: AYE

Commissioner Machielse: AYE

Commissioner Marquez: AYE

Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 6          Nays: 0

**MOTION PASSES 6-0**

**\*4325 Leslie – HDC2025-00616 – Russell Woods-Sullivan HD – ET – Replace historic windows, alter dwelling\***

Homeowner Ann Marie Simpson Hill present in person, sworn in. Purchased the house October 1, 2024 without knowing it was in the historic district and without knowing there were violations on the home.

She didn't know the process and it's been confusing and overwhelming. Has had to go to court, and made this application after she went to court. It's been difficult.

Chair stated that the commission cannot offer legal advice, and it sounds like it was not disclosed that the property had violations prior to your purchase. Chair is not sure what assistance the commission can offer with that, if any at all. Homeowner understands that the violations were also sent to the previous owner? The proposal to remedy the violations is to get the completed work approved.

*[Discussion. Not a lot commissioners can approve by the Standards, but can offer some guidance. The changes are drastic. Commission's priority is often the front façade. If the applicant could devise a remediation plan that prioritizes the front façade, that would be a good start. The porch was distinctive, the second-floor bay window was distinctive, the number of windows in the openings were changed at the first and second floors, the shape of the front door was distinctive, and the small window next to the door was distinctive. Bricked-in windows were mentioned, one commissioner stated that the porch could maybe be addressed with some landscaping so that the bulk of the effort could be focused on trying to address the windows on the front of the house. He sees the windows on the front of the house as a big area of priority. One commissioner suggested that the homeowner might need a design professional to help with technical drawings and help get through the process.]*

## **ACTION**

Commissioner Simmons moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00616 for 4325 Leslie**, 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 replacement of the east-side door and rear door 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:*

- Both doors are painted to match the trim once an appropriate color scheme has been selected, subject to HDC staff review and approval.

Commissioner King: SUPPORTED

Commissioner Franklin: AYE

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner King: AYE

Commissioner Machielse: AYE

Commissioner Marquez: AYE

Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 6            Nays: 0

**MOTION PASSES 6-0**

## **ACTION**

### **Remaining work items**

Commissioner Simmons moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00616 for 4325 Leslie**, 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 remaining work items 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 #9 and 10*

For the following reasons:

- The historic, character-defining features that were removed on the house's front façade (including the windows, front door, and front porch) were removed in conflict with Standard 2, which states that the removal of historic materials shall be avoided. If the features were deteriorated beyond repair, the features should have been replicated in kind as per Standard 6 but were not.
- The historic, double-hung wood windows from the house's sides and rear were removed in conflict with Standard 2, which states that the removal of historic materials shall be avoided. If the features were deteriorated beyond repair, the features should have been replicated in kind as per Standard 6 but were not. Instead, all windows were replaced with vinyl. Because of limits of fabrication and material, vinyl windows are not appropriate for historic districts.
  - 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. Additionally, the current units do not include lead coming, as did the original.
  - Consumer-grade vinyl windows weather poorly, deteriorate rapidly, and exhibit poor detailing and detracting sheen. In addition, the white color proposed here is not compatible with this house's brick because the white creates too great a contrast for this house's architectural style.
  - 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.
  - The number of windows at one second-story, centered opening at the front façade was reduced from three to two as the new units do not match the original in dimension.

- The number of windows at one first-story, centered opening at the front façade was reduced from four to three as the new units do not match the original in dimension.
- The number of windows at one second-story opening at the front façade in the half-timbered projecting bay (at former second-story bowed bay) has been reduced from three to two units as the new units do not match the original in dimension. Also, as the new units are horizontal sliding units, they do not match the original in operation.
- Important, character-defining window and door openings were changed on the house's front façade, in conflict with Standard 6, which states that where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design and other visual qualities.
  - The historic, character-defining second-floor bowed bay window (three sashes) that was near the house's northwest corner was removed and replaced with a flat window with two horizontal-sliding sashes, eliminating an important, dimensional historic feature and
  - The historic, character-defining arched front entry and its front door were replaced with a squared-off front entry doorway and door. The arched decorative window next to the door was eliminated altogether. These changes diminish the house's historic character. Additionally, eliminating arched windows and doors on a Tudor-style house is in conflict with this district's Element of Design 10, which states, "Characteristic elements and details displayed on vernacular English-Revival-influenced buildings include arched windows and door openings, steeply pitched gables, towers, and sometimes half-timbering."
- Rear and side window openings were also changed and infilled inappropriately with brick. The openings should not have been infilled, as per the *Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, which state that it is not recommended to change the number or location of windows through cutting new openings or blocking-in windows. If these openings must be infilled, they should be infilled in a way that is sensitive to the house's historic materials and character, with brick and mortar that matches the historic as closely in strength and appearance as possible and laid in a running bond pattern to match the existing, and inset ½" to 1".
- In conflict with the City's Historic District Color System D and with this District's Element of Design 9, all stucco and adjacent half-timbering were painted white, and white trim now exists on the house. This applies to all windows and doors, including new steel doors at the house's side and rear, in addition to the vinyl cladding at the rear sunroof addition. The existing bright white trim on current windows and side and rear doors is not compatible with this Tudor-style house, as the introduction to Color System D explains when it states that the half-timbering should look like weathered English oak, the stucco between the framing should be white, and the house's trim color is not recommended to be white because it creates too great a contrast to the brick and stone construction.
- The non-historic windows and siding on the rear sunroom addition at the house's southwest corner were replaced with white vinyl. Vinyl is not a compatible material for this historic house. Standard 9 states that exterior alterations shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property and shall be compatible with architectural features. As stated, vinyl's texture, sheen, and, in this case, color, make it an incompatible material with this house's architectural features.

Commissioner King: SUPPORTED

#### ROLL CALL

Commissioner Franklin: AYE

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner King: AYE

Commissioner Machielse: AYE

Commissioner Marquez: AYE



Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 6                Nays: 0  
**MOTION PASSES 6-0**

Chair summarized that she hoped that the guidance offered will be helpful and she echoed the commissioner's comment that hiring a licensed contractor or architect could be helpful to her as she navigates this process and working in stages. Director Landsberg also stated that, in case this information is helpful to the property owner, staff sent a letter to the listing agent in July 2024 a notice of violations prior to sale. At the same time, staff sent a notice of work observed to the former owner, Tarquina LLC in Southfield. Additionally, in September 2024, we understand that the former owner began an application to address these violations, but never completed that application. So, we will share those three documents with the applicant. *[Director Landsberg sent those documents to Ms Simpson Hill shortly after the December 10 meeting.]*

**\*1794 Seyburn – HDC2025-00657 & HDC2025-00689 – West Village HD – BS – Install rear deck,\***  
install concrete driveway

Applicant Nick Sehy present and sworn in. They had put in a proposal for a driveway. There's currently no parking on the property. Also, he had built a rear deck.

*[Discussion.]*

#### ACTION

Commissioner King moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00657 for 1794 Seyburn**, 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 installed rear deck 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.*
- 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.*

And

*Elements of Design # 7*

For the following reason:

- The deck as built visually interferes with the historic house and should be redesigned to be more transparent and with a recessed base, to eliminate its adverse impact on the historic property and district as a whole.

Commissioner Simmons: SUPPORTED

ROLL CALL

Commissioner Franklin: AYE

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner King: AYE

Commissioner Machielse: AYE

Commissioner Marquez: AYE

Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 6            Nays: 0

**MOTION PASSES 6-0**

**Remaining work items**

Commissioner King moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00689 for 1794 Seyburn**, 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 remaining work items 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.

This Certificate of Appropriateness is issued with the following condition:

That if the footprint of the concrete pad changes, the applicant will come back and get approval for that change from staff.

Commissioner Simmons: SUPPORTED

ROLL CALL

Commissioner Franklin: AYE

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner King: AYE

Commissioner Machielse: AYE

Commissioner Marquez: AYE

Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 6            Nays: 0

**MOTION PASSES 6-0**

**4785 Sturtevant – HDC2025-00725 – Russell Woods-Sullivan HD – BS – Replace historic windows, doors, and dormer siding**

Homeowner Armeace Williams present and sworn in. Her plans are to stay within the home's architectural style and that of the neighborhood. She put in an application to replace windows at sides and rear. Some windows are vinyl already, and she'd like to replace those with energy-efficient vinyl windows. She'd also like to install storm windows on the historic windows. There are security bars on a lot of the windows, and she'd like to remove those but replace wood doors with metal ones. Also, the home's trim, soffits, dormer, gutters, and fascia was white. She'd like to keep all of that trim white, and it was white at the time of designation.

*[Discussion of windows, doors, storms, and color.]*

**ACTION**

Commissioner Hamilton moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00725 for 4785 Sturtevant**, 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 replacement of non-historic wood windows with vinyl windows, removal of historic wood front door and replacement of dormer siding with aluminum trim coil 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*

For the following reasons:

- The historic wood windows are not beyond feasible repair and should therefore be retained and repaired where possible.
- If proven to be beyond repair, vinyl windows are not an adequate match for historic prototypes, for several reasons.
- The historic wood front door is a character-defining feature of the house and should be retained where possible.
- Aluminum trim coil is typically not an appropriate material type within the historic district. Wood siding is commonly found at dormers within the historic district.

Commissioner King: SUPPORTED

ROLL CALL

Commissioner Franklin: AYE  
Commissioner Hamilton: AYE  
Commissioner King: AYE  
Commissioner Machielse: AYE  
Commissioner Marquez: AYE  
Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 6            Nays: 0

**MOTION PASSES 6-0**

**ACTION**

**Remaining work items**

Commissioner Hamilton moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00725 for 4785 Sturtevant**, 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 remaining work items 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. That work includes the storm windows, the trim, the storm doors, and the three replacement doors in bright white.

Commissioner Machielse: SUPPORTED

ROLL CALL

Commissioner Franklin: AYE  
Commissioner Hamilton: AYE  
Commissioner King: AYE  
Commissioner Machielse: AYE  
Commissioner Marquez: AYE  
Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 6            Nays: 0

**MOTION PASSES 6-0**

**1815 Seminole – HDC2025-00705 – Indian Village HD – JR – Replace historic windows**

Applicant Rachel Nelson, Tim Flintoff, Alissa Jacobs, Hugh Russell, all present virtually and all sworn in. Applicant stated that they have run into some unexpected issues with the windows in the nave—they are testing positive for lead and asbestos. Consulted with an environmental firm and the recommended path forward is to keep the center fixed leaded glass and move toward clear sidelights as they are not original—they are plexiglass. The intent is that the operable windows on each side would be replaced with a single panel infill for these locations. Because of the oxidation and delamination of the metal window frames, removing them from the window opening and repairing them would damage these window frames. It would be nearly impossible to fix them.

*[Discussion and clarifications.]*

**ACTION:**

Commissioner Marquez moved:

Having duly reviewed the complete proposed scope of **Application HDC2025-00705 for 1815 Seminole**, 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.*
- 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:

- The application does not adequately demonstrate that it is technically and/or financially infeasible to abate the hazardous materials while retaining the existing historic steel casement units. Also, the submitted photo documentation and narrative analysis does not adequately demonstrate that the existing historic steel casement windows at the north and south walls are deteriorated to an extent that merits their replacement
- The proposed casement windows are not an adequate match to the existing historic steel units, which are distinctive, character-defining features previously identified as important by the Commission and described as such in the City's/DLBA marketing materials prior to the property's sale.

Commissioner Hamilton: SUPPORTED.

**ROLL CALL**

Commissioner Franklin: AYE

Commissioner Hamilton: AYE

Commissioner King: AYE

Commissioner Machielse: AYE

Commissioner Marquez: AYE

Commissioner Simmons: AYE

Ayes: 6            Nays: 0

**MOTION PASSES 6-0**

†84 Edmund Pl – HDC2025-00723 – Brush Park HD – GL – Revision to facade/windows†  
Approved as part of the consent agenda

As stated above in Section VI, Commissioner Hamilton moved that the consent agenda be approved subject to staff conditions (Commissioner Simmons seconded). Unanimously passed.

**XIV CITY PROJECTS NOT SUBJECT TO PUBLIC HEARING**

None

**XV OLD BUSINESS**

None

**XVI NEW BUSINESS**

**XVII ADJOURNMENT**

**ACTION**

Commissioner Simmons moved to adjourn.

Chairperson Franklin thanked fellow commissioners and staff for their dedication and hard work this year, and adjourned the meeting at 8:48 p.m.