

STAFF REPORT: MARCH 12, 2025, REGULAR MEETING
APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2025-00048
ADDRESS: 1817 LEVERETTE
HISTORIC DISTRICT: CORKTOWN
APPLICANT: ELISE DECHARD, END STUDIO
PROPERTY OWNER: ALLENSON, THOMAS E & MAUREEN T
DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: FEBRUARY 5, 2025
DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: FEBRUARY 28, 2025

PREPARED BY: T. BOSCARINO

SCOPE: DEMOLISH REAR PORCH, ERECT REAR ADDITION



1817 Leverette viewed from the north. February 2025 photo by staff.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

1817 Leverette is a two-and-a-half-story house built in 1903. An overall Queen Anne massing includes an asymmetrical façade with northwest cutaway corner, a gable-roof front porch, and a front-facing, projecting gable at the attic story. Tuscan columns with pronounced entasis are a Free Classic element. Aluminum siding (installed prior to the designation of the historic district) obscures any other decorative details that may have once existed.

Subject of this application is a rear porch, described as an “unconditioned sunroom” in application materials. The enclosed area has a shed roof, two different types of siding, wood windows, and non-matching doors. It also contains a basement access stair.



Rear of house viewed from the alley, showing the porch proposed for demolition. February 2025 photo by staff.

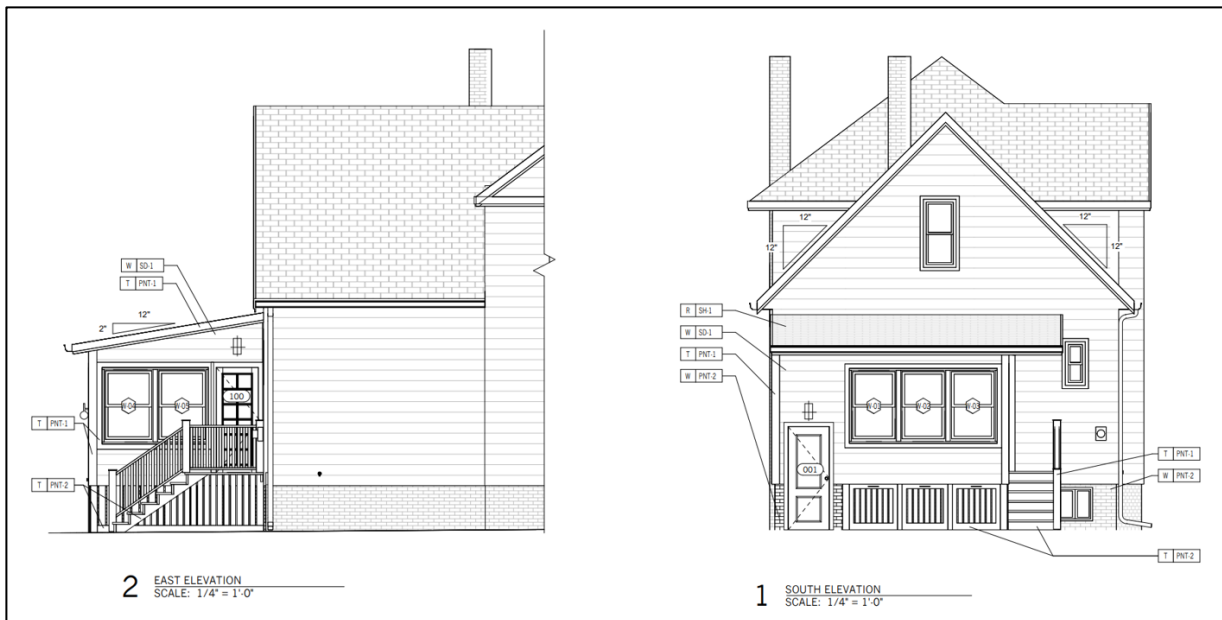
PROPOSAL

The proposal is to demolish the rear porch and build a new rear addition in the same location and slightly wider than the current porch.

Specifications for all materials are provided in the application documents. They include aluminum siding, Marvin Signature Ultimate double-hung aluminum-clad wood windows in Stone White color, Medium-density-fiberboard (MDF) doors (the basement door a solid panel door appearance, and the first-floor door glazed with twelve true divided lites), and two conical wall sconces.



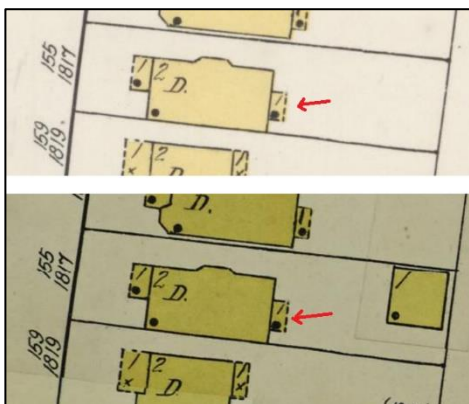
Rendering of proposed work. Image from application.



Elevations of proposed work. Images from application.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Corktown Historic District was established in 1984. The Final Report for the district states “its diversity of architectural styles is representative of working class housing from the late 1840s to the early 1900s,” implying a period of significance.
- Sanborn maps show that the rear porch was originally an open porch, enclosed some time after 1950 and therefore outside of the period of significance.



Sanborn Map Company images from 1921 (above) and 1950 (below) with arrow added to show porch location. The dotted line indicates an open porch.

- The historic and character-defining features of the porch appear to have mostly been lost when the porch was enclosed after 1950. An original balustrade or other historic details are not present. The doors, windows, siding, and skirting are mismatched and do not appear to be original to the house. It is possible that the porch roof is original or historic, but staff suggests that a hip roof would have been a more likely treatment for a Queen Anne house from the era. The decking may be original, but contributes minimally to the building’s character. In conclusion, staff opinion is that the porch is not a character-defining feature and may be removed. The primary concern is that any new work should satisfy Standard #9: “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.”



Additional rear porch photos from submitted application materials.

- The Elements of Design for the Corktown Historic District (Sec. 21-2-142) provide guidance regarding the “characteristic relationships of the various features within [the] historic district which are significant to the appearance of the district” (Sec. 21-2-1); appropriate and compatible additions will adhere to most, but not necessarily all, of the defined elements. The relevant Elements of Design for Corktown are as follows (abridged to exclude text that is not pertinent to the proposed scope of work):
 - 3) *Proportion of openings within the façades.* Window openings are usually taller than wide, but there are also square openings and transom window openings which are wider than tall. Several windows are sometimes grouped into a wider than tall combination. Window openings are almost always subdivided; the double-hung sash is the most common window type. Its sashes are generally further divided by muntins, resulting in lights arranged two-over-two, four-over-four, or six-over-six. There is a great variety of sizes and shapes of window openings in the Queen Anne-style buildings, while there is a more regular arrangement in the earlier pre-1880’s buildings. Façades have approximately five percent to 75 percent of their area glazed; residential buildings generally fall into the 30 to 35 percent range.
 - 7) *Relationship of materials.* The great majority of buildings in the district are wood frame structures originally clad in clapboard with wooden skirting or brick foundations. Window sash and functional and decorative trim are in wood. Wood is frequently the only material below the eaves of a building, except for the window glass.
 - 8) *Relationship of textures.* The most common relationship of textures in the district is that of clapboard to the smooth surface of wood trim.
 - 9) *Relationship of colors.* Paint colors in the district generally relate to style. Earlier buildings usually display muted colors, such as earth tones and shades of yellow, while Italianate and Queen Anne-style buildings sometimes display richer and darker colors, such as browns, golds, grays, and blues. Common trim colors include shades of cream, yellow, gray, brown, green, and white. Window sashes are frequently painted white, deep red, brown, and gray. Most asphalt shingled roofs are either in light colors, such as sand, light gray, light brown or light green, or darker colors, such as dark gray, black, or dark green.
- Staff suggests that the overall form and massing of the proposed addition is consistent with the Elements

of Design and compatible with the building and the surrounding environment. One arguable exception is the expanse of unsupported, projecting shed roof over the east steps, a more modern design that would not have been employed during the period of significance (that a similar condition exists on the building presently is almost certainly a later alteration). However, staff opinion is that this is a relatively minimal aspect of the proposed addition's character and provides a degree of the "differentiation" called for by Standard #9.

- The proposed materials and colors are appropriate, with the exception of the aluminum siding. Though aluminum siding is found on the building presently, that would be a later twentieth century alteration and not a historic material. The Elements of Design (#7 and #8) suggest wood clapboard siding would be appropriate.

ISSUES

- The proposed addition uses aluminum siding, an inappropriate material. Wood clapboard should instead be specified.

RECOMMENDATION

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

Recommendation 1 of 1, Certificate of Appropriateness

Staff recommends that the proposed work will be appropriate according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Corktown Elements of Design, with the condition that:

- The siding shall be wood clapboard.