

REVISED STAFF REPORT: 06/12/2024 MEETING
APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC20204-00318
ADDRESS: 1475 LONGFELLOW
HISTORIC DISTRICT: BOSTON-EDISON
APPLICANT: TIM FLINTOFF (4545 ARCHITECTURE)
OWNER: SHARIF AFFAS
DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 5/20/2024
DATE OF STAFF VISIT: 5/29/2024

PREPARED BY: J. ROSS

SCOPE OF WORK: ERECT REAR ADDITION

EXISTING CONDITION

Erected ca. 1915, 1475 Longfellow is a two-story single-family house which is located in the Boston-Edison Historic District. The building is two stories in height and features a side-gabled, asphalt-shingle roof with front-gabled dormers at the front roof slope and shed-roof dormers at the rear slope. Asphalt shingles are also found at the dormer front and sidewalls. Windows are wood-sash, double-hung units as well as non-historic synthetic windows, which were recently added without HDC approval at the side elevations. A partial width porch on wood 2x4 supports is located at the front elevation. Finally, a two-story, shed-roof addition is located at the building's rear elevation. The Commission did not approve this addition.



1475 Longfellow, staff photo taken on 5/29/2024. Facing southeast.

PROPOSAL

As noted above, the property has undergone a number of exterior alterations without Historic District Commission and/or approval. With the current submission, the applicant is seeking the Commission's

approval to retain a number of these unapproved work items. The application also seeks approval of a number of additional work items which have yet to be undertaken. Specifically, per the current application **drawings and scope of work**, the project proposes to undertake the following work items:

Rear Elevation

- Demolish historic-age rear wings (work completed)
- Erect a two-story, shed-roof rear addition. (work completed). Exterior walls shall be clad with cement fiber siding and windows will be single-hung, 1/1, Fibrex/composite units. **Note that the current application is seeking to revise the fenestration at the rear addition to mitigate its appearance/to better reflect the fenestration of the historic rear/southeast wing that was demolished without approval (see the below images of the proposed rear elevation)**
- Wrap the existing rear deck in a composite skirting. Replace the existing wood deck boards, stairs, and railing will be replaced with the Trex composite boards, stairs and railing
- At roof, install new single-hung, Fibrex/composite window and composite lapped siding at shed-roof dormer (work completed)

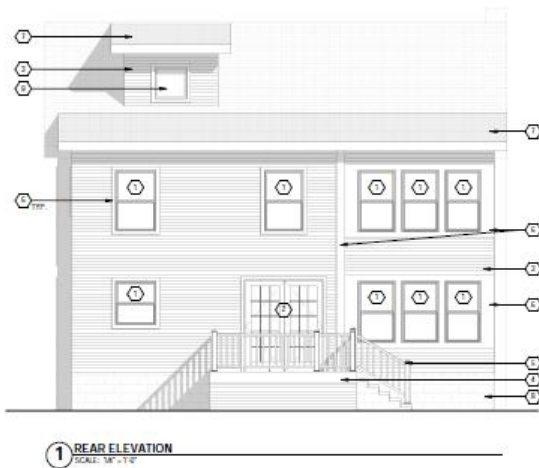


Photo (below) of current rear wall/addition erected without HDC approval and off permit. Drawing (above) depicts proposed rear elevation. The applicant is seeking approval to retain the rear addition with some revisions to/addition of window openings

East Elevation

- Replace original wood window and trim with new 1/1, single-hung Fibrex/composite unit (work completed)
- Demolish the historic-age projecting sunroom bay at first story. Enclose opening with new window and stucco wall

West Elevation

- Replace four original wood windows and trim with new 1/1 single-hung, single-light casement, and single-light fixed Fibrex/composite windows (work completed)

Front Elevation

- Remove the two original front porch wood fluted columns (work completed) and replace with new fiberglass columns, profile to match the existing pilasters which flank the front door (specific dimensions/diameter not provided)
- Replace the existing original wood pilasters which flank the front door with new fiberglass columns, profile to match existing (dimensions/diameter not provided)
- Repair masonry porch, to include the addition of stucco where required
- Replace the existing front door and sidelites which were recently installed without approval with a wood door and sidelite (design based on Anderson Straightline, which include vinyl and aluminum clad wood options, **see the below image of the proposed new front door**). Specific material not outlined
- Replace shutters which were removed without HDC approval (material and specific locations not fully indicated)
- At front porch roof, repair deteriorated wood elements as needed



Proposed new front door (left). Original/historic/character-defining front door which was recently replaced without HDC approval. Note distinctive trim detail which will not be replicated with the current proposed door and sidelites.

All Elevations at Original House

- Repair stucco in kind where necessary at front and side elevations

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- Noted above, the current property owner has undertaken a number of exterior work items without HDC approval and off permit. Specifically, the following work was recently undertaken at the property in violation of the of the Detroit City Code:
 - Remove the original wood shutters at the front and side elevations
 - At the front elevation, main entrance, replace the original wood trim, sidelites and wood door
 - At the front porch, remove the original fluted wood columns
 - At the east elevation, replace one original 6 lite casement wood window and trim with new 1/1, single-hung Fibrex/composite units
 - At the west elevation, replace three original double-hung wood windows and trim with new 1/1 single-hung Fibrex/composite windows
 - At the west elevation, replace one original wood casement window and trim a new single lite fixed Fibrex/composite window
 - At west elevation, remove a single historic-age wood door and replace with a new metal door with fan lite vision panel
 - At the rear shed-roof dormer, replace the original wood window with a new 1/1, single-hung Fibrex/composite window
 - At east elevation, demolish the historic-age, one-story sunroom bay at southeast corner. Enclose opening with new 1/1 single-hung Fibrex/composite window and stucco wall
 - Demolish the historic-age rear elevation wings (to include the one-story sunroom bay) and install a new addition and deck. Note that staff has been unable to acquire photos which fully document the condition of the rear elevation prior to the unapproved addition. However, see the below photo, provided by the applicant, and the 1915 Sanborn Map which depicts the building's original footprint.



Designation slide, appearance in 1980



Photo of 1475 Longfellow taken by staff in 12/2023. Appearance prior to unapproved work. Note that the original character-defining porch posts, front door/sidelites and shutters remained at this time.



1475 Longfellow, current appearance of front elevation. Staff photo taken on 5/29/2024. Note that shutters, porch columns, and front door have been removed without HDC approval sometime between December 2023 and May 2024., *after* the property owner had received an approval from HDC staff for the replacement of the roof and repair of original windows.



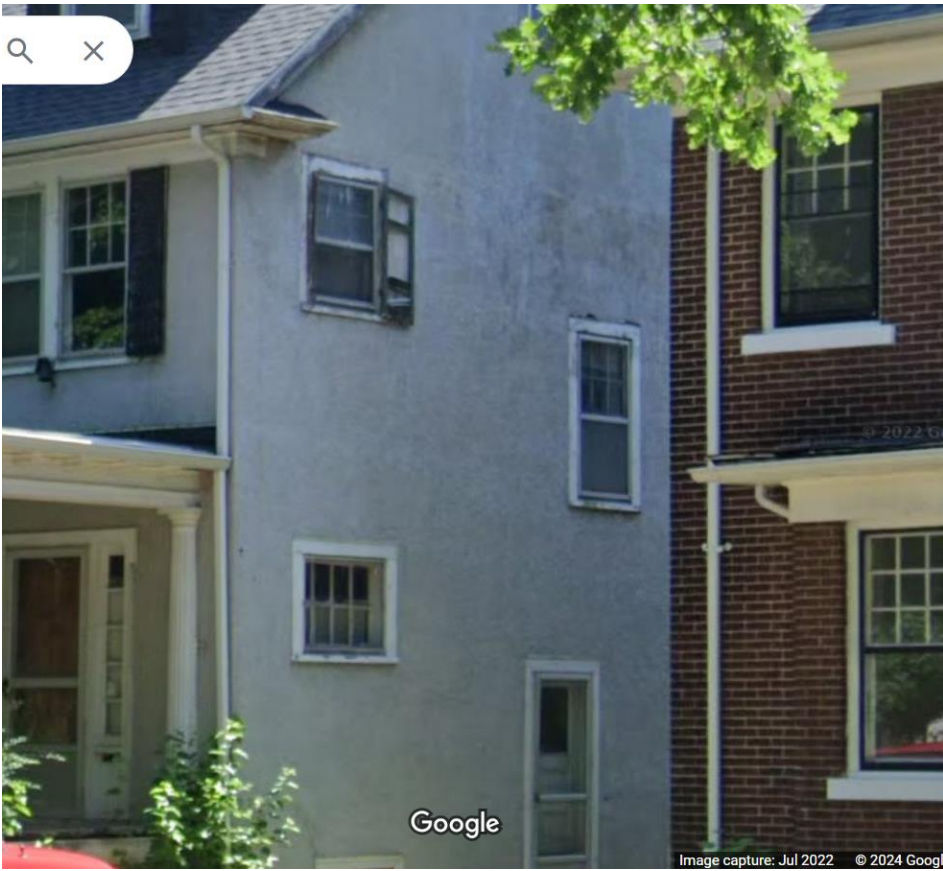
1475 Longfellow, current appearance of front elevation primary entrance. Photo provided by applicant. Detail of new front door and sidelites. Note that the historic fluted pilasters which flank the front door still remain.



East elevation, Google Streetview, 2022. Note original windows, shutters at second story, and projecting sunroof bay at first story (outlined in yellow). This bay also extended to the building's rear elevation



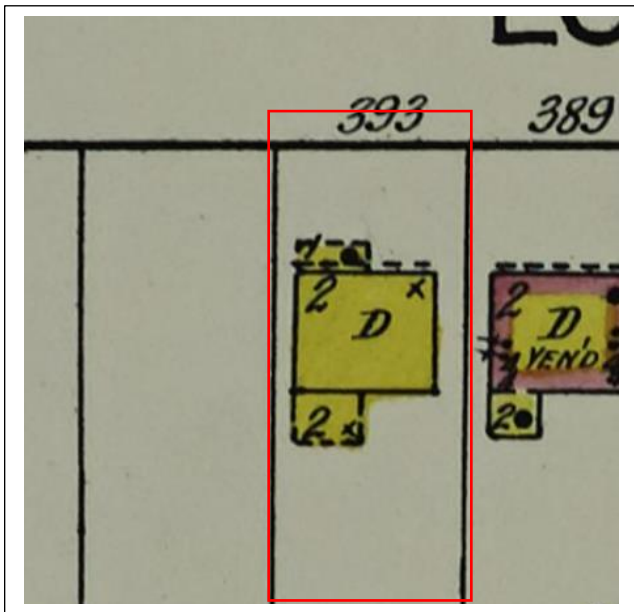
East elevation, staff photo taken on 5/29/2024. Note replacement window at second story. Also, the second story shutters and first story sunroom bay are no longer extant (see area outlined in blue). This work was completed without HDC approval



West elevation, Google Streetview, 2022. Note that original windows, shutter remnant, and wood door at first story remain



West elevation, staff photo taken on 5/29/2024. Note that shutters and the original wood door at the first story has been replaced with a metal door with a fanlight vision panel. Also, note four new windows have been added



Left, 1915 Sanborn Map (1475 Longfellow outlined in red). Prior to 1920, the property was addresses as 393 Longfellow. Right, photo of rear elevation, prior to unapproved new two-story addition. Provided by applicant



Rear elevation, showing unapproved addition, deck, and new window in original dormer. Facing northeast. Photo taken by the applicant.

- Note that the current property owner originally initiated correspondence with HDC staff in **November 2023** in an effort to receive a COA to repair the existing historic windows, install new asphalt shingles at the roof, and add new cement fiber siding at the roof dormers. However, in late December 2023, HDC staff was made aware that a new rear addition had been erected and that historic wood windows had been replaced at the house's side elevations. This work was completed without HDC approval and off permit. On April 16, 2024, a representative of the owner emailed HDC staff with an inquiry re: the replacement of the front porch columns. Staff noted that a complete application needed to be submitted and approved by the Commission prior to any column replacement. However, a complete application to replace the columns was not submitted to HDC staff and, by April 24, 2024, the columns had been removed without approval. Also, the historic shutters, the original front door and sidelites, and an additional number of original windows at the side elevations had been replaced at this point. None of this work was approved by the HDC
- It is staff's opinion that the original windows at the side elevations and rear elevation dormer; the front entry door, sidelites, and trim; fluted wood columns at the front porch; the east elevation first story wood door; and front and side elevation shutters which were removed without HDC approval were significant and distinctive character-defining features. Per the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, these features should have been retained and repaired. However, if any of these features were proven to be deteriorated beyond repair, the replacement element should match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials.
 - As these elements were removed without review and no documentation has been provided to indicate that they were deteriorated to an extent that merited their replacement, their removal does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation
 - As the above-listed features are no longer extant and the installation of new elements are required, per the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, any replacement elements should match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials.
- It is staff's opinion that the historic-age sunroom bay wing which was located at the building's southeast corner was a distinctive character-defining feature of the building. Its unapproved removal therefore does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- Per National Park Service Bulletin #14, entitled *New Exterior Additions to Historic Properties* [Preservation Brief 14: New Exterior Additions to Historic Buildings: Preservation Concerns \(nps.gov\)](#), new additions which meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation must accomplish the following:
 - Preserve significant historic materials, features and form
 - Be compatible
 - Be differentiated from the historic building.

The guidelines also state that “a new addition should always be subordinate to the historic building; it should not compete in size, scale or design with the historic building. An addition that bears no relationship to the proportions and massing of the historic building—in other words, one that overpowers the historic form and changes the scale will usually compromise the historic character as well.” Furthermore The National Park Service's *Illustrated Guidelines for New Additions* [The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation & Illustrated Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings-New Additions \(nps.gov\)](#) do not recommend attaching a new addition so that the character-defining features of the historic building are obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

- It is staff's opinion that the newly erected rear addition does not meet the Standards for the following reasons:
 - Its construction has resulted in the removal of the significant historic-age one-story, sunroom bay which was formerly located at the building's southeast corner.
 - The addition has been appended directly to the rear elevation, with no relief/daylight between the new construction and original building as it is two-stories in height and extends the full width of rear elevation. As a result of its scale, the addition has completed altered the historic character of the building's rear elevation.

ISSUES

- As noted above, it is staff's opinion that the original windows at the side elevations and rear elevation dormer; the front entry door, sidelites, and trim; fluted wood columns at the front porch; the east elevation first story wood door; and front and side elevation shutters which were removed without HDC approval were significant and distinctive character-defining features. Per the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, these features should have been retained and repaired. However, if any of these features were proven to be deteriorated beyond repair, the replacement element should match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials.
 - As these elements were removed without review and no documentation has been provided to indicate that they were deteriorated to an extent that merited their replacement, their removal does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation
 - As the above-listed features are no longer extant and the installation of new elements are required, per the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, any replacement elements should match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. The current application proposes to install the following replacement elements, which do not match the old, and are therefore not in keeping with the Standards:
 - New front door and sidelites. Note that the new elements will not replicate the distinctive front door trim which was extant as recently as December 2023. Also, the final material choice for the new door and sidelites have not been outlined. Staff therefore recommends the Commission deny this scope item
 - New Fibrex windows at the side elevations and rear roof dormer. Note that none of the proposed new windows match the old in material, detail, operation, or lite configuration. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission deny this scope item.
 - New west elevation door. Staff recommends that the Commission deny this scope item because the style and material of the proposed new door does not match the historic-age door that was replaced without HDC approval
 - New fiberglass columns and pilasters at front elevation porch. The original wood pilasters which flank the front door remain and do not appear to be deteriorated beyond repair. In re: to the two original wood columns which were replaced without approval, the application has not included information which indicates that they were deteriorated beyond repair. Also, it is possible to obtain new columns which match the old in material, detailing, and dimension. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission deny this scope item
 - New shutters to replace the original. Note that the application does not provide details re: the new shutters dimensions, material, detailing/style, and specific location. Staff recommends approval of this scope on the condition that the new

shutters match the old in dimension, material (wood), and detail/style and that they be installed where shutters were previously located

- As noted above, it is staff's opinion that the historic-age sunroom bay wing which was located at the building's southeast corner was a distinctive character-defining feature of the building. Its unapproved removal therefore does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission deny the removal of the wing.
- Finally, staff recommends that the Commission deny the newly erected rear addition because it does not meet the Standards for the following reasons:
 - Its construction resulted in the removal of the significant historic-age one-story, sunroom bay which was formerly located at the building's southeast corner.
 - The addition has been appended directly to the rear elevation, with no relief/daylight between the new construction and original building as it is two-stories in height and extends the full width of rear elevation. As a result of its scale, the addition has completed altered the historic character of the building's rear elevation.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation # 1 - Section 21-2-73, DENIAL – Replace original windows, front entry door (to include door, sidelites, and trim), fluted wood columns at the front porch, and east elevation first story wood door; demolish sunroom bay at southeast corner; AND Erect rear addition

The above listed items are inappropriate for the following reasons:

- The current application does not provide documentation that the original door, trim, and sidelites that were replaced without HDC approval were deteriorated beyond repair. These were distinctive features that characterized the historic property. Also, the proposed new elements will not replicate the original distinctive front door trim which was removed without approval. Finally, the current application does not specify the new door and sidelite material.
- The current application does not provide documentation that the windows that were replaced without HDC approval were deteriorated beyond repair. These windows were distinctive features which characterized the historic property. Also, the new Fibrex windows at the side elevations and rear roof dormer do not match the old in material, detail, operation, or lite configuration.
- The current application does not provide documentation that the wood door at the west elevation which was replaced without HDC approval was deteriorated beyond repair. The wood door was a distinctive feature which characterized the historic property. Also, the proposed new door does not match the historic-age door in material or design
- The original character-defining wood pilasters which flank the front door remain and do not appear to be deteriorated beyond repair. Also, the current application has not included information which indicates that two distinctive, character-defining wood columns at the front porch were deteriorated beyond repair. Finally, it is possible to obtain new columns which match the old in material
- The newly erected rear addition has resulted in the demolition of the distinctive, character-defining historic sunroom wing which was located at the building's southeast corner. Also, the addition has been appended directly to the rear elevation, with no relief/daylight between the new construction and original building as it is two-stories in height and extends the full width of rear elevation. As a result of its scale, the addition has completed altered the historic character of the building's rear elevation.

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for these items because they do not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, in particular, Standards# 2, 5, 6, 9 and 10 which state that:

#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 historic 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.

#10) New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

Recommendation # 2 - Section 21-2-73, CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS (COA) – Remaining work items

It is staff's opinion that the remaining scope items are appropriate to the property's historic character. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work because it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standard's for Rehabilitation and conforms to the district's Elements of Design. However, staff recommends that the Commission issue the COA with the following condition:

- New shutters which match the old in dimension, material (wood), and detail/style shall be installed where shutters were previously located. HDC staff be afforded the opportunity to review and approve a final proposal for the new shutters prior initiation of the work and the lifting of the current stop work order.