

STAFF REPORT UPDATED 11/15/2022
CHANGES IN RED TEXT

STAFF REPORT: 11/16/2022 REGULAR MEETING

PREPARED BY: D. RIEDEN

APPLICATION NUMBER: #22-8094

VIOLATION NUMBER: 654

ADDRESS: 19434 STRATFORD

HISTORIC DISTRICT: SHERWOOD FOREST

APPLICANT: KENDRA PAUL

PROPERTY OWNER: KENDRA PAUL

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 10/17/2022

DATES OF STAFF SITE VISITS: 10/4/22, 10/21/22, 10/24/22

SCOPE: INSTALL LANDSCAPE FEATURES, CONSTRUCT NEW DRIVEWAY (WORK DONE WITHOUT APPROVAL)

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Built in 1926, 19434 Stratford Road is a 2-story Tudor, single-family residence featuring variegated reddish-brown brick and brick lentils and sills. Multi-level eaves and a square tower-like central feature punctuate the steeply sloped, cross-gabled roof, which is covered in red, asphalt shingles. Original steel casement windows are centrally placed in the front facade. The primary entrance to the house is located one wing of the multi-level eave and has its own timbered roof and wood beam posts that shelter the front door. This primary entrance is flanked with brick walls and a modestly sized, raised porch with concrete surface and steps that lead to a centrally located concrete walkway in the center of the front yard. The front yard is heavily landscaped with stone, cement block and metal edged planter beds, which is the topic of this application. The former concrete driveway, already demolished, is included in this application, and runs along the south property line to the garage and a proposed turn-around in the rear yard in front of the garage.



Site Photo 1, by Staff October 24, 2022: (West) front side.



Site Photo 2, designation slide, 2002: (West) front side.

This property has the following HDC approved work:

- December 3, 2014 COA- Install front security door, 6' aluminum fence, glass block basement windows; replace front walkway and driveway
- December 10, 2014 COA – Paint house and install landscaping
- October 28, 2014 COA – Remove two dead trees

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This property also has the following open violation:

- September 29, 2022 Violation- Installation of front yard landscape, removal of front yard lawn and driveway without approval.



Aerial of Parcel 02005141..



Site photo 3, by Google Street May 2019 showing previously approved landscape installation.

PROPOSAL

This application is a response to the violation citation that was invited to include the work done without approval on the front and rear yards and the installation of the driveway that is already complete or in process of completion. The proposed work consists of the following (See attached drawings):

DRIVEWAY

- Demolish existing driveway, widen former driveway footprint from 8' to 12'.
- Install 12' wide concrete driveway.
- All concrete paving shall have cobblestone patterned stamping with grey stain and smooth dark gray stained outlined edging per the attached drawings. *(See figure 1.)*
- Note that the attached images with proposed columns at the foot of the driveway has been removed from this application.

REAR YARD

- Extend proposed driveway in rear yard to create turn around space with a planting bed in the center of the area. *(See figure 2)*
- Install one 10'x2.5'x1.5' concrete planter box by the back door.
- All concrete paving shall have cobblestone patterned stamping with grey stain and smooth dark gray stained outlined edging per the attached drawings.

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- Maintain planted pine tree in center planting bed, add boulders to perimeter of center planting bed.
- Note that the attached images with the waterfall feature in the center of the planting area has been removed from this application.

FRONT YARD

- Remove all front yard lawn and berm lawn.
- Expand width of concrete walkway from 4' to 7' from the front porch bottom step to 6' length along walkway. (See figure 3)
- **Install 6'x6' concrete pad for garbage/recycle bin storage to match driveway at front, southwest corner of house behind barberry shrubs. (See figure 6)**
- All concrete paving shall have cobblestone patterned stamping with grey stain and smooth dark gray stained outlined edging per the attached drawings.
- Install concrete block wall and 38" high, 20" square concrete columns per the attached drawing. Concrete blocks shall be "onyx". (See figures 3-5)
- Attach lights on top of concrete columns.
- Install black metal edging to outline flower beds and rock beds per attached photos.
- Install boulders and decorative rocks in flower beds and rock beds per attached photos.
- Install ground cover plantings per the attached photos.

SIDE (NORTH) YARD

- **Install 6' tall iron fence with gate along north edge of property with a gate facing the front yard, connecting to the northwest corner of the house. (See figure 7.)**



Figure 2, by Applicant: Proposed rear yard

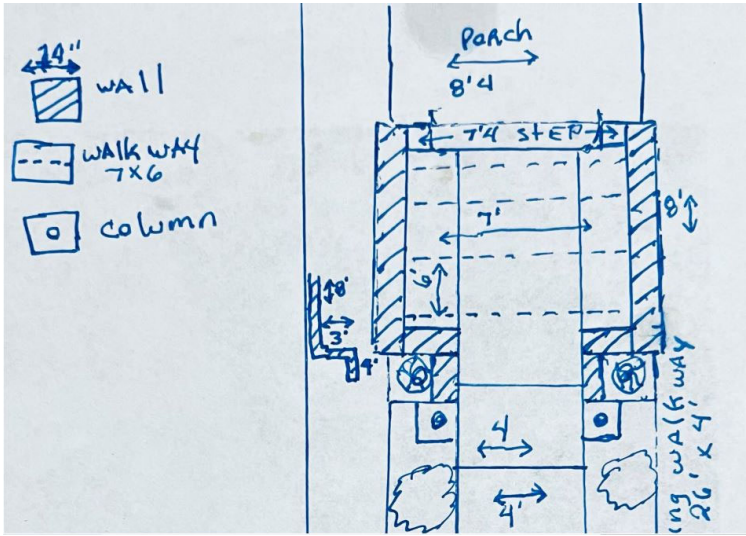


Figure 3, by Applicant: Proposed front walkway

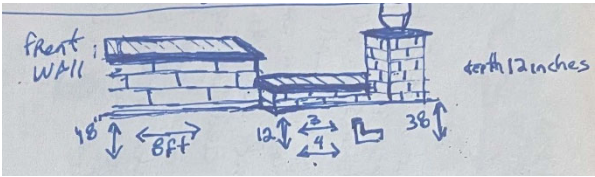


Figure 4, by Applicant: Proposed front wall and columns

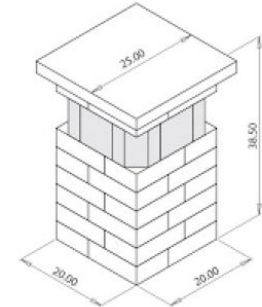


Figure 5, by Applicant: Proposed front walkway columns

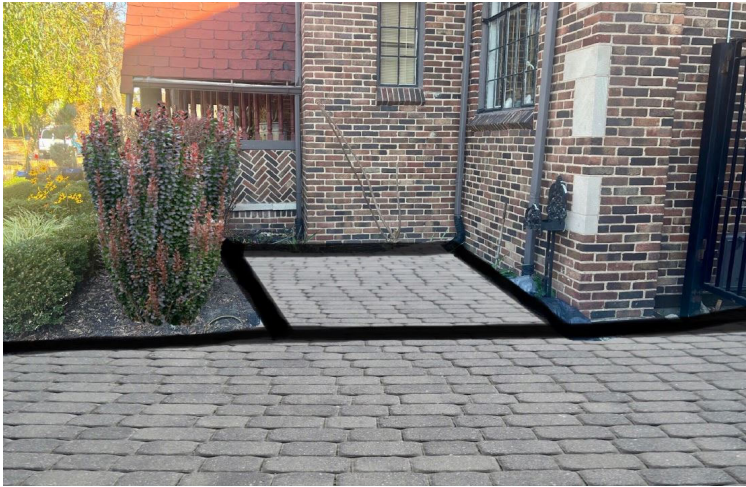


Figure 6, by Applicant: Southwest corner of house, showing proposed garbage/recycling storage pad

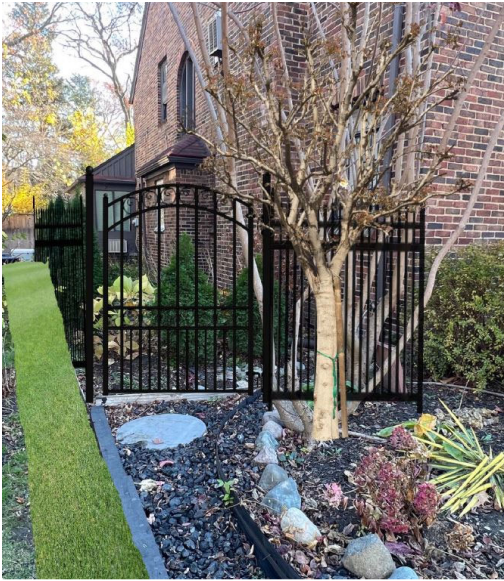


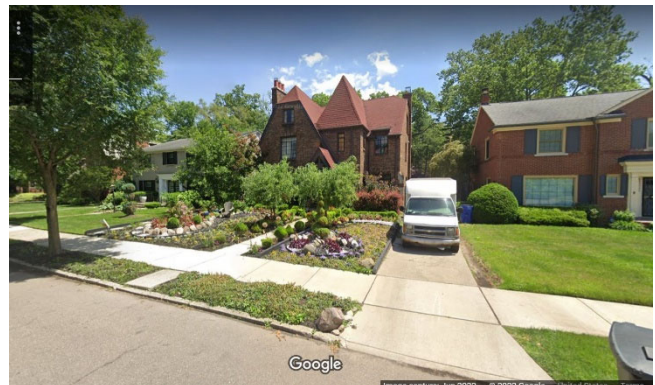
Figure 7, by Applicant: Northwest corner of house showing proposed iron gate and fence.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Sherwood Forest Historic District was established in 2002.
- The current owner acquired this property in January 2011.
- Upon receipt of the application, Staff requested the following additional information which has not been received at the date of this report:
 - A narrative that explains the purpose of the proposed front walkway and driveway expansion and the proposed wall for the front yard.
 - Clarification on the extent of the proposed concrete stamping and staining for all proposed paving.
 - Proposed light fixture and fence design, dimensions, materials and details for the proposed columns.
- Staff visited the site on three separate occasions October 4-24, 2022 and observed the property and adjacent front yards in the neighborhood.
- Staff observed that the driveway was already removed, and grading work has begun to increase the width of the driveway footprint.
- Staff also observed that the front yard landscape planting has been complete for some time and observed that front yard, black-painted wood beams were not securely embedded in the ground both on the neighboring lot line and in the berm: there appears to be no footing or subsurface beams to keep the beams from heaving and lifting from the ground. (see Site photo 4)
- Staff observed that the steel edging is readily visible. Although the applicant states that adjacent plants will eventually hide this edging, staff observed that the plants are mostly the type that will not be present during off-season months and the edging is a visual component that adds yet another material type in the landscape in addition to the wood beams, stones, boulders, and concrete blocks. It is staff's opinion that this mixture of materials and plant types detracts from this historic property by introducing a landscape that lacks *legibility* and *cohesion*. In other words, the former lawn and its support of the Walls of Continuity in the Elements of Design of Sherwood Forest unified the relationship of this property to its historic surroundings but is now occupied by a range of landscape materials that collectively creates a *new primary element*, which no long supports the Tudor architecture nor the cohesion of this property's landscape with its neighbors. Staff recommends a reduction in the number of types of materials, particularly edge materials, to support greater cohesion and legibility in the design of this historic landscape.
- It is staff's opinion that proposed front yard wall's design, concrete block materiality and scale detracts from the house's historic Tudor design. The Elements of Design describe the *Rhythm of Entrance and/or Porch Projects* as "entrance and porch types relate to the style of the building..." and it is staff's opinion



Site Photo 4, by staff, October 21, 2022: (West) extent of landscape and wood beams not secured in ground.



Site Photo 5, by Google June 2022: (West) showing adjacent neighbors' lawns.

that the proposed design also does not meet Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, specifically Standards 2, 5 and 9.

- It is staff opinion that the original widths of the pathway and driveway and the original front lawn are historic character defining features that contributes to the *Walls of Continuity* and *Relationship of Significant Landscape Features and Surface Treatments* of the Elements of Design of the Sherwood Forest Historic District ([See Section 25-2-141 \(e\)12-13](#)).:

(12) Walls of continuity. *“Where common setbacks of houses on relatively straight stretches of residential streets exist, strong walls of continuity are created. This is augmented by tall, fluted light standards and mature trees on the tree lawns. Where streets curve and the procession of houses is less visible, landscape features in the public right-of-way create a sense of continuity.”*

(13) Relationship of significant landscape features and surface treatments. *“The typical treatment of individual properties is that of a dwelling erected on a grade of approximately fifteen (15) to twenty (20) inches above the inner grade line of the public sidewalk. The front lawn area is generally covered with grass turf, subdivided by a straight or curving concrete, stone or brick walk leading to the front entrance and a single width side driveway leading to a garage, which is most often located at the rear of the lot but sometimes attached to the rear, side or, less frequently, the front of the main dwelling. On corner lots, garages are located on the side streets and the width of the driveway corresponds to the width of the garage...”*

It is staff’s opinion that the introduction of a new wall feature and the wholesale replacement of the front lawn with various materials destroys the rhythm of the open lawn landscape that is historically established in this neighborhood and the adjacent properties. Also, the alteration of the driveway and front yard pathway widths detracts from the relationship to their destinations as described in the Elements of Design’s *Relationship of significant landscape features and surface treatments*. , i.e., the wider driveway and proposed paved turn-around exceeds the width of its relationship to the garage and the pathway to the width of the front porch steps. Furthermore, it is staff’s opinion that the introduction of stamped, color treated concrete, especially within public view of the front and side yards (front pathway and driveway), detracts from the Element’s Design’s recognition of authentic pathway materials such as concrete, brick or stone by altering concrete to appear as something that it is not, ie, the proposed grey stained, stamped concrete in cobblestone format. The applicant did state that an alternative material for both surfaces would be an unstained, unstamped concrete with exposed aggregate. This alternative, in Staff’s opinion, would be appropriate.

- It is staff’s opinion that an alternative approach for the front yard landscape would be to retain some areas of lawn that connects with the public berm and adjacent resident’s lawn to create cohesion with the historic neighborhood fabric of the front lawn.
- Although not within public view, and in response to the applicant’s stated desire to replace chemically treated,



Site Photo 6, by Applicant October 2022: (East) showing rear yard conditions and locations of proposed turn around space, center planting bed and side raised planter (right).

irrigated lawns with other materials, staff observed that the rear yard expansion of the driveway, **the garbage/recycling pad**, and turn-around greatly increases the amount of impervious paving surface that may affect the management stormwater run-off. (See Site Photo 6 and Figure 2.)

ISSUES

- Except for the proposed front yard wall, front walkway expansion, **fence, and garbage/recycling pad**, all proposed work is complete or started without HDC approval.
- It is staff's opinion that the wholesale removal of the front yard lawn, the introduction of a new wall, the mix-match of material edges in the landscape and the widening of both the front walkway and the front driveway with stamped, stained concrete destroys the original *scale, design, and materiality* of both the pedestrian and vehicular pathways and introduces a new elements that are incompatible, illegible, not cohesive and inappropriate for this historic property, and therefore does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation nor the Elements of Design as described earlier.
- **It is staff's opinion that the recent added concrete pad in the front yard is also inappropriate as the function for the use of storage of materials, even partially screened during a portion of the year, is not an appropriate location and would more readily be stored in the back yard, out of public view.**
- Staff questions the execution of how landscape edging materials were installed and therefore questions the quality and durability of these materials in the front yard landscape.

RECOMMENDATION

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

Recommendation 1: Installation of Front Yard Wall, Expansion of Sidewalk and Driveway with Stamped, Color-treated Concrete, and installation of Rear Concrete Turn-Around

Staff finds that the replacement of the original pathway and driveway with a single wider concrete driveway, the curbcut, **installation of the storage concrete pad in the front yard**, and the alteration of the front yard with the installation of the raised earth terrace and installation of the retaining wall destroys the historic character of this property and removes distinctive, character-defining features.

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the above work items, as it does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, 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 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 will not destroy historic materials, features and spatial relationships that characterize the property. The new work will be differentiated from

the old and will be compatible with the historic materials, features, size, scale and proportion, and massing to protect the integrity of the property and its environment.

Recommendation 2: Installation of Front Yard Landscape, Rear Raised Planter Box, Front Yard Pathway and Driveway

It is staff's opinion that the front yard and rear yard landscape work proposed, other than the use of stamped, color-treated concrete and the widening of the front pathway, **concrete pad** or driveway, retains and preserves the historic character of the building, its site, and setting. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness as the proposed work meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

However, staff recommends that the Commission issue this Certificate of Appropriateness with the following conditions:

- The applicant work with staff to introduce some areas of lawn in the public berm and front yard and to issue more appropriate material in the landscape that reduces the number of edge materials to create a more cohesive and legible design.
- The applicant work with staff to adjust the design of the driveway and walkway with the following changes:
 - Maintain the walkway's historic width.
 - Maintain the driveway to a width no wider than 10' until it approaches the garage, and then to be no wider than the garage itself.
 - To have both the walkway and driveway be of material that is either concrete (non-stamped, non-color treated), brick or stone.
- **The applicant work with staff to confirm the following for the proposed iron fence:**
 - **A site plan that shows that the fence does not project past the front face of the house.**
 - **A product sheet that confirms the dimensions and materiality of the fence and gate.**
- The above conditions are reviewed and approved by staff before execution.