

ADDRESS: 1652 EDISON

APPLICATION NO: #23-8240

HISTORIC DISTRICT: BOSTON EDISON

APPLICANT: AGHOGHO EDEVBIE

OWNER: AGHOGHO EDEVBIE

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 2/28/2023

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 2/13/2023

SCOPE: ALTER FRONT PORCH, REMOVE REAR ENCLOSED PORCH, AND INSTALL REAR DECK

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The property located at 1652 Edison includes a Tudor Revival house that was constructed ca. 1916. The home has a side-gabled central/main mass with a projecting wing that is topped by a broad front-gabled roof which features stucco and half-timber detailing. Exterior walls are primarily faced with orange brick, however the first floor exterior wall, spanning the front porch, is faced with stone. The stone was in place at the time of designation. A shed-roof, one-story porch with brick columns extends the length of the building's front elevation. Each of the porch's outermost columns features a wood bracket which ties each column to the building's primary elevation. Black slate tiles cover the front porch deck/floor while faux slate/ceramic tiles and metal nosing are located at the front porch steps. The porch flooring, tile and nosing strip at the stairs, and wood brackets were added to the porch without Historic District Commission (HDC) approval in 2017. A partial-width wood deck was installed at the building's rear elevation ca. 2019, also without HDC approval. Windows are aluminum-clad, double-hung wood units which were installed in 2019.



1652 Edison, current appearance, staff photo taken 2/28/2023



Front porch, current appearance, showing slate tiles added without HDC approval in 2017

PROPOSAL

With the current submission, the applicant is seeking the Commission's approval of work items which were **completed between ca. 2017-2019** without HDC approval to include the following:

Rear/North Elevation

- Remove an enclosed porch (photographic documentation not available)
- Erect a wood deck **which measures +/- 139 inches wide and 144 inches deep. The porch stairs are approximately 47 inches wide and 54 inches long. The railing is approximately 37 inches from deck to railing, and the porch from grade to deck is approximately 33 inches. The porch is not painted or stained**
- At first story, remove a door and enclose opening with wood panel (painted white)
- At first story, remove a window and enclose opening with wood panel (painted white)

Front/South Elevation, Front Porch

- At the the outermost/eastern and western brick columns, reduce the height and add a masonry cap
- At porch roof, above the outermost/eastern and western brick columns, install wood "brackets" to tie columns to exterior wall
- At porch floor/deck, install black slate tiles
- At porch steps (risers and treads), install black ceramic/faux slate tiles and metal nosing strips

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- Per the below photos, in 2017 a former owner of the property undertook a number of exterior work items without HDC approval and/or permit to include the following:
 - Replaced all windows with new vinyl and glassblock units

- Enclosed a window and door opening at the rear elevation, first story
- Removal of an enclosed porch at the rear elevation, west end
- At the front porch, add new wood cladding over brick columns, add new wood brackets at roofline, and install slate tile at porch flooring/deck and ceramic tile and metal nosing strips at steps



Google Streetview image of 1652 Edison, appearance in 2015 prior to the unapproved work which was undertaken in 2017.



Google Streetview image of 1652 Edison, appearance in 2017 after the unapproved work

The Detroit building department cited the property for completing the work without HDC approval which led the property owner to submit an application for the unapproved work

items to the Commission for review at their regular 11/8/2017 meeting. The Commission reviewed the application and denied the scope in its entirety.

- In 2019, HDC staff approved an application for the replacement the non-compliant/unapproved vinyl and glassblock windows with new double-hung, aluminum clad wood windows with a light configuration that matched the original wood windows which were removed without COA. Please see that this work was completed by the previous property owner.
- HDC staff notes that wood paneling/cladding which had been added to the front porch's outermost brick columns without approval has been removed. However, the wood brackets at the porch roof, the slate tile at the porch floor, and the tile and nosing strips at the front porch stairs which were added without COA still remain. The current property owner has therefore submitted the current application to the Commission in an effort to seek this body's approval of the non-compliant work items which remain from the 2017 rehabilitation. See the below photo for the house's current appearance.
- Staff notes that the current applicant/property owner has only recently purchased the property and the unapproved work which is the subject of the current application was completed by a previous owner

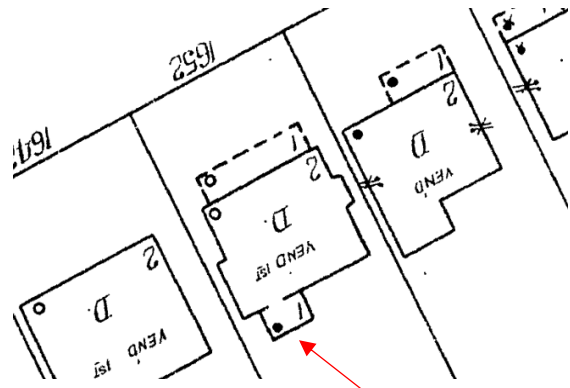


1652 Edison, staff photo showing current appearance. Note that the vinyl windows and glassblock windows were replaced in 2019 with new aluminum clad wood units and the wood has been removed from the corner columns at the front porch. However, note that the unapproved wood brackets above those columns, at the porch roof, and the slate tiles at the porch steps and floor remain.

- Per the current application, an enclosed porch at the rear façade's west end was removed without approval during the 2017 rehabilitation. See the below photo which indicates the location of the former porch. A Sanborn Fire Insurance map from 1971 indicates that the porch was added sometime after 1971 and therefore was not historic age. However, note that the current applicant was unable to access a photo/image of the porch.



Rear of 1642 Edison, current appearance. Ghosting indicates the location of former porch (west end) removed in 2017



Rear of 1642 Edison, 1971 Sanborn map. Note that the map indicates an enclosed porch on the opposite/east end of the rear elevation vs the porch which was removed in 2017

- Staff does recommend that the plywood door and window infill which was added without COA at the rear elevation be painted a neutral/brown color which in more in keeping with the color of the brick. Also, the new wood rear deck should be painted or stained a color which in in keeping with that found at the home’s trim.

ISSUES

- It is staff’s opinion that the front porch brick elements which were replaced in 2017 were highly-visible, distinctive character-defining elements of the property. Therefore, according to the Secretary of the Interior Standards, if these elements were deteriorated they should have been repaired. If the elements were deteriorated beyond repair, they should have been replaced in kind/to replicate the original. It is staff’s opinion that the current wood brackets are not an adequate replication of the original brick elements. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission deny this work item. However, please note that staff does recommend that the wood brackets be painted one uniform color to match the building’s trim if the Commission does decide the approve the current wood brackets.
- Similarly, it is staff’s opinion that the concrete steps and porch floor were highly-visible, distinctive, character-defining elements of the property. The installation of black slate tiles at the porch floor in addition to the ceramic/faux slate tiles and metal nosing at the porch steps do not meet the Standards as the new elements do not replicate the original concrete material. Also, the new porch floor and stair elements are incompatible with the building’s historic appearance as they appear to be more appropriate for an interior application and are not in keeping with the home’s Tudor Revival stylistic detailing.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation #1). Section 21-2-78. Determination of the Historic District Commission – Denial

It is staff’s opinion that the replacement of the original brick brackets, slate flooring at the front porch deck, and ceramic tile at the front porch steps do not meet the Secretary of Interior Standards for the following reasons:

- The original brick brackets, concrete floor, and concrete steps at the front porch were distinctive, character-defining features of the property. Per the Standards, the elements should have been repaired or replaced in kind versus the current treatment.

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the wood brackets at the front porch roof, the slate tile at the front porch floor, and the ceramic tile and metal nosing at the front

porch steps because they do not meet the district's Elements of Design nor meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, specifically Standards:

5). Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.

and

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

Recommendation #2). Section 21-2-78. Determination of the Historic District Commission – Certificate of Appropriateness

HDC staff recommends that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the remaining work items because they meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and conform to the Elements of Design for the district. However, staff does recommend that the Commission issue this COA with the following conditions:

- The plywood door and window infill at the rear elevation shall be painted a neutral/brown color which is in keeping/compatible with the color of the brick.
- The new wood rear deck shall be painted or stained a color which is keeping/compatible with the home's trim color