

STAFF REPORT: 7/12/2023 REGULAR MEETING

PREPARED BY: J. ROSS

ADDRESS: 19435 CANTERBURY

APPLICATION NO: #23-8437

HISTORIC DISTRICT: SHERWOOD FOREST

APPLICANT/OWNER: WILLIAM LEWNAU

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 6/30/2023

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 6/18/2023

SCOPE: INSTALL SECURITY CAMERAS ON POLE IN FRONT YARD

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The resource at 19435 Canterbury is a 2 ½-story, Tudor Revival-style, single-family dwelling that was erected ca. 1920. The handsome home features a central hipped-roof mass with hipped-roof dormers. The roof is covered with black asphalt shingles and is topped with a brick chimney. A second monumental brick chimney is located at the building's front elevation. The exterior walls are clad with red brick, set in a running bond pattern with intermittent projecting clinker bricks. Stone is found at door and window surrounds, while stucco and half-timber detailing is located at gable end and dormers. Windows are the historic steel casement units. Two security cameras are located at the building's front elevation while an additional two security cameras are mounted on a pole (material unknown) at the edge of the lawn. A motion activated security light is located in the eaves at the home's side elevation.



Location of pole-mounted security cameras

19435 Canterbury, current appearance. Photo taken by staff, 6/30/2023

PROPOSAL

With the current application, the property owner is seeking the Commission's approval to install a pole with mounted security cameras within the property's front yard, adjacent to the sidewalk. Please note that this work has been completed without HDC approval (see the below).



19435 Canterbury, current appearance. Photo taken by staff, 6/30/2023

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- A review of HDC files indicated that staff issued a Certificate of Appropriateness for the following work items in 2019 (see 2019 COA on property page):
 - Restore original front entrance door
 - Restore original windows
 - Tuckpoint brick as needed
 - Apply new grout around limestone
 - **Install security camera**

Staff reviewed the documentation that was submitted with the 2019 application and noted that it does not include a detailed scope of work. However, the 2019 application documentation did include spec sheets for a security camera. The documentation also included an email between the then applicant/contractor and a representative of the former owner which stated that “there will be no changes to the exterior front façade other than the addition of security cameras, complete restoration of the original front entry door refreshing brick by tuckpointing with matching grout where needed, re-grouting around limestone where needed with matching grout, and restoration of original windows.” Despite the fact that the current *HDC Security and Lighting Guidelines* (approved May 2023) do not give staff the authority to approve the mounting of security cameras to front elevations, staff does accept that the 2019 COA covers the two security cameras which are currently mounted on the home’s front elevation as the email submitted with the 2019 application refers to security cameras within the context of changes proposed for the “exterior front façade.” However, staff does note that the pole mounted security cameras which are the subject of the current application are not mentioned in the documentation which was submitted with the 2019 application nor is it mentioned in the staff-issued COA.

- Staff received a report re: the installation of pole with attached security cameras within the property’s front yard in August 2021. Staff reviewed our files and noted that the work had not been approved via the 2019 COA. Staff therefore sent a notice of the unapproved work to the then owner in September 2021. A second follow up notice was sent to the current owner in December 2022 re: the pole with attached security cameras. The current owner has therefore submitted the current application to the Commission for review and approval of the current pole with attached security cameras.
- Please see the applicant’s narrative which notes why he installed the pole with cameras attached
- A review of Google Streetview images and records maintained by the Detroit building department and the Historic District Commission (HDC) indicate that the following work was undertaken at the property without HDC approval sometime between 2019 and 2022:
 - New landscaping at front and rear yard
 - New hardscape at front and rear yard to include replacement of concrete driveway with 2-track brick driveway and replacement of slate walkway at front yard with brick walkway
 - Replace deteriorated front porch with new front porch of a different footprint, material, and dimension
 - At rear porch, install new columns
 - At front elevation second-story gable end, replace stucco and half-timber detail with new stucco and half-timber detailing
 - Install new asphalt shingle roof with aluminum flashing

Staff did alert the applicant/property owner re: the above-listed existing unapproved work and offered them the opportunity to add the items to her current application so that the Commission might address the work. However, staff received no response to her correspondence as of the date of this report’s completion.

ISSUES

- Staff does note that it is common to find pole-mounted light fixtures in front lawns and in the berm area/public right-of-way within the historic district. Indeed, staff did identify three such pole mounted lights in front yards in the direct vicinity/in the same block as 19435 Canterbury. However, these light standards are of a style and scale that is compatible with the historic character of the neighborhood. Additionally, it appears that the only non-

historic vertical elements of a utilitarian style present in the front yard/berm areas in the near vicinity is signage.

- The area visible from the public right-of-way within the vicinity of 19435 Cambridge (street bed, berm area, and front yards) is devoid of modern, utilitarian intrusions such as stoplights, utility poles, pole mounted security cameras, utilitarian-style light poles, etc. The current/proposed pole-mounted security camera installation is an anomaly within the neighborhood and presents an appearance that is highly incompatible with the historic character of 19345 Canterbury and its surrounds due to its location, scale, and utilitarian appearance.
- The Commission’s *Security and Lighting Guidelines* emphasize the installation of security cameras “within the site/yard in a manner that will not call undue attention to itself.” The current installation is highly visible due to its scale, location, and utilitarian nature.
- For the above-listed reasons, it is staff’s opinion that the proposed pole with mounted security cameras does not meet the Standards and does not conform to the district’s Elements of Design.

RECOMMENDATION

Section 21-2-78. Determination of the Historic District Commission – DENIAL

The proposed pole with mounted security cameras is incompatible with the home’s and district’s historic character for the following reasons:

- The area visible from the public right-of-way within the vicinity of 19435 Cambridge (street bed, berm area, and front yards) is devoid of modern, utilitarian intrusions such as stoplights, utility poles, pole mounted security cameras, utilitarian-style light poles, etc. The current/proposed pole-mounted security camera installation is an anomaly within the neighborhood and presents an appearance that is highly incompatible with the historic character of 19345 Canterbury and its surrounds due to its location, scale, and utilitarian appearance.
- The Commission’s *Security and Lighting Guidelines* emphasize the installation of security cameras “within the site/yard in a manner that will not call undue attention to itself.” The current installation is highly visible due to its scale, location, and utilitarian nature.

HDC staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a *Denial* for the project because it does not meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards, in particular, Standards#:

2). The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

And....

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.