



SR-2 – ADVISORY STAFF REPORT (04-03-2026)

This advisory report, prepared by staff, represents the opinion and advice of professional staff, and does not represent nor direct the separate review and decision of the Historic District Commission. This report serves as an addendum to SR-1, an objective staff summary of the proposal and property.

ADDRESS: 1436 EDISON STREET

MEETING DATE: 04-08-2026

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2026-00080

ADVISORY STAFF REPORT PREPARED BY: B. SALIE

STAFF OBJECTIONS TO APPROVAL:

This first section describes itemized conclusions/concerns, which, in staff's professional opinion, would prevent the issue of an unconditional Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). "None" means staff has no objections and believes a COA is warranted, with no conditions. The Historic District Commission is not required to accept staff opinions or recommendations.

1. None.

STAFF ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

This second section expands on the reasoning and analysis leading to staff's conclusions given in the first section above. The Historic District Commission is not required to accept staff opinions or recommendations.



Photo of existing garage, provided by applicant.



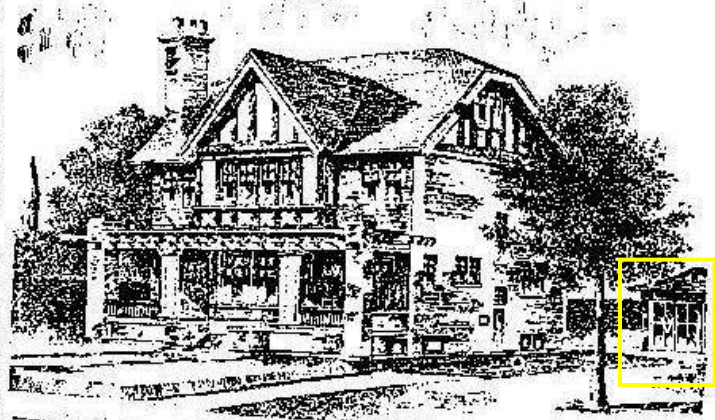
Designation Photo 1974



Designation Photo 1984

RIGHT: An article from a 1916 edition of the Detroit Free Press, provided by the Facebook group; Historical Detroit Area Architecture

HOUSE OF ELIZABETHAN STYLE IS TO BE CONSTRUCTED ON EDISON



—J. Will Wilson, Architect.

HOME FOR JAMES S. PURSE.

Following the Elizabethan style in design, a 19-room house, two and one-half stories in height with basement, is to be constructed on the north side of Edison avenue, between Wilson and Schmittdelel avenues, for James S. Purse. The house is designed by J. Will Wilson, architect, of the building department of the H. A. Jones Real Estate company. It is to be of brick-veneer and stone and will stand on a lot just 126 feet.

There will be on the first floor a reception hall, a living room with large fireplace, dining room with built-in buffet, butler's pantry and kitchen. From the dining room, access will be had through French doors to the sun-parlor.

On the second floor there will be a bedroom, 25x12 feet, extending across the entire front of the house, two sleeping rooms of smaller size, a bathroom finished in tile, a sleeping porch and balcony in the rear. The large front bedroom will be finished in silver gray.

Rooms for the maids and storerooms will be on the third floor.

The rooms on the first floor are to be finished in oak; those on the second floor in white enamel, Circassian walnut and mahogany. The house will be heated by steam and will be equipped with automatic water heater. A solid brick garage in the rear with capacity for two cars will have a driveway leading to it from the side of the house.



- The garage is partially illustrated and mentioned in an article in the Detroit Free Press, published in 1916, prior to construction: "A solid brick garage in the rear with capacity for two cars will have a driveway leading to it from the side of the house"
- The Sanborn Map (shown left) also shows that the garage is of historic age.
- Since its time of construction in 1916, the garage has undergone significant deterioration, as the application includes Notes from Assessment at time of purchase in 2026: "The property has a three-car garage with sliding doors, but it is in such poor condition (hole in roof, missing exterior brick covering of one wall) that it cannot be considered as having value as a functioning garage. Therefore, for purposes of the sales comparison grid, the subject will be listed as having no garage."

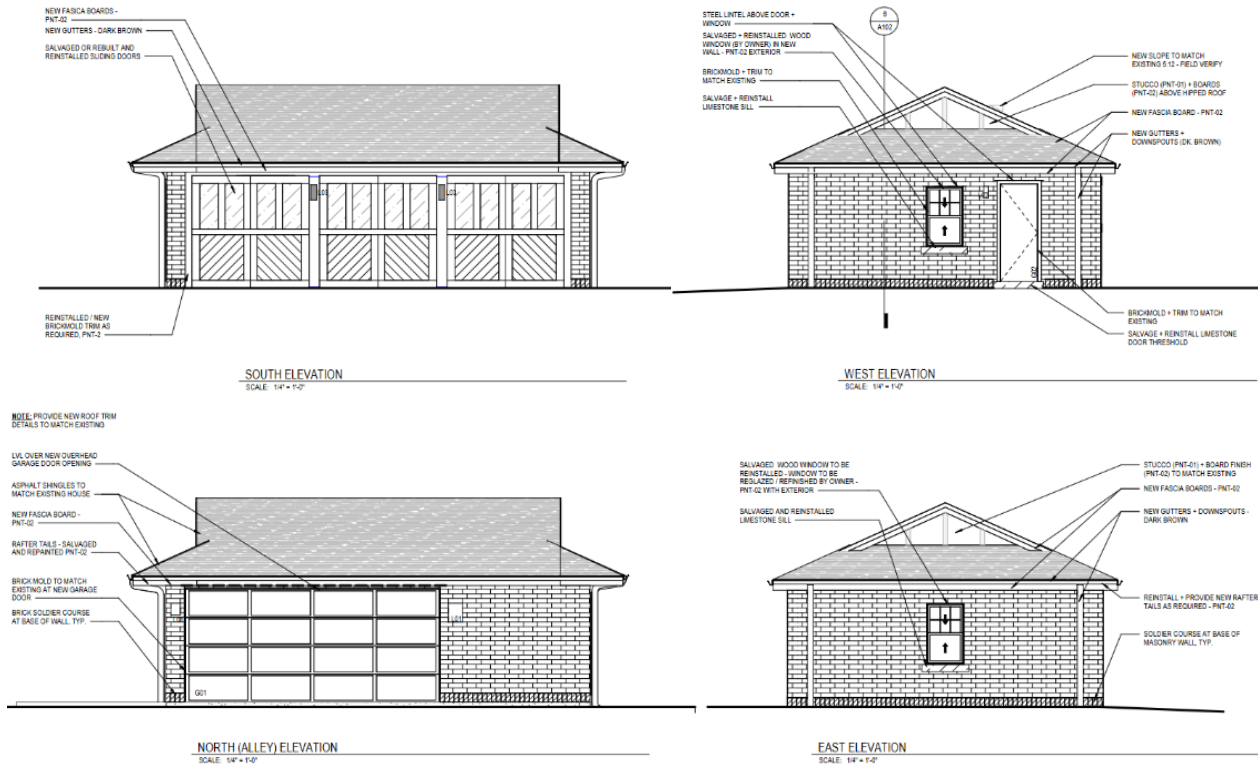
- The applicant, who is also resident architect, has provided staff with photo evidence as well as a structural report, which confirms that the garage is beyond feasible repair.
 - The architect/property owner recommends: *Garage structure as a whole has critical deficiencies in the roof and wall structure(s) that make it non-viable for repair. The demolition of elements of the structure would ultimately put undue stress and cause further damage throughout the structure.*



Photos of the garage as seen from the alley. Taken by staff on 03/23/2026.

- Based on our review of the submitted materials as well as our on-site observations on site; staff agrees that the historic garage is beyond feasible repair, as repair would in effect require a complete rebuild, potentially eliminating most of the building’s historic integrity, or else require an unreasonably complex historic preservation treatment exceeding the structure’s apparent economic, architectural, and historic value.
- The application proposes to demolish the existing garage and provide a new structure with the exact same design and footprint as required. The new structure is proposed to match the existing in-kind. Because the existing garage would lose its historic integrity during any feasible renovation, only a compatible design is required (not in-kind). However, the applicant has

submitted an in-kind design, which is also compatible.



Drawings provided by applicant for the proposed new garage, to match the existing garage.

- Therefore, the demolition of the current structurally unsound garage and the erection of a new garage that is compatible with the house and its historic surrounds is appropriate, staff’s opinion.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

This third and final section takes staff’s itemized “objections” identified in the first section, and presents them in the form of “conditions” in support of a proposed approval recommendation or “reasons” in support of a proposed denial recommendation, in the form required by Section 21-2-78 of the City Code. The Historic District Commission is not required to accept staff opinions or recommendations.

Section 21-2-78, Determinations of Historic District Commission

Recommendation 1 of 1, Certificate of Appropriateness: Demolish garage, erect garage

Staff recommends that the proposed work will be appropriate according to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and the Boston-Edison Historic District’s Elements of Design.