

STAFF REPORT: FEBRUARY 12, 2025 MEETING

PREPARED BY: A. DYE

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2025-00027

ADDRESS: 2277 LONGFELLOW

HISTORIC DISTRICT: BOSTON-EDISON

APPLICANT: CODY MICHAEL

PROPERTY OWNER: CODY MICHAEL

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: JANUARY 21, 2025

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: JANUARY 24, 2025

SCOPE: INSTALL BETWEEN-THE-GLASS GRILLES WITHIN WOOD ALUMINUM-CLAD WINDOWS AT FRONT ELEVATION (WORK COMPLETED WITHOUT APPROVAL)

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Erected circa 1921, the structure at 2277 Longfellow is located mid-block on the south side of the street, between 14th Street and LaSalle Boulevard. The three-story house is Georgian Revival in styling. Faced with reddish-brown brick and laid in a running bond pattern, the floors are divided by masonry belt courses that also serve as headers for the window openings. The front elevation's symmetrical façade includes individually placed window openings with stone sills, 5 bays wide, and a front entry surround that is flanked by pilasters that "support" a tall, detailed cornice.

The replacement windows within the first and second floor openings are black, aluminum-clad wood double-hung units with a six-over-six, between-the-glass muntin, pattern. The central window opening over the entrance, along with the three dormer openings, are each comprised of a fixed half-circle unit (with radiant grille pattern) above a (three-over-three) casement unit.



Staff photo, January 24, 2025.

PROPOSAL

- Retain the previously installed aluminum-clad wood windows at the front elevation that have between-the-glass grilles.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Boston-Edison Historic District was enacted on April 2, 1974.
- At the November 2021 meeting, the Commission reviewed a request to approve the installation of replacement windows as part of a larger application for the rehabilitation of the house. Much of the work at the property had been started, and the installation of windows was already complete. A COA was issued for the installed windows with the condition the between-the-glass grids/grilles be removed at the front elevation.



CITY OF DETROIT
HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

1 WOODWARD, SUITE 808
DETROIT, MICHIGAN 48226
PHONE 313-628-2190

November 16, 2021

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS

Sebastian and Cody Roy
2277 Longfellow
Detroit, MI 48206

RE: Application Number 21-7580; 2277 Longfellow, Boston Edison Historic District

Dear Sebastian and Cody Roy:

At the regularly scheduled meeting held virtually on November 10, 2021, the Detroit Historic District Commission ("Commission") reviewed the above-referenced application for building permit. Pursuant to Section 5(10) of the Michigan Local Historic District Act, as amended, being MCL 399.205, MSA 5-3407(5)(10) and Section 21-2-73 of the 2019 Detroit City Code; the Commission has reviewed the above-referenced application for building permit and hereby issues a Certificate of Appropriateness, which is effective as of November 16, 2021.

The following proposed work meets the defined elements of design for the historic district and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and guidelines for rehabilitating historic buildings (36 CFR Part 67).

Rebuilding of Rear Sunroom/Two-Story Porch, Removal of Rear Porch, Replacement of all Windows, Repair/Rebuild Front Door Surround, Replacement of Front Porch and Front Walk per submitted application and drawings.

The COA was issued with the following conditions:

- The between-the-glass grids on all of the front elevation windows will be removed, turning the units into one-over-one sash.
- The brick wing walls will be erected to flank the front porch steps and the black railing will not be installed. The wing walls with limestone caps will match the design, dimensions, and placement (adjacent the stairs) of the original walls.
- The paint color of the front door surround will be C:4 Yellowish White.
- The rear porch lattice, constructed in a traditional vertical/horizontal format, will be painted to match the color of the masonry piers or color of the clapboard siding.
- A final railing design for the rear second floor porch, confirmed to meet the building code, will be submitted to staff for review.
- If the historic shutters are no longer present on-site, and the property owner wishes to install new shutters on the front elevation, the replacement shutters shall match the dimensions of the historic shutters and be one-half the dimension of the window rough opening. The selected shutter will be submitted for staff review prior to installation.

Please retain this COA for your files. You should now proceed to obtain a building permit from the City of Detroit Buildings, Safety, Engineering and Environmental Department. It is important to note that approval by the Detroit Historic District Commission does not waive the applicant's responsibility to comply with any other applicable ordinances or statutes.

For the Commission:

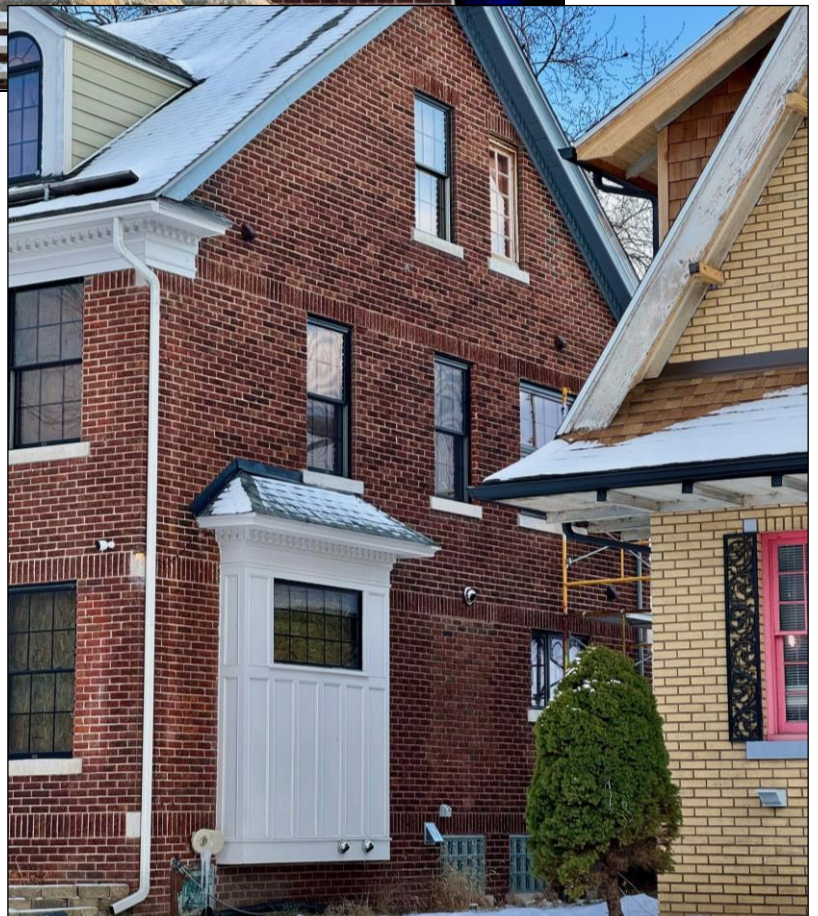
Audra Dye

Staff, Detroit Historic District Commission

- As the Commission approved the replacement windows with the condition the grilles be removed at the front elevation, the existing windows with grilles remain a violation.
- The Commission’s denial of the existing windows was more than one year ago so the applicant is returning to the Commission with the request for approval of the existing windows with between-the-glass grilles.
- The applicant states in the application that the reason for the request is due to the manufacturer confirming that it is not possible to remove the internal grilles from the existing windows. The only way to satisfy the Commission’s decision is to remove the existing windows and install new one-over-one aluminum-clad wood windows.



*Above: Façade
Left: right-west elevation.
Staff photos, January 2025.*





*Left: East elevation. Staff photo.
Below: Rear elevation. Real estate listing photo, 2024.*



- As a Certificate of Appropriateness was issued for the existing windows with the condition that the internal grilles be removed at the front elevation, the question for the Commission is whether retaining the internal grilles can meet the compatibility standard, as described in the National Park Service document *Replacement Windows that meet the Standards*, specifically the section Replacement Windows Where No Historic Windows Remain:
 - Replacement windows for missing or non-historic windows must be compatible with the historic appearance and character of the building.
 - Although replacement windows may be based on physical or pictorial documentation, if available, recreation of the missing historic windows is not required to meet the Standards.
 - Replacement of missing or non-historic windows must, however, always fill the original window openings and must be compatible with the overall historic character of the building.
 - The appearance of the replacement windows must be consistent with the general characteristics of a historic window of the type and period but need not replicate the missing historic window. In many cases, this may be accomplished using substitute materials.
 - There may be some additional flexibility with regard to the details of windows on secondary elevations that are not highly visible, consistent with the approach outlined for replacing existing historic windows.
 - Replacing existing incompatible, non-historic windows with similarly incompatible new windows does not meet the Standards.
- It is staff's opinion that a dimensional multi-lite pattern in the upper and lower sash is necessary for the articulation of the architectural design of the front elevation, which is also in keeping with Boston Edison's Elements of Design:
 - 3) *Proportion of openings within the façade.* Windows openings are virtually always taller than wide; however, several windows are sometimes grouped into a combination that is wider than tall. Window openings are always subdivided. The most common window type is double-hung with sashes that are generally further subdivided by muntins or leaded glass. Façades have approximately 15 percent to 35 percent of their area glazed.
 - 15) *Scale of façades and façade elements.* There is a variety in scale from block to block and style to style.... The size and complexity of façade elements and details either accentuate or subdue the scale of the façades. Façade elements have been determined by what is appropriate for the style. Window sashes are usually subdivided by muntins, which affect the apparent scale of the windows within the façades.

ISSUES

- Because the windows within this application are located on the front/primary elevation and are highly visible, between-the-glass grilles do not offer a profiled dimensionality which is available with simulated-divided light replacement windows. As stated in the district's *Elements of Design 15) Scale of Facades and Facade Elements*, Window sashes are usually subdivided by muntins, which affect the apparent scale of the windows within the façades.
- Replacement windows for missing or non-historic windows must be compatible with the historic appearance and character of the building.
- The appearance of the replacement windows must be consistent with the general characteristics of a historic window of the type and period.

RECOMMENDATION

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

Recommendation 1 of 1, Denial: Install between-the-glass grilles in aluminum-clad wood windows at the front elevation

Staff recommends the proposed work will be inappropriate according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Boston-Edison Historic District's Elements of Design, specifically:

- Standard 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.
- Standard 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.
- Elements of Design, specifically elements 3 and 15.

For the following reasons:

- Because the windows within this application are located on the front/primary elevation and are highly visible, between-the-glass grilles do not offer a profiled dimensionality which is available with simulated-divided light replacement windows. As stated in the district's *Elements of Design 15) Scale of Facades and Facade Elements*, Window sashes are usually subdivided by muntins, which affect the apparent scale of the windows within the façades.
- Replacement windows for missing or non-historic windows must be compatible with the historic appearance and character of the building.
- The appearance of the replacement windows must be consistent with the general characteristics of a historic window of the type and period.