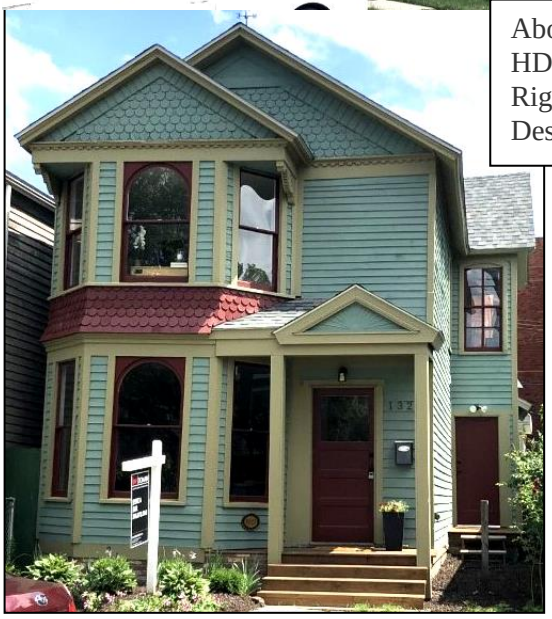
STAFF REPORT: JULY 14, 2021 MEETING **PREPARED BY**: A. DYE
APPLICATION NUMBER: 21-7360 **VIOLATION NUMBER:** 21-466
ADDRESS: 1321 LABROSSE
HISTORIC DISTRICT: CORKTOWN
APPLICANT: JOHN BIGGAR, STUDIOZONE, LLC.
PROPERTY OWNER: DR. KATHLEEN YAREMCHUK
DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 06-21-2021
DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 06-28-2021

SCOPE: WINDOWS REPLACED WITHOUT APPROVAL

EXISTING CONDITIONS
The two-story house at 1321 Labrosse sits mid-block on the south side of the street amongst an intact streetscape filled with a mixture of two-story and single-story historic residential structures. Constructed in 1900, the house fills the width of the lot and is within feet of the neighboring houses. Victorian in styling, the steeply pitched front-gabled roof is reinforced by a small projected front-gable roof that covers a two-story bay. Clapboard siding is the dominant cladding material. The triangular portions of the gable walls are covered with fishscale siding; this siding is also used on the flared wall separating the two bay windows. The windows on the house are mostly wood, double-hung, one-over-one sash. The central bay windows have arched tops that echo the fishscale siding pattern.



Above and left:
HDC Photos, June 28, 2021
Right:
Designation photo, HDAB

PROPOSAL

The applicant is requesting approval for the installation (completed without approval) of three vinyl windows, one glass block window, and the removal of two window openings.

Front Elevation

- Removal of two window openings: first story, small double-hung window adjacent front door; second story window opening above front porch.

West Side Elevation

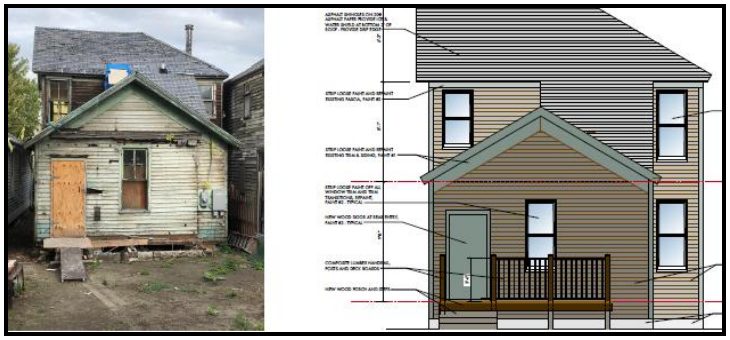
- Removal of one historic, wood double-hung window on the second story, and installation of one double-hung, one-over-one vinyl sash (clear glass), color: white.

Rear Elevation

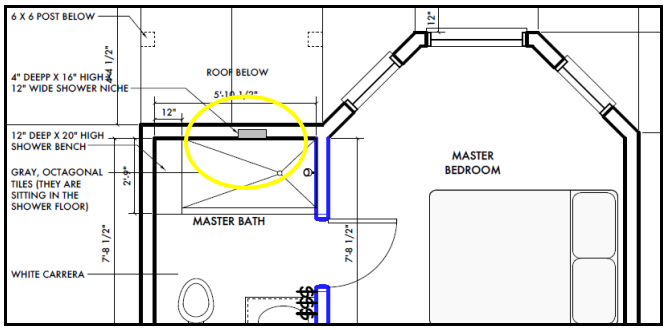
- Removal of one historic, wood double-hung window on the second story (far left), and installation of one double-hung, one-over-one vinyl sash (clear glass), color: white
- Removal of one historic, wood double-hung window on the first story, resizing of opening, and installation of one vinyl awning window, clear glass, color: white
- Removal of one historic, wood double-hung window on the second story (far right), and installation of glass block.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

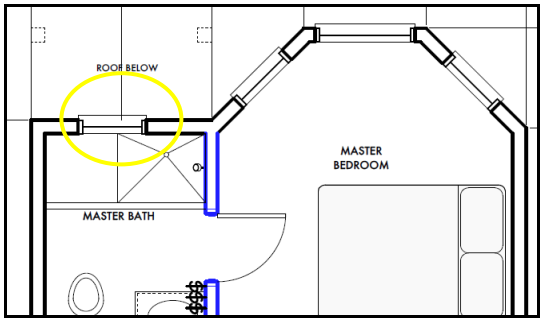
- The Corktown Historic District was established in 1984.
- In 2019, HDC staff issued a Certificate of Appropriateness for the rehabilitation of the house, which included the repair of the existing wood windows as well as exterior painting. (#19-6555)
    - As shown on the applicant's renderings below, the boarded up window opening on the front elevation was to be re-opened and the small window opening adjacent the front door was to be retained. On the rear elevation, double-hung windows were to be retained in the window openings.



    - The second story floor plan ("Scheme G" – included with the applicant's submission materials) shows the front elevation second story window gone, in contrast with the floor plan submitted as part of the 2019 rehabilitation application.



Applicant's 2021 Floor Plan – "Scheme G"



Applicant's 2019 Floor Plan "Scheme F"

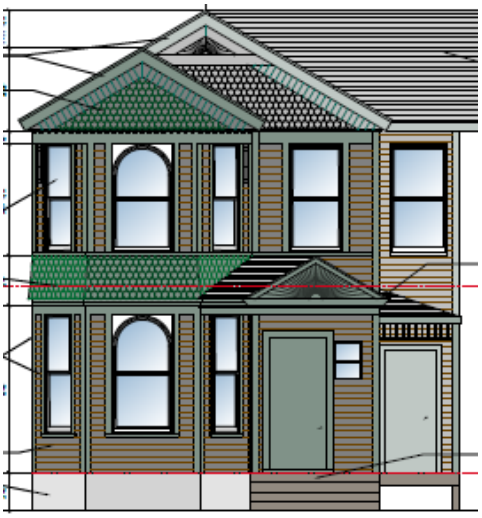
- During a May 2021 inspection, a BSEED inspector noticed glass block and vinyl windows installed in a few openings, in contradiction to the city's approved plans. HDC staff issued a violation number and requested the applicant apply to the Commission for review of the altered windows.
- This past week, HDC staff identified additional window alterations (the enclosure of the two front elevation window openings) which the applicant has added to the scope of work before the Commission).
- According to the National Park Service's document *Replacement Windows that meet the Standards*:
  - Replacement windows on primary, street-facing or any highly visible elevations of buildings of three stories or less must match the historic windows in all their details and in material (wood for wood and metal for metal).
  - Replacement windows on secondary elevations that have limited visibility must match the historic windows in size, configuration and general characteristics, though finer details may not need to be duplicated and substitute materials may be considered.
  - While it may be theoretically possible to match all the significant characteristics of a historic window in a substitute material, in actuality, finish, profiles, dimensions and details are all affected by a change in material.

ISSUES

- It is staff's opinion, the historic windows are character-defining features due to their placement, visibility, materiality, function, dimensionality, and wood window trim, all of which help identify the age of the house.

FRONT ELEVATION

- The façade of this house offers a multitude of patterns and angles, in line with the Queen Anne architectural style. The window opening above the front porch (as shown in the below-left rendering) completed the horizontal line (or rhythm) of windows at the second story, as well as creating a vertical balance with the first story openings. The removal of this window opening created a flat void within this highly detailed façade.



Applicant Rendering

HDC Staff Photo, June 28, 2021

WEST SIDE AND REAR ELEVATIONS

- The applicant states the existing sash within the second story openings (side and rear elevations) were missing components and therefore used to repair other windows/sash on the house. While staff agrees this can be a common practice in window repair, which then requires entirely new sash to be installed in those openings, it is not clear why wood sash replacement windows were not selected.

Side Elevation - The white vinyl window immediately adjacent a historic window creates a jarring visual juxtaposition for the two window openings.

Applicant photos

Front and west side elevation

Replacement Window Historic window

Rear Elevation - The historic windows, due to their wood sash and double-hung operation (with the two taller windows also having a matching muntin pattern), offered a level of uniformity to the asymmetrical rear elevation. As the windows are now different operations, sizes and materials, a discordant appearance to the rear elevation has been created.

Applicant photos

Before 2019 rehab

Current conditions

RECOMMENDATION

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

It is staff's opinion the removal of the four wood windows and installation of vinyl windows and glass block, as well as the removal of the two front elevation window openings, has altered the features and spaces that characterize the property. Staff therefore recommends the Commission deny a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as proposed because it does not meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and the Elements of Design for the district.

studiozONE, llc

350 Madison, 4th Floor, Detroit, Michigan • www.studiozonedetroit.com • (313) 549-2790

June 21, 2021 REV July 5, 2021, REV July 8, 2021

Jennifer Ross
City of Detroit Historic Commission
2 Woodward Avenue
Detroit, Michigan 48226

RE: 1321 Labrosse Street – Application Number 19-6555

Dear Jennifer:

Please accept the information detailed below, the attached supporting information, photographs, plans and elevations plus the completed HDC application with regards to (3) windows which are different from the original Certificate of Appropriateness granted on December 4, 2019.

Detailed Photographs: See attached photographs.

Description of Existing Conditions:

Identified on the Plans and Elevations are (3) windows, A, B, and C which differ from the original, proposed reuse of the existing windows.

It should be noted, that parts and pieces from Windows A & B were salvaged and used to replace missing parts for the windows and sashes at the front of the house facing the street so the house could present a true historic presence on the street. Ultimately, there were (2) windows openings, identified as A & B which did have sashes that fit the window frames and there were not enough components left to try and recreate the sashes so they would fit properly.

Window A – This is on the 2nd Floor, on the side of the house, facing west, towards the neighbors side of the house. The sash did not match the frame. It appears someone replaced the sash in the existing window frame at some point. We were unable to obtain a "weather-tight" condition due to the sloppiness between the sash and frame to the homeowner's satisfaction. A replacement window was purchased and installed in the window opening.

Window B - This is on the 2nd Floor bedroom at the top of the stairs, facing the rear of the property. The same conditions apply. The sash did not match the frame. It appears someone replaced the sash in the existing window frame at some point. We were unable to obtain a "weather-tight" condition due to the sloppiness between the sash and frame to the homeowner's satisfaction. A replacement window was purchased and installed in the window opening.

Window C – This is on the rear of the house, 1st Floor in what was the kitchen. The only item that remained were an upper sash and part of the window frame. This window had experience an extreme amount of wood rot. The height of the existing window above the floor was too low and would have place the window below the countertop height, behind the base cabinets in the kitchen. We replaced the double-hung with a single window, placing the bottom of the window right above the countertop and the top of the window generally matches the top of the adjacent door.

Window D – This window is on the rear of the house, in the bathroom at the shower/bathtub. The window was severely deteriorated from the moisture of the bathroom and the homeowner did not want to have a vision window into the house. She requested it be changed to glass block.

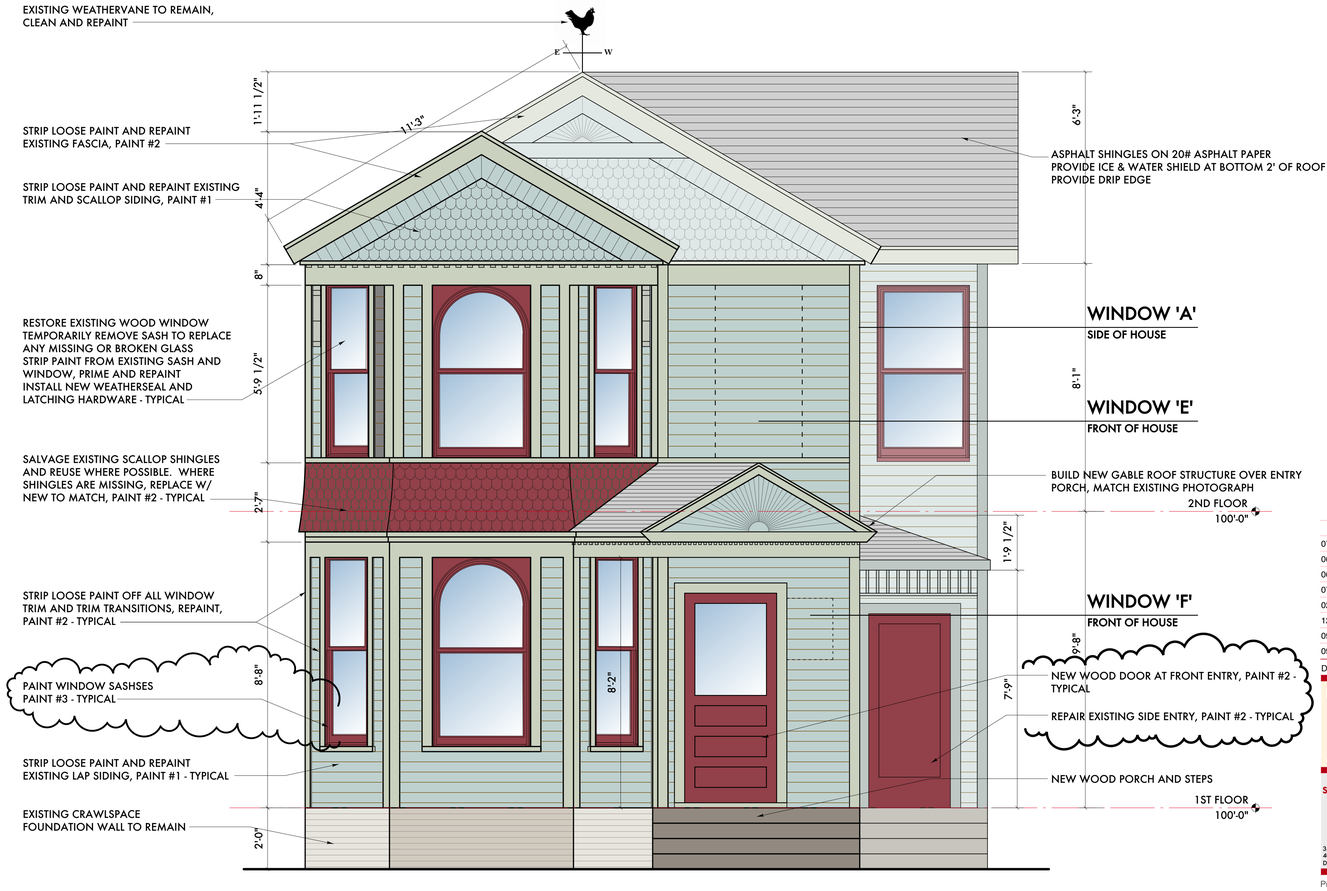
Window E – This opening was boarded over the interior and exterior of the house. When the plywood was removed on the exterior and the finishes on the interior, whatever window opening may have been there at one time is long since gone. The opening had been framed and infilled, there were not any window frames or any other elements of the window left. Instead of putting plywood back, we used the same wood siding to frame over the entire face of the house.

Window F – This was the former window installed next to the door. The original idea was to put this window back but after reviewing the window, an aluminum, single lite (non-insulated" window that was not historic to the original windows, we decided to not reinstall this window. The damaged caused to the interior sill by the sweating of the window was repaired, the exterior boarded over with the wood siding and the interior covered with gypsum board and painted.

Description of the Project: These windows were part of a much, larger renovation of the existing house. The existing house was in horrible condition, even without a furnace relying on a wood stove for heat. The house interior had significant structural damage including a large hole in the floor and framing in what is now the dining room as well as a large hole in the floor in the kitchen below what is referred to as window C. Additionally, the house did not have foundations below the frost line causing structural issues. All of these structural repairs were made. The front of the house was faithfully restored to include extensive rehabilitation of the existing windows. Missing scallops on the façade were replaced and the front porch rebuilt.

B **EXISTING LABROSSE ELEVATION**
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"

0' 5' 10' 20' 40'



A **PROPOSED LABROSSE ELEVATION**
SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"

0' 5' 10' 20' 40'

PAINT SCHEDULE:

PAINT #1 - B:10 GRAYISH GREEN, MS: 10G 5/2
PAINT #2 - B:16 LIGHT GRAYISH OLIVE, MS: 75Y 6/2
PAINT #3 - A:9 MODERATE REDDISH BROWN

NOTE: ALL COLORS REFERENCED ARE CITY OF DETROIT HISTORIC COMMISSION "COLOR SYSTEM 'B'"
MS = MUNSELL STANDARD

07/08/21	Historic Commission Hearing
06/21/20	Historic Commission Hearing
06/03/20	Historic Commission
07/31/20	Paint Revision
02/12/20	Permit Revisions
12/03/19	Permits
09/24/19	Historic Commission
09/23/19	Historic Commission
Date:	Issued For:

Labrosse Residence

1321 Labrosse Street
Detroit, Michigan 48226

studiozONE : DETROIT
architectural urban interior DESIGN
350 Madison Avenue
4th Floor
Detroit, Michigan 48226
313 549 2790 [p]
jpb@ware-house.com
studiozonedetroit.com

Project Number: 2019-

Sheet Title:
ELEVATION

Sheet Number:
A5.10

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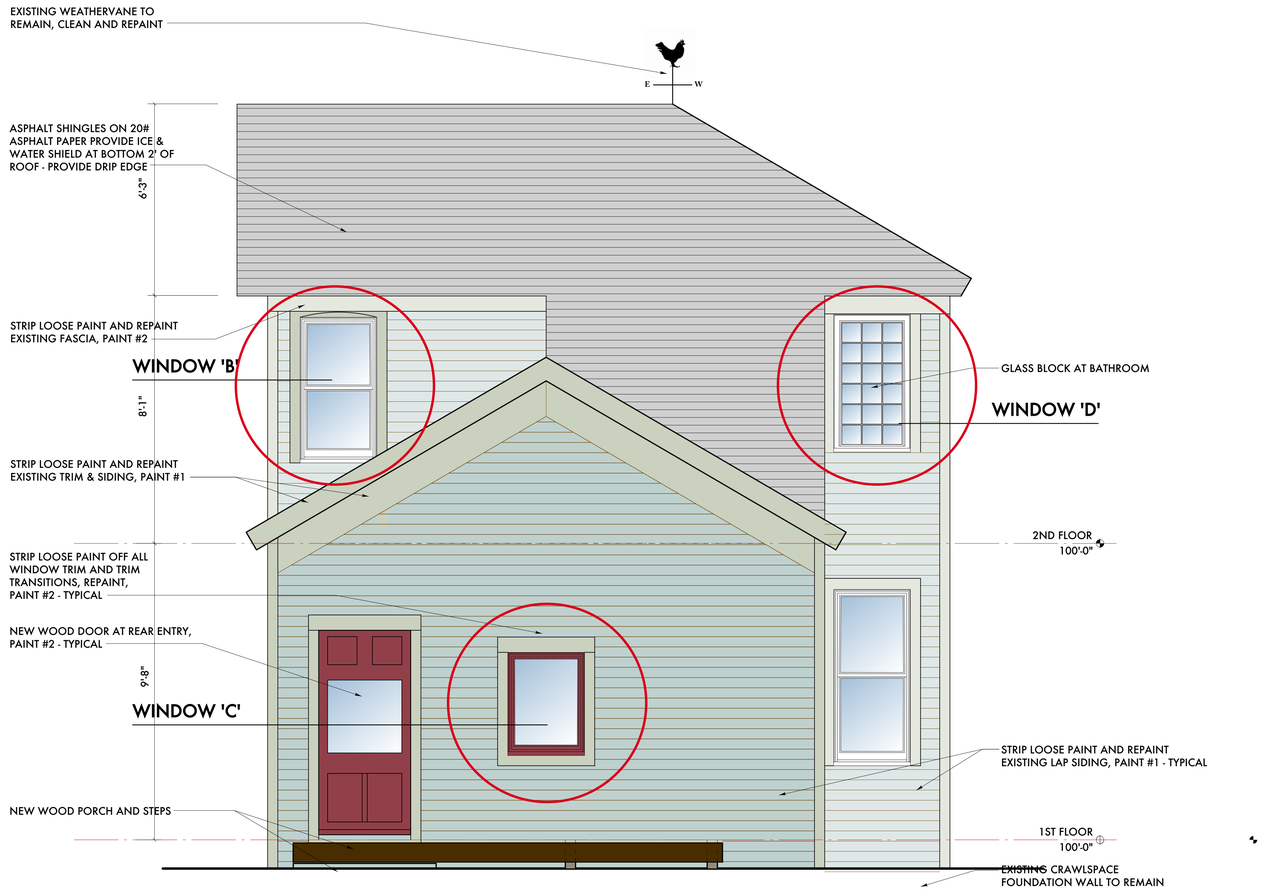
D **EXISTING REAR ELEVATION**

SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"

0' 5' 10' 20' 40'



NOTE: REUSE EXISTING FOUNDATIONS AT FORMER PORCH

C **PROPOSED REAR ELEVATION**

SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"

0' 5' 10' 20' 40'

PAINT SCHEDULE:

PAINT #1 - B:10 GRAYISH GREEN, MS: 10G 5/2
PAINT #2 - B:16 LIGHT GRAYISH OLIVE, MS: 75Y 6/2

NOTE; ALL COLORS REFERENCED ARE CITY OF DETROIT HISTORIC COMMISSION "COLOR SYSTEM 'B'"
MS = MUNSELL STANDARD

Date:	Issued For:
07/05/21	Historic Commission Hearing
06/21/21	Historic Commission Hearing
06/03/21	Historic Commission
12/03/19	Permits
11/12/19	Historic Commission

Labrosse Residence

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Detroit, Michigan 48226

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313 549 2790 [p]
jgb@ware-house.com
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Project Number: 2019-

Sheet Title:

REAR ELEVATION

Sheet Number:

A5.11

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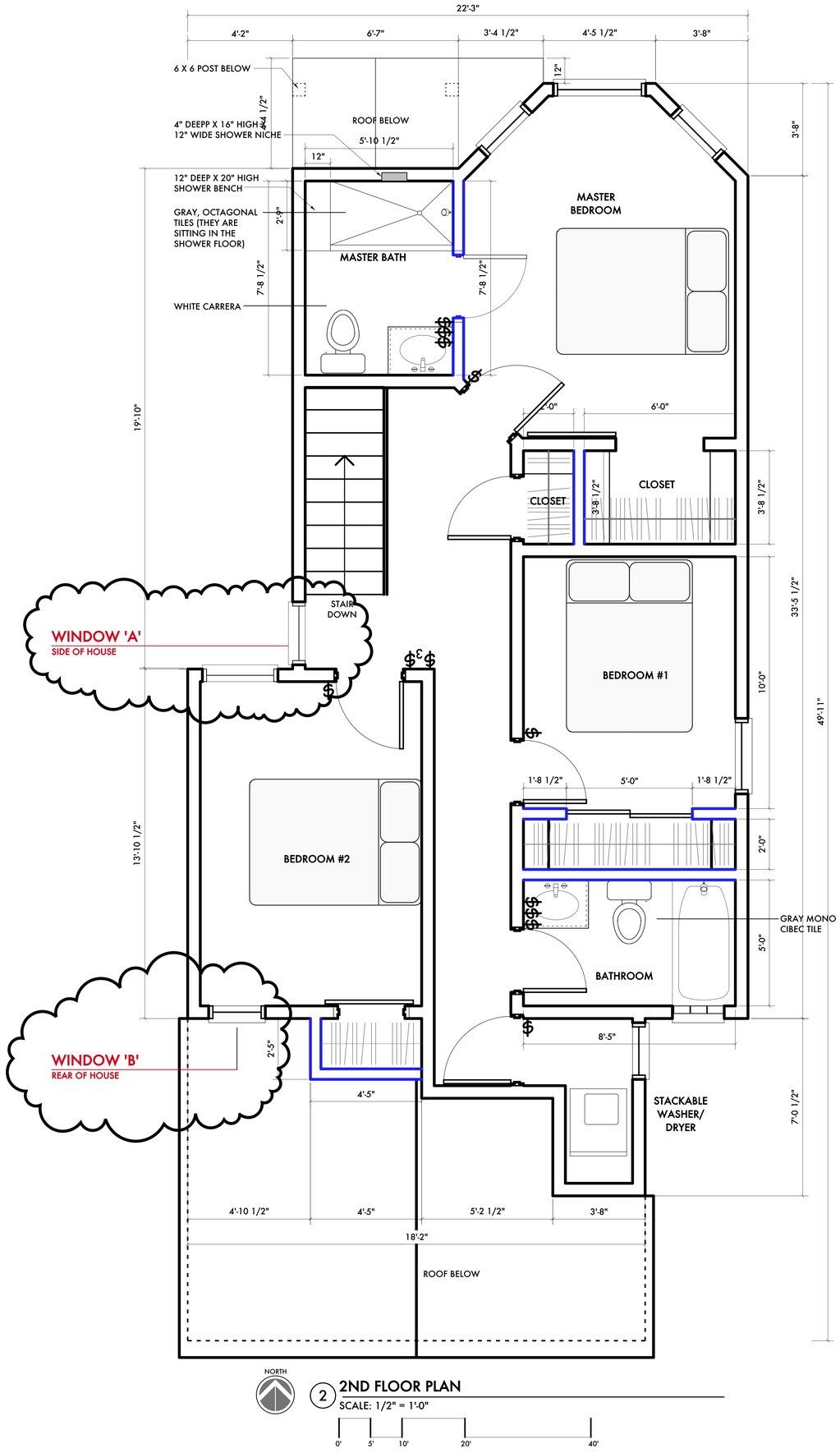
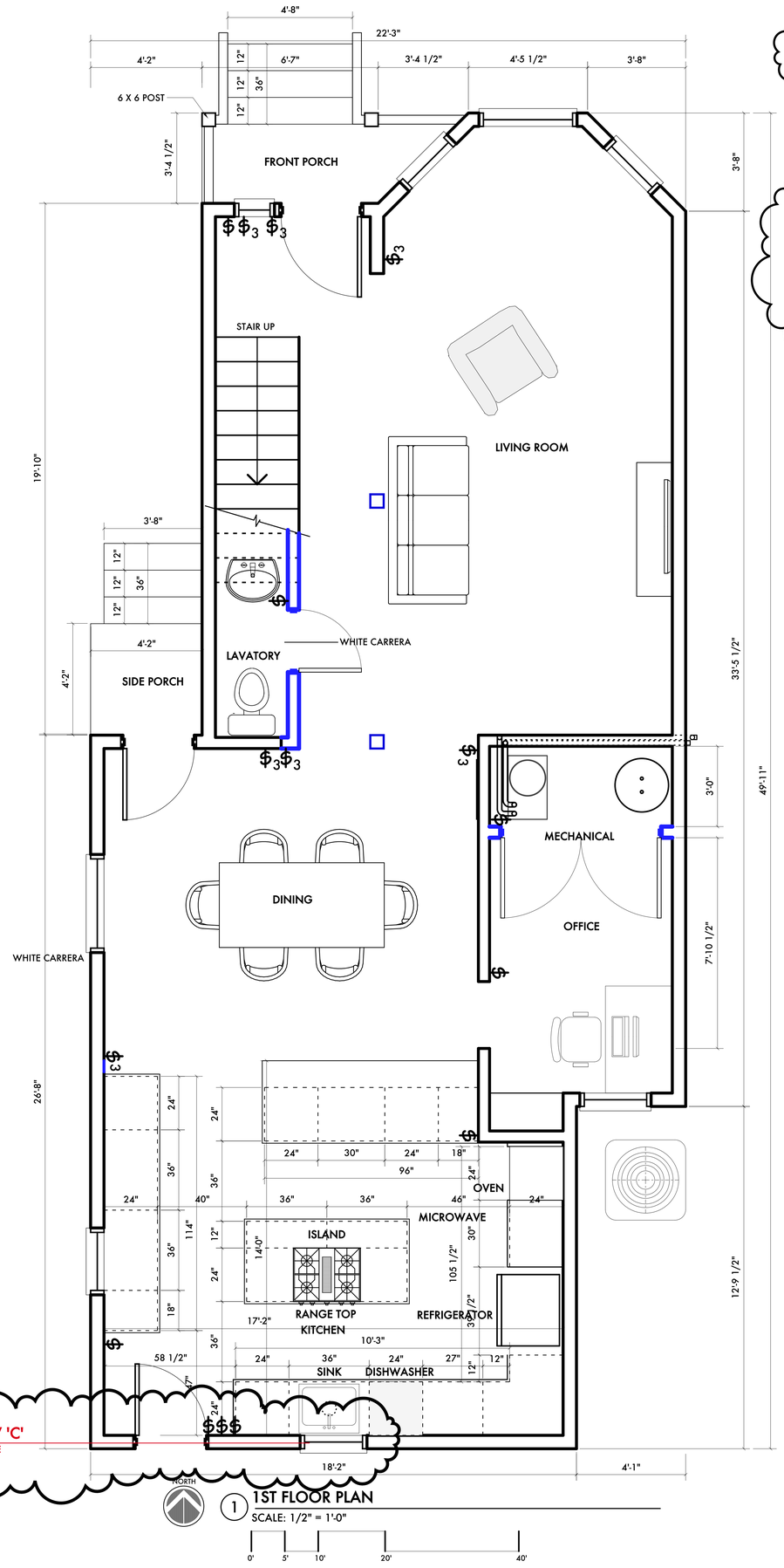


NORTH

2 2ND FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"

0' 5' 10' 20' 40'



NORTH

1 1ST FLOOR PLAN

SCALE: 1/2" = 1'-0"

0' 5' 10' 20' 40'

NOTE: ALL WORK IS TO BE DONE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MICHIGAN RESIDENTIAL CODE

CHECKLIST ITEM #1

USE GROUP:
R-5 SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL
CONSTRUCTION TYPE:
V-B (5B)
ZONING:
R-3 RESIDENTIAL
PARCEL ID:
06000269

CHECKLIST ITEM #2

Date:	Issued For:
06/21/20	Historic Commission Hearing
06/03/21	Historic Commission
02/03/20	Plan Review Comments
12/03/19	Permits
09/24/19	Historic Commission
08/22/19	Owner Review

Labrosse Residence

1321 Labrosse
Detroit, Michigan 48226

studiozONE : DETROIT
architectural | urban | interior DESIGN
350 Madison Avenue
4th Floor
Detroit, Michigan 48226
313 549 2790 [p]
jpl@ware-house.com
studiozonedetroit.com

Project Number: 2019-

Sheet Title:
FLOOR PLAN
SCHEME G

Sheet Number:
A3.11 (G)

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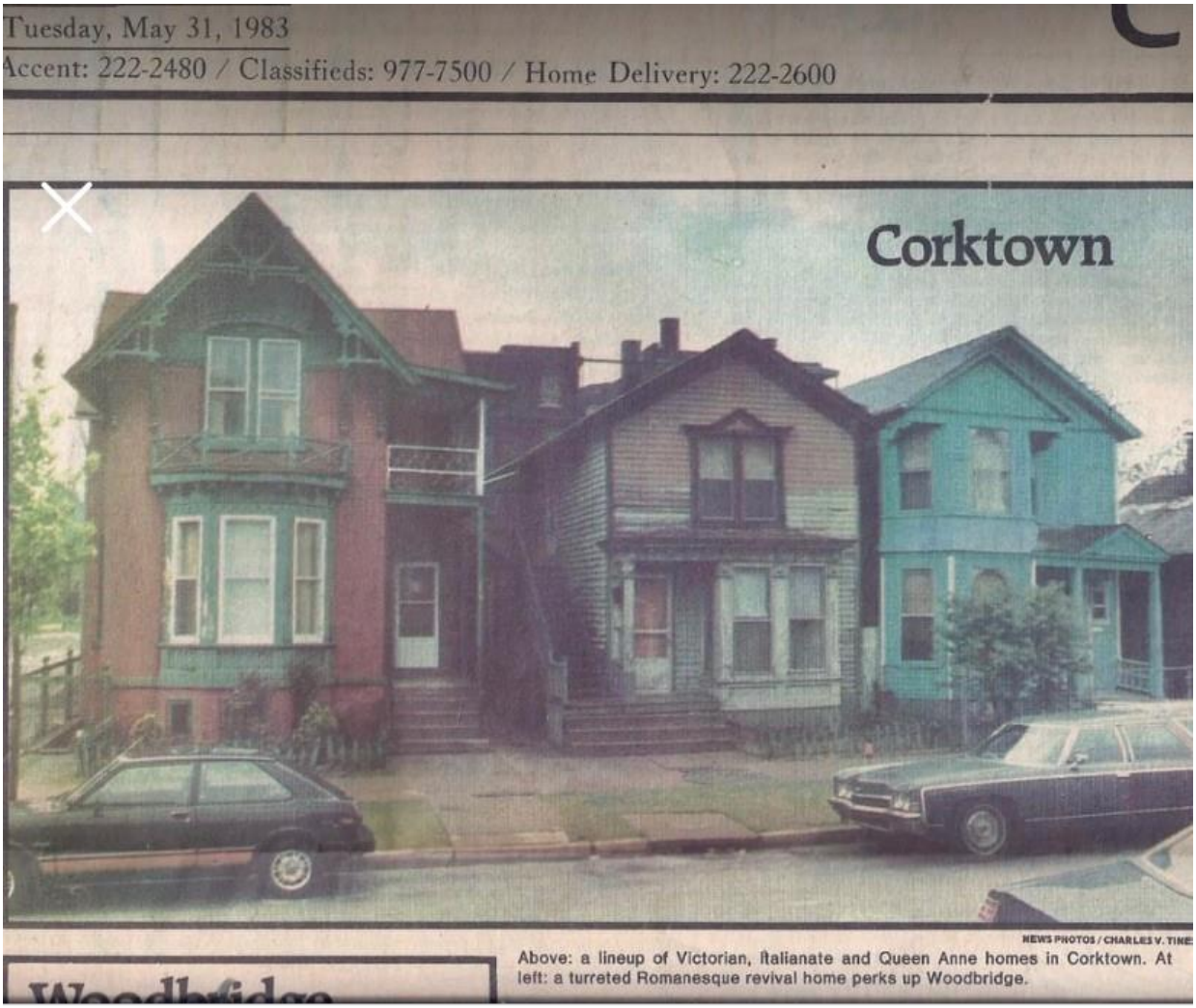
1319



Corktown Historical Society
August 26, 2013 ·

This photo of 1315, 1319, and 1321 Labrosse appeared in the Detroit Free Press in May of 1983. It is from a sampling of

As the article shows, the newspaper clipping below from 1983 there was never a window above the front entrance. I don't know what the previous owner was intending to do by trimming it out and installing the plywood on the exterior but a window was never installed.

John P. Biggar, PA, AIA, NCARB