



SR-2 – STAFF ADVISORY REPORT (06-05-2026)

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: 1466 CHICAGO

MEETING DATE: 06-10-2026

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2025-00562

SCOPE: ERECT WALL

ADVISORY STAFF REPORT PREPARED BY: A. DYE

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. The proposed CMU block, due to its dimensions, edge profile, and surface texture, is an incompatible material for use at a visible side property line within this early 20th century residential district. Traditional brick would be more compatible.
2. A mottled "marble hue" applied stain will visually conflict with the solid color of the adjacent dark red brick houses and introduces a material finish that is not compatible with the district's textures, colors and surface treatments.
3. The erection of the CMU wall as proposed will alter the features and spaces that characterize this property and change the visual and historical relationship between the dwellings, open space, and the other historic structures within the district.

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.

- The building permit for the dwelling was issued on 07/07/1916; the permit for the masonry garage was issued one year later (07/18/1916).



HDAB designation photo, 1974.

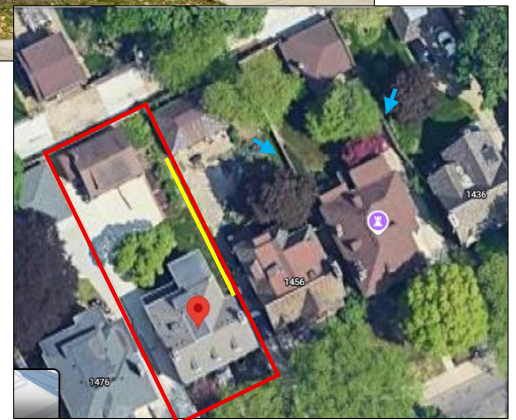
- During a November 2025 site visit with the property owner / applicant and contractor, staff noted the existence of a masonry wall extending the length of the rear yard at the east property line of the neighboring (1456) property.



Above: This view of 1466 Chicago's rear and side yards, looking east from the applicant's driveway, captures the rear house walls of 1466 and 1456 Chicago, and a partial view of 1446 Chicago. The CMU (concrete masonry unit) wall, in the center of this photo (blue arrow), exhibits an unpainted gray finish of CMU blocks.

Right: Google aerial view of five properties (left to right): 1476 – 1436 Chicago. Subject property is enclosed in red; location/footprint of proposed wall is shown in yellow. The masonry wall enclosing the rear yard at 1446 Chicago is visible and identified by blue arrows.

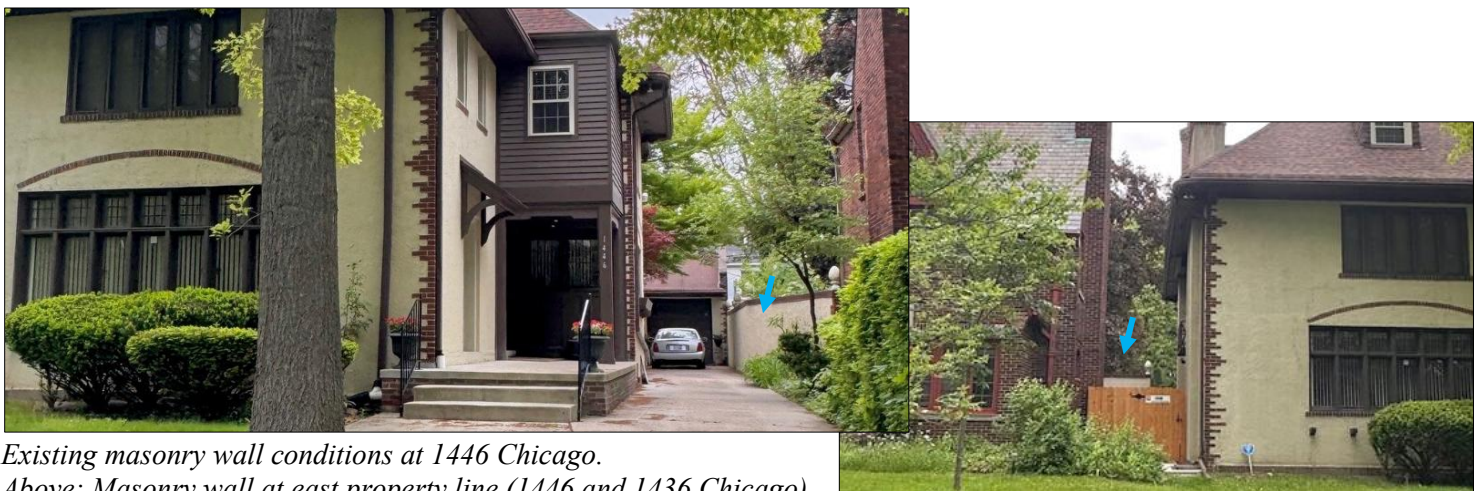
Staff photos, 11/21/2025.



- The installation of a flush CMU masonry wall at 1446 Chicago was approved by the HDC in 1978 and a permit was issued.
 --Note that reviews prior to the 1990s were made using the Elements of Design in combination with district-specific treatment levels – a different standard than the Secretary of the Interior Standards and National Park Service Guidelines in effect today.



Above: 1446 W. Chicago, 1980, HDAB. The masonry wall had a light gray stucco finish.



Existing masonry wall conditions at 1446 Chicago.

Above: Masonry wall at east property line (1446 and 1436 Chicago).

Right: Partial view of masonry wall at west property line (1446 and 1456 Chicago). Staff photos, 05/20/2026.

- A highly visible example in the Boston-Edison district of a masonry wall extending from the house to the garage is at 801 Edison (southwest corner of Edison and 3rd Avenue).



801 Edison rear yard masonry wall enclosure. View from 3rd Avenue, looking west. Staff photo, 05/20/2026.

- At 1466 Chicago and 801 Edison, the masonry walls visible from the public right-of-way are clad with materials that match the cladding material of the house.

HDC Fence and Hedge Guidelines

- *New construction of fences or walls should be designed to minimize impact to the historic fabric and should be compatible with the site in setback, size and scale to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*
- *New fences or walls should be differentiated from the old and should be designed to complement the style, design, color and material of the historic building(s) and its features.*
- *New fencing or walls should be removable without impairing the essential form and integrity of the historic property*
- *Allowable Types:*
 - *Brick and stone –masonry foundations, piers and fence walls. The material of any masonry wall should be compatible with that of the building it abuts.*
- *Allowable Locations:*
 - *The side yard alone at the front face of the house, the back face or at a point between.*
 - *Rear yard, from the back face of the house to the rear property line (can be considered with the side yard as well)*
- *Allowable Heights: 6' side lot lines, at the front face of the house*
- *Allowable Colors: The color of the fence should complement the colors of the house*

Boston-Edison Historic District Elements of Design

- 8) *Relationship of textures.* *The most common relationship of textures in the district is that of a low-relief pattern of mortar joints in brick contrasted with the smooth surface of wood or stone trim. There are a few houses with rough or rusticated stone surfaces. The use of stucco or concrete, with or without half-timbering, as a contrast to brick surfaces, is not unusual.*
- 9) *Relationship of colors.*
 - a. *Natural brick colors, such as red, yellow, brown, and buff, predominate in wall surfaces. Natural stone colors also exist. Where stucco or concrete exists, it usually remains in its natural state, or is painted in a shade of cream.*
- 13) *Relationship of significant landscape features and surface treatments.* *There is a wide range in the type of fencing. Fencing within the public view was generally designed to compliment the style, design material, and date of the residence.*

- The proposal for 1466 Chicago states a 5'-0" tall, 8" wide masonry wall will begin at the edge of the existing wood fence (and adjacent to the outer edge of the extending wall of the house). The masonry wall will travel along the side property line, ending in proximity to the front edge of the neighboring (1456 Chicago) garage.
- The *Fence and Hedge Guidelines* state on page 4 that “a single lot shall contain no more than two types of fencing material”. This guidance, which can be changed by the Commission, is intended to preserve a consistent and compatible enclosure complementary to the historic property. In this instance, 1466 Chicago would have two types of fencing: wood (painted) and masonry/CMU block (stained).

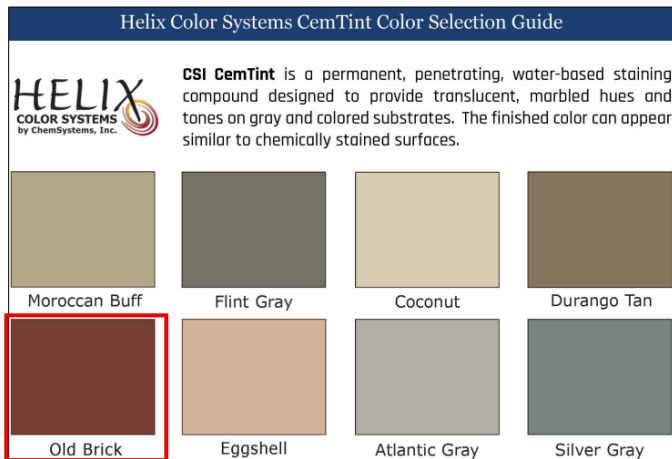


Views of area mid-property where the masonry wall is proposed to begin (★), (l) looking towards W. Chicago, (r) looking towards alley/garages.



Above: View towards alley showing front walls of garages (l) 1466 Chicago, (r) 1456 Chicago. Right: View towards W. Chicago, near the edge of 1456 Chicago's garage, where the masonry wall will end. Far right: Applicant's site plan (Chicago Ave at bottom; alley at top). Red arrows denote end points for the masonry wall.

- The issues staff identified with the proposal relate to the wall material and staining product:
 - The proposed CMU block, due to its dimensions, edge profile, and surface texture, is an incompatible material for use at a visible side property line within this early 20th century residential district.
 - The CMU blocks are to be tinted “Old Brick” color. The introductory description of “Helix CSI CemTint” states that it will “provide translucent, marbled hues and tones”, which is different than the presented dark uniform color swatches.
 - A mottled “marble hue” will visually conflict with the solid color of the adjacent dark red brick houses and introduce a material finish that is not compatible with the district’s textures, colors and surface treatments. An example (photo or physical sample) of this tint applied to a CMU block has not been submitted.



Product information can be found on the company's website: <https://chemsystemsinc.com/shop/cemtint/>

Helix Color System products by ChemSystems will transform any cement based project from ordinary into extraordinary. Easy to use, Helix Integral Colors are the economical coloring choice that will turn any concrete project into a premium design element. As a leading manufacturer of decorative concrete admixtures, ChemSystems has been combining art and science in concrete since 1996.

CemTint offers the kind of versatility traditional concrete treatments cannot match and can be combined with concrete stamping applications, cementitious overlays, concrete polishing or any existing concrete surface that is not sealed. The result is an architectural concrete application that is nothing short of breathtaking.

Designing with CemTint:

- Wide range of colors
- Allows for necessary vapor transmission
- Eliminates dusting of concrete
- Increases concrete's surface density
- Increases surface abrasion resistance
- Internal humidity stabilization
- No VOC/VOS content
- Permanent application
- Prevents free-moisture migration
- Compatible with most cementitious topping systems
- UV Stable

Application Methods:

CemTint can be applied to properly prepared surfaces with a brush, roller, or with HVLP or airless spray equipment. Back-rolling spray

Applications:

- Car Dealerships
- Courtyards
- Driveways
- Event Centers
- Garage Floor
- Hospitals
- Hotels
- Parking Lots
- Restaurants
- Retail
- Schools/Universities
- Stadium Arenas
- Streetscapes
- Waterparks

- The erection of the CMU wall as proposed will alter the features and spaces that characterize this property and change the visual and historical relationship between the dwellings, open space, and the other historic structures within the district.
- A masonry wall constructed of brick in a dimension, design/bond, color and surface finish (including mortar) similar to the adjacent brick-clad dwellings would be a compatible solution and protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.

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

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, with the condition that:

1. A masonry wall at this location will be constructed of traditional masonry brick in a design, dimension, color and surface finish (including mortar) that is compatible with the adjacent brick-clad dwellings.
2. A site visit with staff will be scheduled to review the proposed brick in the field.
3. The application drawings will be revised to confirm the change in wall materials, brick bond pattern, and mortar joints, and will be submitted to staff for review/approval prior to the permit being issued.