

STAFF REPORT: 8/14/2024 REGULAR MEETING
APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2024-00404
VIOLATION NUMBER: 912
ADDRESS: 677 W. CANFIELD
HISTORIC DISTRICT: WEST CANFIELD
APPLICANTS/ PROPERTY OWNER: MATTHEW ALLEN FLESZAR
DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 07/22/2024
DATES OF STAFF SITE VISITS: 06/26/2024, 7/25/24

PREPARED BY: D. RIEDEN

SCOPE: ALTER REAR DOOR AND WINDOW OPENINGS AND REAR PORCHES (WORK COMPLETED WITHOUT APPROVAL)

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Built in 1875, the 2 ½ story home at 677 W. Canfield features a centrally located bay window designed to give the appearance of a turret. Additional historic features include true divided light windows with stone sills and headers, stained glass windows, ornate trim and scalloped wood shingle siding. The house is constructed with light brown brick with stone detailing and stone cladding around the front façade's foundation. The front entrance is centrally located under the turret and under a roofed porch, which is currently under construction per a previously approved Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). The proposed work is located at the rear where ongoing construction of the rear deck and balcony is underway. This work was also previously approved by the Commission but is in violation because the work is not in compliance with the COA. This application's focus is on the rear porches along with alterations of the rear fenestration (under construction without approval). This rear elevation work is not readily visible from the public right-of-way.



Site Photo 1, by Staff July 25, 2024: (North) front elevation showing current conditions.



Site Photo 2, by Applicant July 2024: (South) rear elevation showing current conditions.

This property has the following timeline of COAs, BSEED permits, and prior violations on file for this property.

- Nov. 2003 COA: Replace asphalt shingle roof, install skylight, and repair chimney.
- Jul. 2004 COA: Install driveway from the alley, repair walkway, install new fencing.
- Sept. 2017 COA: Repair front porch, install new handrail, repaint. Rebuild rear wood porches to existing footprint, stain dark brown. Install (3) new rear entry doors. Install (2) AC units near rear foundation. Install new gutters and downspouts, painted brown. Tuckpoint masonry.
- Aug. 2020 COA: Repair, replace and restore siding and trim, paint. Repair front and rear porches and railings, paint. Paint window trim and doors.
- Oct. 2020 BSEED Permit No. BLD2019-04662 a.k.a. BLD2021-02018 (Not approved by the Historic District Commission): Install new attic access door at 3rd floor dormer, replace four (4) rear existing doors,

add rear deck to reach 3rd floor dormer and extend rear decks to new door openings, remove and replace gable and fascia trim and scallop siding.

- Aug. 2021 COA: Rebuild bay window/turret on front façade with in-kind materials. Add opening and wood, double-hung window to bay window/turret. Paint trim, siding, sash and accents.
- June 2024 Violation #912: Constructed rear porch/balconies outside of previously approved footprint. Altered rear fenestration (doors and window openings).
- July 2024 COA: Install rear stairwell enclosure, concrete pad and walkways; install rear downspouts.

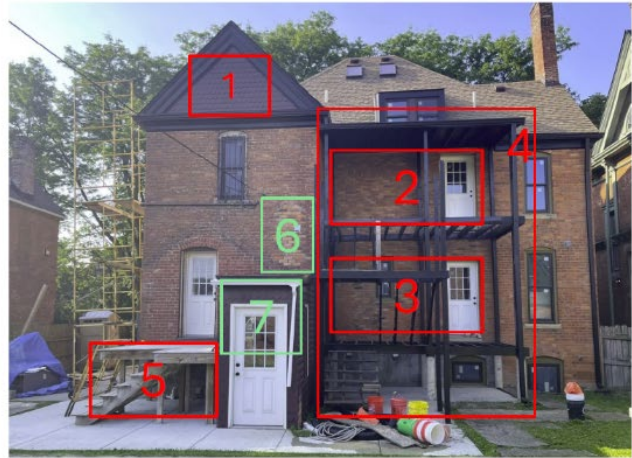
Rear Elevation Changes Overview



Date Unknown used in 2020 COA

Violations & COA Proposals

- 1) Replace filled-in gable window
- 2) Modify 2nd floor apartment window & door layout
- 3) Modify 1st floor apartment window & door layout
- 4) Extend deck/balcony footprint
- 5) Modify porch steps



July 2024

Changes under COA

- 6) (June 2020 COA) 1 ½ floor window filled-in w/ brick
- 7) (August 2020 COA) basement stairwell structure

Figure 1, by Applicant, July 2024: (South) rear elevation location showing locations of work: red and gold boxed areas are included in this proposal, the green boxes indicate previously approved work and are excluded from this application.

PROPOSAL

The applicant initially proposed a scope of work that included altering the front porch design but has since removed this scope stating that they would instead repair the front porch as previously approved in the COA issued in 2007.

This proposal is mainly focused at the rear elevation and includes closing of window and door openings, opening of new door and window openings, and the redesign of the rear porches and balconies that shows significant changes from a previously issued COA in 2017. Finally, this proposal includes minor changes to the paint color scheme that was initially approved with COAs in 2017, 2020, and 2021. All work in this proposal is underway or nearly complete without approval. (Numbers listed below correspond to Fig.1 for clarification.)

Proposed Rear Elevation



Figure 2, by Applicant, July 2024: (South) rear elevation, showing proposed outcome. Note that the missing 3rd story dormer is a drawing error confirmed by the applicant.

REAR DOOR AND WINDOW OPENINGS

1. Replace filled-in gable window with new Pella Architect Series wood, custom double-hung window per attached drawings and details.
 - Replace window moulding and surround to match
 - Paint trim according to paint series shown below.
2. Convert window opening into door opening at rear second floor per attached drawings and details.
 - Install steel door, painted dark reddish brown to match other doors (B:18).
 - Fill in former door opening with matching brick and mortar: use Chicago common brick, use in-kind historic mortar mix (3 parts mason sand | 6 parts sharp sand | 3 parts St. Mary's mortar | 6oz Light Buff color), clean with Vana Trol sensitive brick & stone cleaner
 - Install 24"x36" Pella Architect Series custom wood, double-hung window, color auburn brown. Install window moulding and surround per attached drawings.
3. Convert window opening into door opening at rear first floor per attached drawings and details.
 - Install steel door, painted dark reddish brown to match other doors (B:18).
 - Fill in former door opening with matching brick and mortar: use Chicago common brick, use in-kind historic mortar mix (3 parts mason sand | 6 parts sharp sand | 3 parts St. Mary's mortar | 6oz Light Buff color), clean with Vana Trol sensitive brick & stone cleaner
 - Install 24"x36" Pella Architect Series custom wood, double-hung window, color auburn brown. Install window moulding and surround per attached drawings.

Proposed Rear Elevation (Side Views)

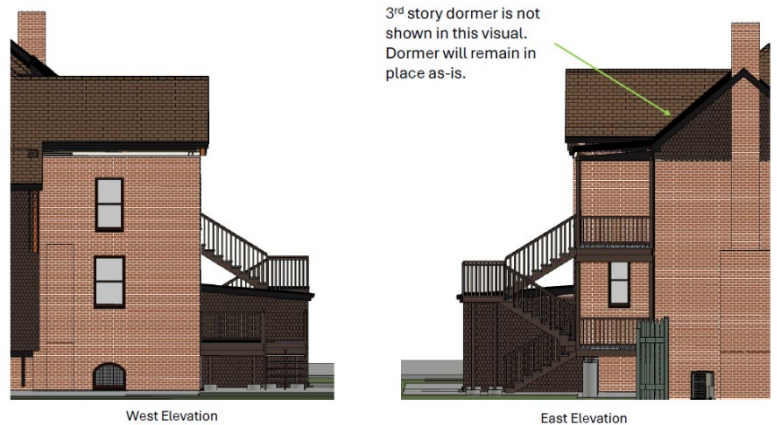


Figure 3, by Applicant, July 2024: (South) rear elevation side views, showing proposed balcony and stair footprints. Note that the missing 3rd story dormer is drawing error confirmed by the applicant.

REAR PORCHES AND BALCONIES

4. Extend rear porch/balcony and shed roof per attached drawings and details.
 - Expand rear balcony footprint to 15' 6" x 8' (124 SF) and raise balcony by approximately 20". Add stairs and 1 ½ story 9'x4' (36SF) landing.
 - Install wood railings to match design and dimension of the front porch, painted per color scheme below.
 - All materials with the exception of the decking is wolmanized wood, painted per color scheme below.
 - Install TimberTech composite decking, color gray.
5. Relocate and modify rear 1st floor porch per attached drawings and details.
 - Expand rear porch to 8'4" x 4'6" (37SF)
 - Change orientation of steps to extend westward instead of southward direction.
 - Install wood railings to match design and dimension of the front porch, painted per color scheme below.
 - All materials with the exception of the decking is wolmanized wood, painted per color scheme below.
 - Install TimberTech composite decking, color gray.

PROPOSED PAINT SCHEME (HDC COLOR SYSTEM B)

- **Body**
 - Chicago Common Bricks (Natural Red- No Paint)

- Cedar Scallop Shingles (B:18 Dark Reddish Brown)
- **Trim**
 - Fascia/soffit (B:19 Black)
 - Porch / Accent Trim (B:16 Light Grayish Olive)
 - Accent Trim 2 (B:13 Moderate Olive Brown)
- **Windows & Doors**
 - Window Sash (B:18 Dark Reddish Brown)
 - Casing & Surrounds (B:19 Black)
 - Stone Headers (Natural Grey- NO PAINT)
 - Doors (B:18 Dark Reddish Brown)
- **Porches**
 - Front Porch Plank (B:16 Light Grayish Olive)
 - Rear Porches Plank (Grey)
 - Columns (B:18 Dark Reddish Brown)
 - Handrails (B:18 Dark Reddish Brown)
 - Balusters & Lattice (B:16 Light Grayish Olive)

Rear Elevation Differences in COA and BSEED Permit

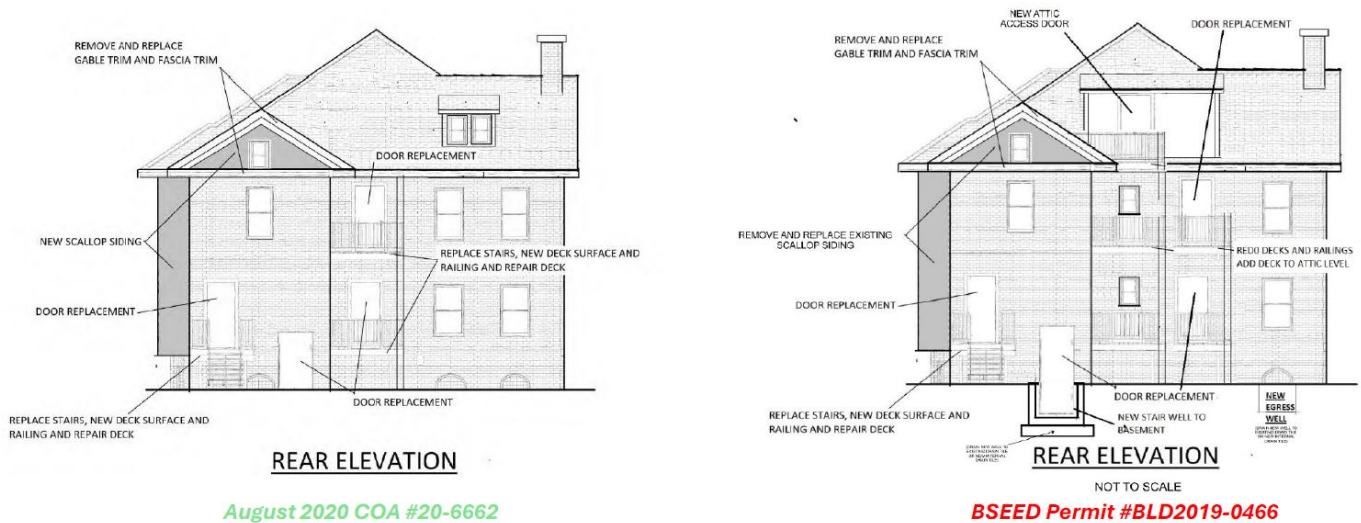


Figure 4, by Applicant: (South) rear elevation drawings comparing previously approved 2020 COA and BSEED permit, which was not approved by the Commission. Please note that the 3rd story alterations to the dormer and balcony were not constructed but the alterations to the door and windows, basement access, and extension of the rear balcony footprint is underway. This is NOT the final proposed drawing but indicates the progression of changes in the drawing concept over time.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The West Canfield Historic District was established in 1970. Although the District does not have a Historic Designation Advisory Board report, it does have a National Register of Historic Places nomination. The National Park Service determined that the District's period of significance is 1870-1947.
- Upon review of 1897 Sanborn map (*see figure 5, below*), rear porches were present as single-story wood structures. Staff was not able to find any photos of this previous condition. It is staff's assessment that the rear balconies, although present at the time designation, are not original to the house and are not a historically significant, character defining feature.

- The 2020 COA has an attached drawing that shows a 1 ½ story rear window that was bricked-in, the work is considered approved and therefore Figure 1 (see above), accurately shows previously approved work.
- In October 2020, a permit was issued in error by BSEED (see BLDG19-04662, figure 4) without HDC review. Staff requested information from BSEED and received the response that this permit was also certified under BLDG2021-02018. Under both permit numbers these drawings reference the 2020 HDC COA (#20-662), but the drawings of both rear elevations do not match. BSEED’s Supervisor of Plan Review offered the explanation that at the time of this application BSEED would process permits if there was a COA on file, but currently they require sign-off by HDC staff regardless of having a COA or not.
- The BSEED approved drawing shows a 3rd story alteration: the dormer is changed into an attic door with the balcony extending to this higher level. This drawing also shows the unapproved extension of the rear balconies and the alterations of door and window openings at the 1st and 2nd floors and a new egress basement stairwell. This work has started but not completed except for the 3rd story elements (never constructed). This 3rd story change is NOT in this proposal. Instead, the roof line over the second story is proposed to be extended to cover the rear balcony extension, leaving the rear dormer in place. Staff received confirmation from the applicant that this dormer will remain, even though the proposed drawing shows that it is missing as noted in the applicant’s final proposal. (See figures 1, 2, 4 and site photo 2.)
- The Elements of Design for the West Canfield HD offer the following insights for this proposal:
 - *Proportion of openings within the façades...* Most buildings have window openings in the roof area, either in dormers or gables. Most window openings are taller than wide, although when grouped in pairs or trios, they may achieve a horizontal effect... A great variety of sizes, shapes, and groupings of openings exist in the district in conformity with the historic design and proportion of individual buildings.
 - *Rhythm of entrance and/or porch projection...* Positions and placement of porches contribute significantly to the design of the Victorian houses. Entrances are either centered, off to one side of the front façade, or at the side of the house; porches are frequently off to one side and in some instances wrap around to the side of the building. Rear and secondary side porches are also common.
 - *Relationship of materials.* The district contains a variety of building materials characteristic of Victorian architecture. Common brick is the main building material, although the façade of one



Aerial 1 of Parcel # 04000899, by Detroit Parcel Viewer, showing the location of proposed basement entrance structure (arrow).

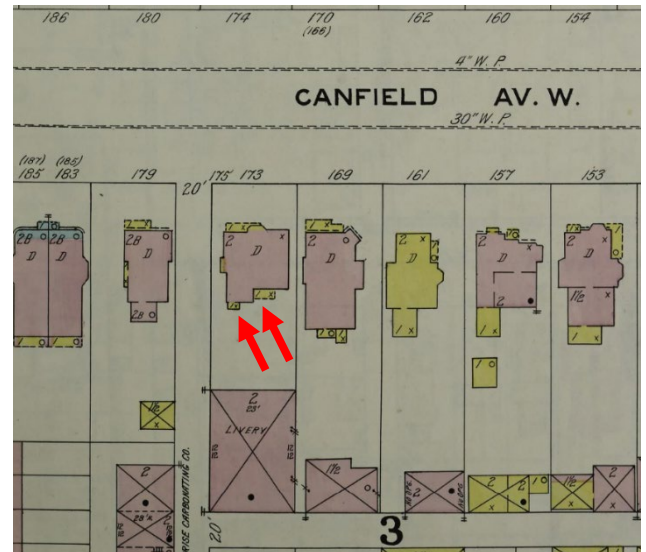


Fig. 5, Sanborn 1897 Vol 2, Image 90: rear single story rear porches (arrows).

house is entirely stone and one is clapboard on the first story and shingled on the second story. Sandstone and wooden trim are common; fieldstone or brick are foundation materials.

- *Relationship of textures...* The most common textural relationship is that of common brick with mortar joints juxtaposed with other materials, such as wood or stone, which is either rock-faced or smooth. Foundations are frequently rough-faced rectangular stone blocks. Smooth stone lintels and sills are sometimes carved. Ornamental brickwork and fishscale wood and slate shingles create textural interest... In general, the buildings in the district have a great variety of textural interest.
 - *Relationship of colors.* Orange-red natural brick contrasts with gray or brick-colored mortar... Wooden trim is painted white, stone gray, gray-blue, brown, green, olive, or black. On the two buildings with shingled second stories, the shingles are stained green or brown...
 - *Relationship of architectural details.* Architectural details are generally related to style... Porches, window surrounds, cornices, verge boards, dormers, and gables are areas frequently treated with wood detailing... All of the buildings that contribute to the historic district are rich in architectural detail.
- As stated in the Elements of Design cited above, brick detailing is characteristic of this historic district. It is staff's opinion that the brick detailing above the arched windows and door openings are historic, distinctive character-defining features. Arches have been replaced with a rectilinear form with the replacement of windows to door openings in areas 2 & 3 (See figure 1, photos 2, 3-5.) In these areas smaller windows are placed where they appear to have impact where some of the arches remain, thereby impacting this distinctive character defining feature.
 - Staff has no issue with the proposed window opening at the rear gable, which would restore a historic element that was removed without approval.
 - At this secondary, rear location, with a non-public view, it is staff's opinion that the proposed rear porches, balconies and stairwells meet the Standards and the Historic District's Elements of Design and are appropriate.
 - It is staff's opinion that the proposed color scheme changes are aligned with the HDC color guide and is appropriate.



Site Photo 3, by Applicant, date unknown: (South) rear elevation, showing original arched brick detailing over door and window openings.



Site Photos 4&5, by Applicant, 2024: (South) rear elevation, showing remains of arched brick detailing over door and window at second floor (area #2, shown in figure 1).

ISSUES

- It is staff's opinion that the brick detailing above the arched windows and door openings are historic, distinctive character-defining features. The original openings and arches over the windows at the rear 1st and 2nd floors have been replaced with door openings that have removed historic features that characterize this property. Additional smaller proposed windows appear to be located at areas where some of these brick arches remain. It is staff's opinion that this proposal in its current state is not in compliance with National Park Service Standards 2, 3, 4 and 5. However, it is staff's opinion that these features could potentially be retained or restored. (See figure 1, photos 2, 3-5.)
 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 historic property shall be preserved."*
- Staff has no other issues with the proposal.

RECOMMENDATION

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

Recommendation: Alter Rear Door and Window Openings and Rear Porches, Change of Paint Scheme (Work Completed without Approval)

It is staff's opinion that the proposed work is appropriate. Staff therefore recommends the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as proposed because it meets the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and the West Canfield Historic District's Elements of Design.

Staff recommends the COA be issued with following conditions to be completed with Staff review for approval before completed:

- The original openings and historic brick detailing of the door and window archways be preserved or restored when filled in with brick or replaced with a new window or door.