

STAFF REPORT: 2/9/2022 MEETING

APPLICATION NUMBER: #22-7664

VIOLATION NUMBER: #544

ADDRESS: 2485 BURNS

HISTORIC DISTRICT: INDIAN VILLAGE

APPLICANT: TERRY SWAFFORD

PROPERTY OWNER: JARED STASIK

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 1/18/2022

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 1/25/2022

PREPARED BY: D. RIEDEN

SCOPE: ALTER FRONT PORCH; ALTERATIONS AT REAR PORCH AND SECOND FLOOR SLEEPING PORCH COMPLETED WITHOUT APPROVAL

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Built in 1930, the property at 2485 Burns is a 2 ½ story, Georgian Revival home that sits on the northern side of a vast, one-acre property in the middle of the block. The hip roof features two dormers symmetrically located over the shuttered windows below. The building is clad in red brick with limestone detailing around the windows. Patinated copper downspouts line each front elevation edge and is visible around the north side of the front entrance porch balcony. This central balcony protrudes from the arching window and side lights and is supported by highly detailed column supports that frame the front entrance with a similar arching transom. The front yard is minimally landscaped with an evergreen hedgerow that embraces the front concrete walkway. The grand yard is surrounded by an iron wrought fence with brick column posts capped by matching limestone. From the southeast side of the house, the rear sunporch, now enclosed is publicly visible.



Site Photo 1, by Staff January 25, 2022: (Northeast) front elevation.



Site Photo 2, by Staff January 25, 2022: (Southeast) front and side elevations showing rear, former screen-in porch.

This property has the following HDC approvals on Detroit Property Information System (DPI).

- July 2017, Certificate of Appropriateness (COA): Replace rear, screened porch per approved drawings.

There are outstanding violations for work done without approval:

- January 2022, Application: Rear screened porch altered with a design inconsistent with the 2017 COA. Windows and siding replaced without approval on rear 2nd floor extension, identified in this application as the “sleeping porch”.



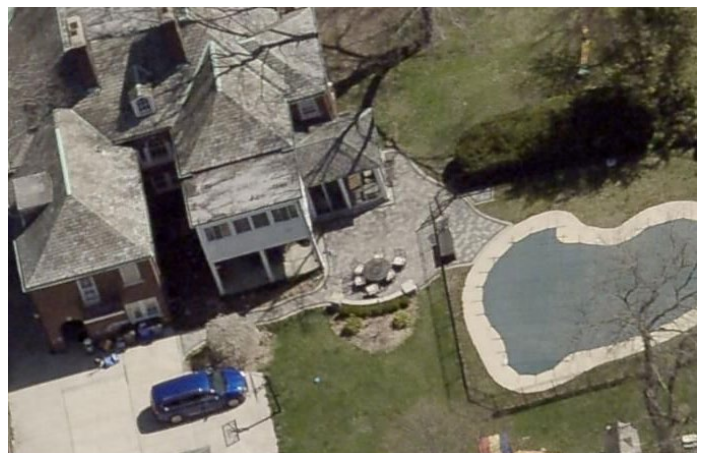
Sanborn V8, P065.



Aerial 1 of Parcel # 17006629 by Detroit Parcel Viewer, highlighting property with adjacent lot (not highlighted).



Aerial 2, by All Pictometry March 2018: (Southeast) rear elevation showing original windows of sleeping porch and screen-in porch.



Aerial 3, by All Pictometry April 2020: (Southeast) rear elevation showing replaced windows of sleeping porch and screen-in porch.



Site Photo 3, by Applicant: (Southeast) rear elevation showing new windows and siding of upper "sleeping porch" and former screened porch.



Site Photo 4, by Applicant of 2017: (Southeast) rear elevation showing original screened porch, rear house window and door, and view to yard.

PROPOSAL

The scope of work under review includes several different projects. The initial applicant is a contractor submitting the front porch proposal. Upon receipt of this proposal, staff observed that there were several violations at the rear of the property, which the owner directly addressed and identified as the 2nd floor “sleeping porch” and the rear porch. Staff pulled excerpts from the applicant’s narrative to identify individual scope items found within the application. All scope items at the rear of the property are work complete unless noted as “Proposed”. See also attached photos and narrative.

Front Porch Alteration

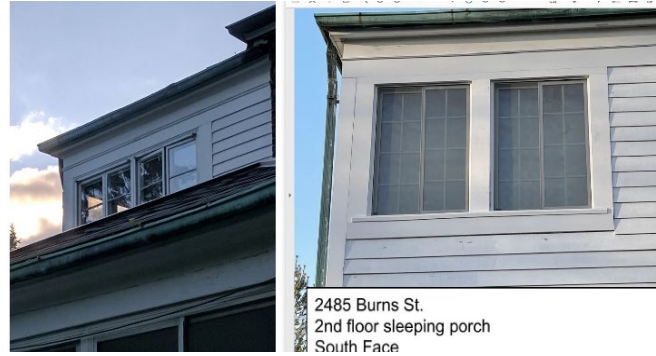
- Expand Porch:
 - Demolish, excavate and haul away existing front porch
 - Compact infill
 - Install pavers (Old World Vintage Series “Holland-Antique Blend” 4in by 8in units cement pavers) with sand infill at two levels:
 - First level in a semi-circle, 27ft, 5in wide
 - Second level (supports balcony columns) in semi-circle, 10ft 11in wide
 - Install limestone step perimeter with crushed limestone infill
- Install Wingwalls:
 - At each end of new first level porch, install two (2) partial wing walls (8ft long, 2.3ft high, 6in wide) terminating the semi-circle that consist of railing, newel post and balusters, with a planter bowl/vessel (1ft tall) on top of the leading newel post.

Front Porch Repair and Gutter Replacement

- Repair four (4) columns:
 - Two (2) round columns: Prop balcony, remove, strip all paint layers, repair surface, re-work (or replace) previous replacement portion (lower 5”), prime, paint two (2) coats in Guardian exterior or equivalent, re-install.
 - Two (2) box pilasters (at front door): same as above with fewer repairs.
- Repair four (4) capitals:
 - Two (2) remove, strip, repair as needed, prime, paint, and reinstall.
- Repair four (4) bases:
 - Two (2) round: rebuild to match existing.
 - Four (4) square: first layer box
 - Two (2) 2nd level at house: strip, surface repair, prime and paint.
- Repair Balcony/Deflection/Porch Roof/ceiling:
 - Prop balcony into the proper position after columns have been removed, ensure copper roof flashing edge is thoroughly inserted into masonry groove (original placement before deflection) attach structurally, from underneath, after ceiling is removed.
 - Replace bead board ceiling
 - Replace inset ceiling panels with matching components
- Paint Door Surround:
 - Lower panels on sidelights and frame returns, repair/ replace rotten wood
 - Seal, prime, paint all remaining parts of front porch
- Replace Gutter and Fascia:
 - Replace ½ round gutters in bronze (or other preferred color) aluminum across façade and around both side returns.
 - Replace fascia and install extended copper drip edge under slate to ensure proper water capture by the new gutters.

Rear 2nd Floor Sleeping Porch

- Replaced 7" wood clapboard siding with 7" cement board siding (Hardie Board) to match overlapping pattern of existing wood.
- Replaced damaged wood with pressure-treated lumber, added house-wrap to prevent moisture damage. Added trim board at the exterior corners.
- Painted white to match existing siding color.
- Replaced all metal casements and fixed windows with vinyl slider windows, muntins between the glass. The design configuration of the glass was changed from 4 divide lights per pane to 2x4 simulated divided light with a between-the-glass-grid.

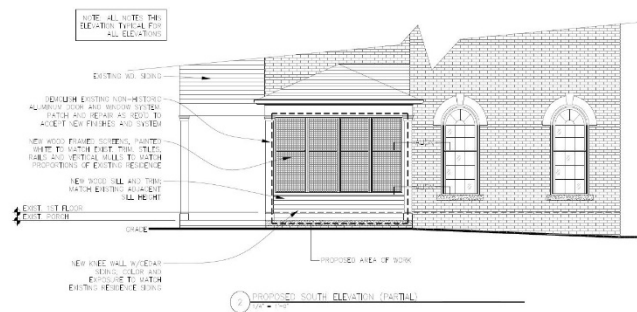


Site Photos 5 and 6, by Applicant: (Southeast) rear elevation showing before and after conditions of the sleeping porch siding and windows: metal casements replaced with vinyl sliders; mitered, wood clapboard replaced with trim board and Hardie board.

Rear 1st Floor Screen Porch

The replacement of the rear screened porch, as approved by the 2017 HDC's COA was built with several changes to the originally approved design. The sketches provided by the applicant were also deviated by the homeowner due to availability of materials. As a result, there are no accurate as-built drawings available. However, the photos provided by the applicant shows several modifications from the approved 2017 drawings as follows:

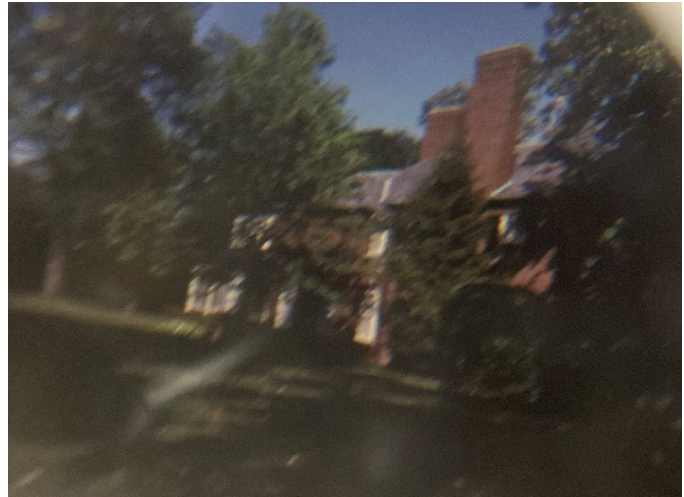
- Removed all aluminum sliding doors and tracks.
- Maintained fascia board below gutter and paint white.
- All screened-in knee walls replaced with full walls and windows:
 - Northeast Face: 6'1" length with 1 window @ 36", centered
 - Southeast Face: 11'6" length with 2 windows @ 41" each, centered
 - Southwest Face: 13'2" length with 2 windows @ 27" each and 1 door @ 34", evenly divided
- Installed Marvin Signature wood windows
- Installed Thermatru fiberglass door and Provia steel storm door
- Installed 7" Hardie board to match sleeping room siding.
- Add two exterior electrical outlets, fed from box existing outlets in screen porch
- Paint siding white to match all other wood on house exterior
- The floor plan dimensions remain the same as the original porch.



Drawing 1, by Applicant: (Southeast) side elevation excerpt from 2017 COA showing approved new knee wall and original columns.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- Indian Village Historic District was established in 1971.
- Staff observed that the Sanborn map of this property shows that both the rear porch and the rear sleeping room are not shown as part of the original structures to the house. Staff found a hard copy of the designation slide for this property on file, showing the rear porch. Also, due to the method of the construction, Staff has the opinion that the rear sleeping porch was likely present at the time of historic designation. The owner stated that they did not know the construction of these additions as they predate their previous owner, but they offered the opinion that they were likely constructed in the 1960s or 1970s, as stated by their window restoration consultant.
- Staff confirmed with the owner that the original metal casements of the sleeping porch are in storage.
- Staff has the opinion that the rear sleeping porch's wood clap board siding with the mitered corners and the operation of the casement windows with true-divided light were distinctive, character-defining features. The mitered edge of the clapboard has been replaced with trim board, the casement windows with vinyl sliders with between-the-glass grids that do not match the configuration, design, material or operation of the original windows. Although this location is not within prime public view, it is staff's opinion that the loss of the casement windows reduces the open-air quality of the sleeping porch and replacement of the mitered edge clapboard with board trim reduces the craftsmanship of the siding. Vinyl windows of this type and quality are inappropriate.
- Staff has the opinion that the open-air quality of the rear, first story screen-in porch, which was approved to introduce a modest knee wall and approved by the HDC in 2017 is a distinctive, character-defining structure. This porch, publicly viewed from the front, had a quality of light transparency with matching character-defining columns that was destroyed by the construction of the solid block massing. This impervious form hides the rear French doors and arched windows (see photos 2-4 & 7) and reads like an addition rather than a porch. Staff also observed that the corner columns of the screen-in porch have been removed on the southwest wall panel and not retained as described in this application. The addition of vinyl transoms over the 2x3 double hung wood windows introduces a new material and pattern that does not complement the existing 3x3 configuration of existing windows of the house.
- Staff confirmed with the owner that the original rear French doors and windows of the house that opens into the screen porch have not been modified.
- Staff did not have access to the hard copy files for this property to produce a copy of the COA issued in 2017, nor the designation photo for this location. However, the Detroit Property Information system did confirm the generation of this COA. Staff confirmed by checking the July 26, 2017 minutes, that this



*Designation Photo, by Historic District Advisory Board, 1971:
(Southeast) side elevation showing rear screen porch with original
columns in white, center-left of this photo.*



*Site Photo 7, by Applicant: (Southeast) side elevation view from
sidewalk showing original screen in porch.*

COA was approved through consent agenda and the applicant's drawings from the COA matches that of the Staff Report from that meeting.

- Staff observed that the existing front porch features cast stone capping and matching brick underlay detailing that matches the material, scale and color of the house (See photo 8). Staff offers the opinion that the rectangular shape and material of the porch, especially the top step that supports the columns, is a character defining feature that supports the symmetry and geometry of this Georgian Revival architecture.
- It is staff's opinion that the introduction of 4x8 cement pavers, replacement of the square form with circular forms, and the introduction of wingwalls destroys the character defining features of the front elevation critical to an understanding of the building's style by obscuring the front elevation windows and introducing a new style and historically anachronistic material, scale and design that is not appropriate.
- Staff does offer the observation that retaining the original material of the porch, its rectangular form and scale of the top step supporting the columns, and the potential expansion of the porch floor minus the balustrade ("wingwall") could be an appropriate solution that would meet the Standards.
- Staff offers the opinion that the proposed front porch repair and gutter replacement is consistent with the scale, design, and material of the historic character of the property.



Site Photo 8, by Applicant: (Northeast) front elevation showing current conditions of the front porch.



Conceptual image, by Applicant: (Northeast) front elevation showing proposed new patio and "wingwalls".

ISSUES

- It is staff's opinion that the replacement of wood siding to Hardie Board and the replacement of casement windows with vinyl sliders that do not match in design, configuration, material or operation has destroyed the original *scale, design, and materiality* of this historic property, and therefore does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- It is staff's opinion that the full replacement of the rear screened in porch, which is publicly in view from the front yard with a design that did not conform to the HDC's COA, changes the character from an open air porch to a enclosed room with window and transom configurations that do not match the house has destroyed the original *scale, design, and materiality* of this historic property, and therefore does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- It is staff's opinion that the proposal to change the front porch's material from cast stone and limestone to cement block that does not match the house's material nor scale, changing the shape of the front porch to a circular form and introducing "wing walls" that obscure's the front elevation the house's Georgian Revival architecture would destroy the original *scale, design, and materiality* of this historic property, and therefore does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Staff found no issue with the proposal to restore the front porch as proposed in this application.

RECOMMENDATION

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

Recommendation #1: Rear sleeping porch repair, rear screen-in porch and front porch modifications:

Staff finds that the replacement of wood siding with Hardie board, the replacement of casement windows of the rear sleeping porch with vinyl slider windows, the modification of the rear screen-in porch to an enclosed room, the proposal to replace the front porch cast stone with cement pavers, the redesign of the front porch from rectangular to circular form, and the installation of wingwalls 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.

3. Each property shall be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or architectural elements from other buildings, shall not be undertaken.

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 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.

Recommendation #2: Repair of rear sleeping porch siding, repair of front porch, expansion of lower porch step:

It is staff's opinion that the proposed residing of the rear sleeping porch, repair of the front porch, and the proposed expansion of the lower front porch step 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.

Staff recommends the COA be issued with the following conditions:

- The top surface of the front porch floor remain the same in dimension, material and size to support the existing columns.
- The proposed lower step of the front porch consist of the same surface material as the original top step or brick that matches in material and scale of the house with a limestone perimeter step.
- The proposed lower step retain the rectangular form as the original step and reach no wider that the outer limits of the first set of windows on either side of the door.
- The applicant provide HDC staff a revised plan of this front porch for review and approval.





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