

STAFF REPORT: APRIL 9, 2025 MEETING

PREPARED BY: A. DYE

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2025-00107

ADDRESS: 14615 E. JEFFERSON & 1000 PHILIP

HISTORIC DISTRICT: JEFFERSON-CHALMERS HISTORIC BUSINESS

APPLICANT: ADNAN AL-SAATI, A & M CONSULTANTS

PROPERTY OWNER: FRANK ALLAHAM

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: MARCH 17, 2025

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: MARCH 26, 2025

SCOPE: DEMOLISH AND REBUILD EXTERIOR WALLS, ERECT ADDITIONS & TRASH ENCLOSURE

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The one-story concrete block building at the northeast corner of E. Jefferson Avenue and Philip Street operates as a car wash and covers two parcels – 1000 Philip and 14615 E. Jefferson. The building is located at the west and north property lines and runs parallel with Philip Street. The north end of the building extends to the east and serves as the entry point for the car wash. Once inside the building, the cars turn to the left and travel south through the washing system. Molded canvas awnings, bearing the words “car wash”, extend over the driveways where the cars exit at one of two bays that face E. Jefferson.

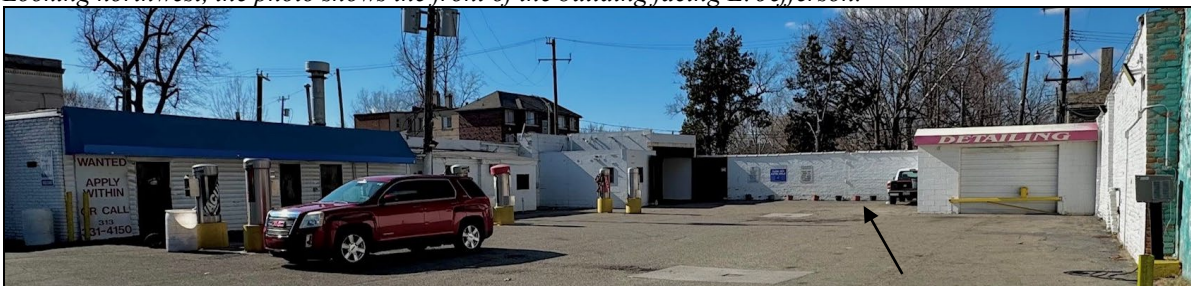
The south wall of the building is clad in brick. The remaining walls are concrete block, and a portion of the east wall is covered with white vinyl siding. The footprint of the building is asymmetrical. The west wall at the property line/Philip Street sidewalk is linear, but the building’s east wall expands and contracts in size. A small building is located at the northeast corner of 14615 E. Jefferson, and has a single, overhead door opening that faces E. Jefferson. The lots are enclosed from the alley by the two buildings and a masonry wall topped with coping tile.



*E. Jefferson Avenue
Aerial View, EagleView
2024.*



Looking northwest, the photo shows the front of the building facing E. Jefferson.



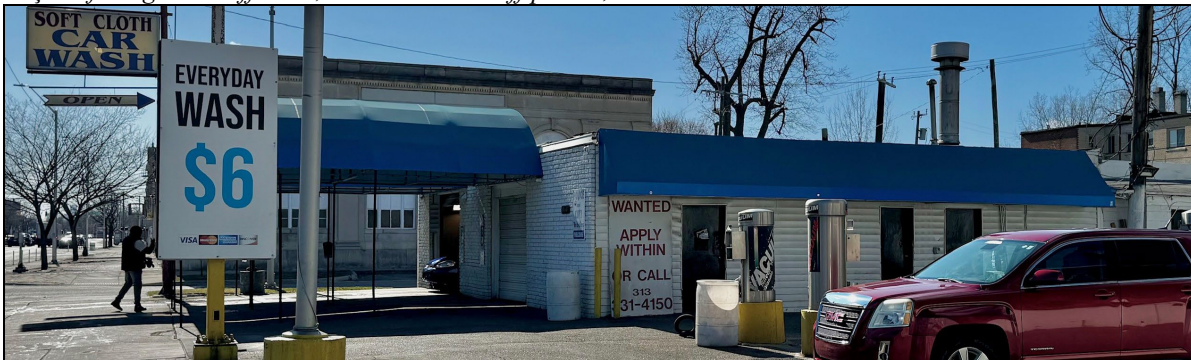
This view shows the east wall of the car wash, including automobile entrance (center left). The masonry wall at the rear of the lot extends from the east corner of the car wash building to the northeast corner of 14615 E. Jefferson. The free-standing structure (far right) was erected with concrete block for the south (front) and west walls; the masonry alley wall and adjacent building enclose the north and east walls. Staff photos, March 26, 2025.

PROPOSAL

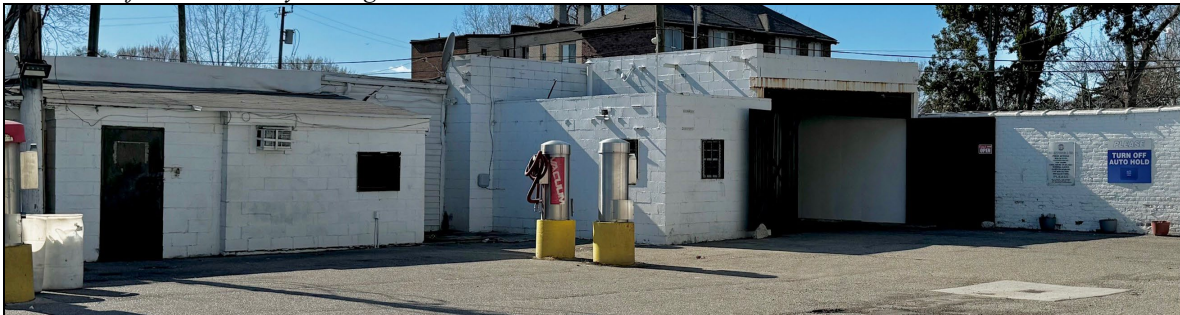
- Demolish and rebuild exterior (east) walls - increase height of west and south/façade walls and a portion of the north wall. Install new roof – single ply rubber roofing.
- Clad exterior walls with vinyl – 7” lap siding with wood grain surface and panels, colors: lap siding-white, panels-deep ocean blue; install galvanized metal coping at roof, color: not specified.
- Install new hollow metal pedestrian doors on east wall, color: navy (painted finish).
- Install metal awning (12” high, 48” extension from building) to cover both car wash exits, color: not specified.
- Erect concrete block trash enclosure.
- Install lighting fixtures on building, color: dark bronze.
- Site – install pole lighting fixtures, color/finish: adonized bronze, install new round vacuum canisters,



Façade facing East Jefferson; brick veneer. Staff photos, March 2025.



Front end of east wall; vinyl siding.



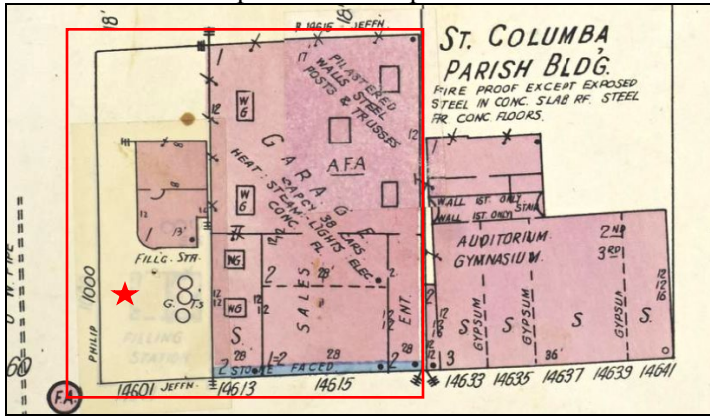
Middle and rear end of east wall; concrete block.



North (rear) and west walls; concrete block and glass block.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The two lots originally had one Philip (1000) and multiple E. Jefferson addresses (14601 – 14621) according to the Sanborn map and BSEED permit cards.



Sanborn Map, Vol. 11, 1929 – 1949.

Detroit Parcel Viewer. 14615 E. Jefferson is outlined in yellow.

- The first permit card staff located was issued in 1915 for a “garage”. On the above Sanborn map, one “filling center” (likely the 1915 “garage”) has been covered over (★) on the map. The then-existing filling center had a curved front corner, reminiscent of streamline Moderne buildings that were erected in the 1930s-1940s.

14609-15 4- E 18' Jefferson E. of 3 8597 6-28-15 USE Garage CONS. Brick REMARKS O. K.	14615 Jefferson E. 2-3-4 15673 8-21-26 USE Garage & Salesroom CONS. Conc. & Brick REMARKS O.K.	14609-21 E 18.16' of lot 2 & E. Jefferson All 3 & 4 20794 Use Brick Garage and Office Cons. Remarks O.K. Wreck and remove debris D. P. W. 20941.
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BSEED permit cards.

- In 1926, a concrete and brick “garage and salesroom” was erected at 14615 E. Jefferson (Sanborn map 14613-14615 E. Jefferson).
- The two buildings – garage and office – were demolished in 1968.



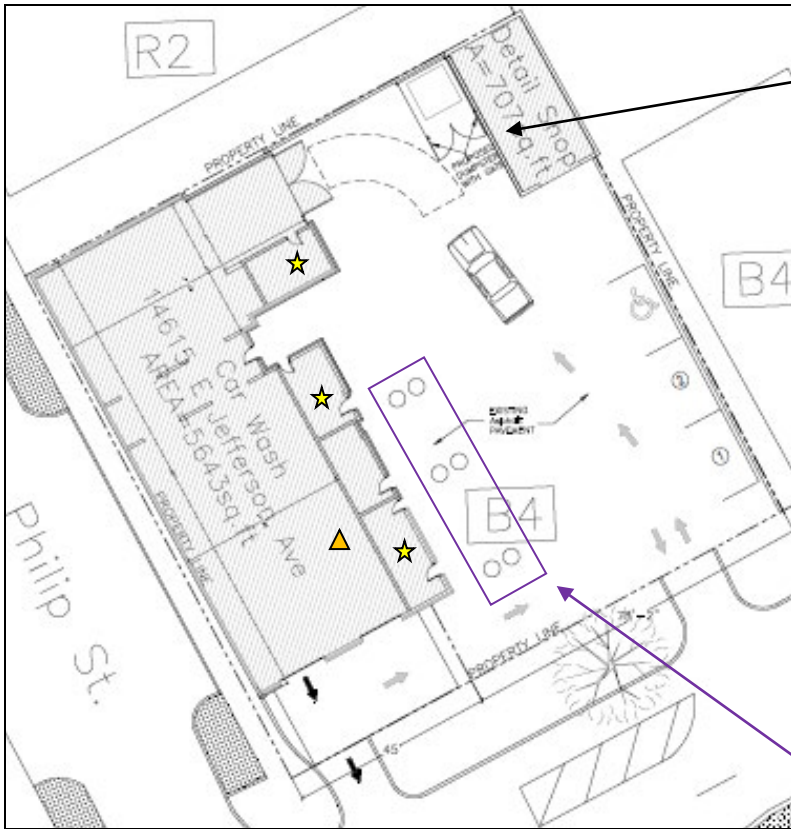
Garage & salesroom, 14615 E. Jefferson. A small portion of a building can be seen at the left edge of this photo and is likely the 1915 garage/filling station. Photo from Indiana University’s “Building a Nation: Indiana Limestone Photograph Collection”. Staff dates the photo to 1926 - 1929 due to the shape of the car visible in the right-side window and the “Dodge Brothers” sign. Dodge Brothers Motor Cars was purchased by Chrysler Corporation on May 28, 1928 and ceased as an interpedently advertised company.

14615 OK
 E. Jefferson 1,2,3,4.
 25101 7-31-68 Lot No.
 Date
 Use Masonry Automatic Car Wash
 Cons. 9,900.
 Remarks O.K.
 Erect one story 26'6"/18 x 60' automatic car wash per plan

14615 OK 1-1-4 Sub. Pt.
 E. Jefferson of PC 120
 38675 9-4-69 Lot No.
 Date
 Use Steel Car Wash
 Cons. 9,000.
 Remarks O.K.
 Erect 20'x61'9" one sty. prefab. steel car wash addn.

BSEED permit cards.

- Within a few months after the demolition was completed, a permit was issued for a one-story masonry car wash. A permit for a prefabricated steel addition to the car wash was issued in September 1969.
- The historical research confirms that a car-related business has continuously been located at the northeast corner of E. Jefferson and Philip for 110 years.
- The Jefferson-Chalmers Historic Business District was enacted on August 18, 2008.
- As stated in the district's final report: *The proposed district contains a notable concentration of architecturally distinguished commercial, apartment and church buildings dating from the later 1910s to the 1930s. There are fifty-seven buildings located in the proposed district, of which forty are considered contributing structures.*
- The lot and buildings that comprise this application were erected after the district's "period of significance". The National Park Service states the period of significance as "the timeframe when a property was associated with important events, activities, or persons, or attained the characteristics that qualify it for listing."
- The car wash buildings are identified as non-contributing structures within the historic district. Therefore, the Commission should review the proposal with the lens of "compatibility" and determine if the proposed alterations are compatible with the historic appearance and character of the district.



Existing site plan.

Adjacent the existing secondary building will be a new trash container. (While it is shown on this existing site plan, there is not a container at this location now.)

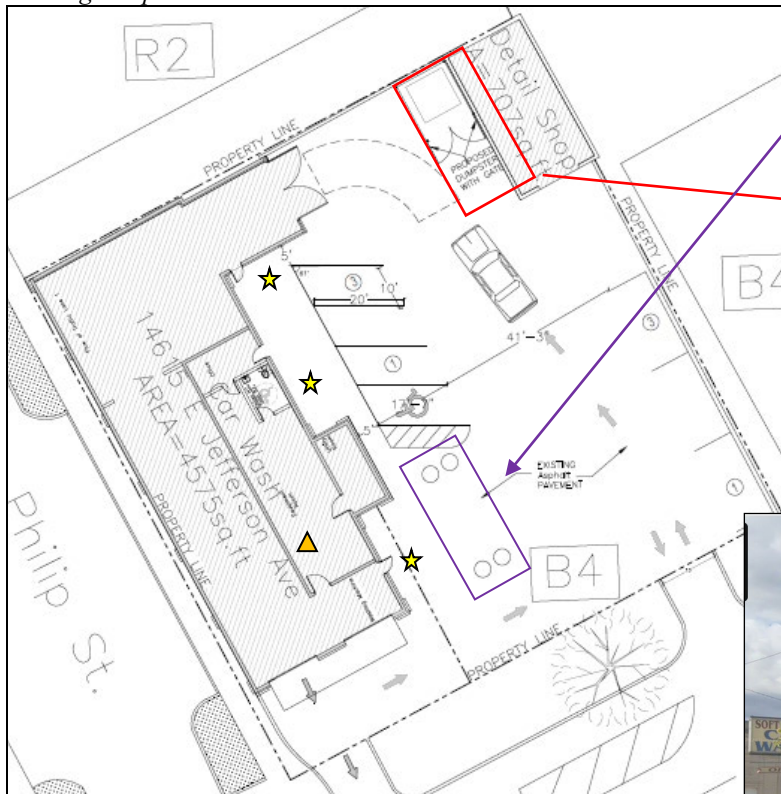
The majority of outer rooms along the east wall will be demolished, creating additional open space within the parking lot for use as parking spaces.

- Yellow stars on the existing and proposed site plans denote the areas of the building that will be demolished.
- The number of exterior doors at this area will be reduced from five to three.

Rooms will be erected within the existing building (▲).

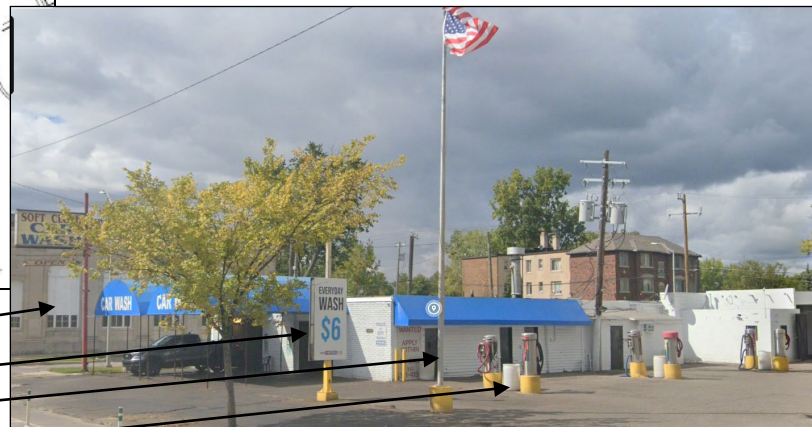
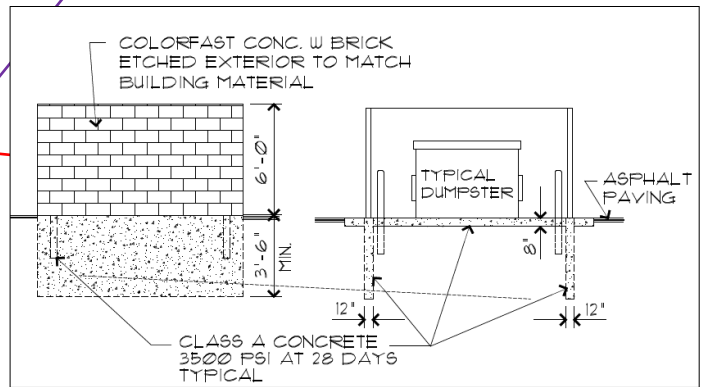
The existing freestanding signs - one tall two-sided lighted "Soft Cloth Car Wash" sign near the corner of E. Jefferson and Philip, and one smaller two-sided wood board "Everyday Wash \$6" sign - are not shown on the existing nor the proposed site plans. The flagpole is also not noted on both site plans. The exterior equipment/vacuums are noted and will be reduced from three locations to two.

Circles identify round vacuums.

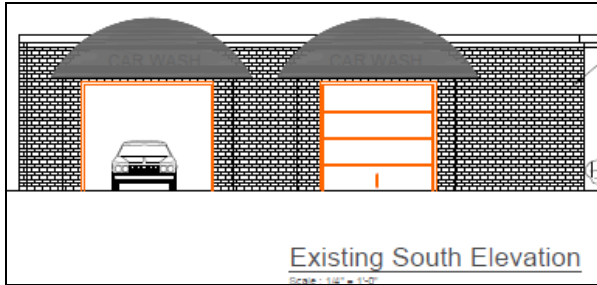


Proposed site plan.

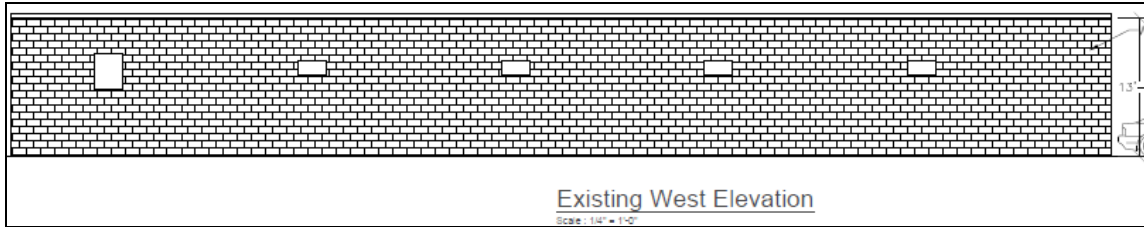
Right: Google street view.



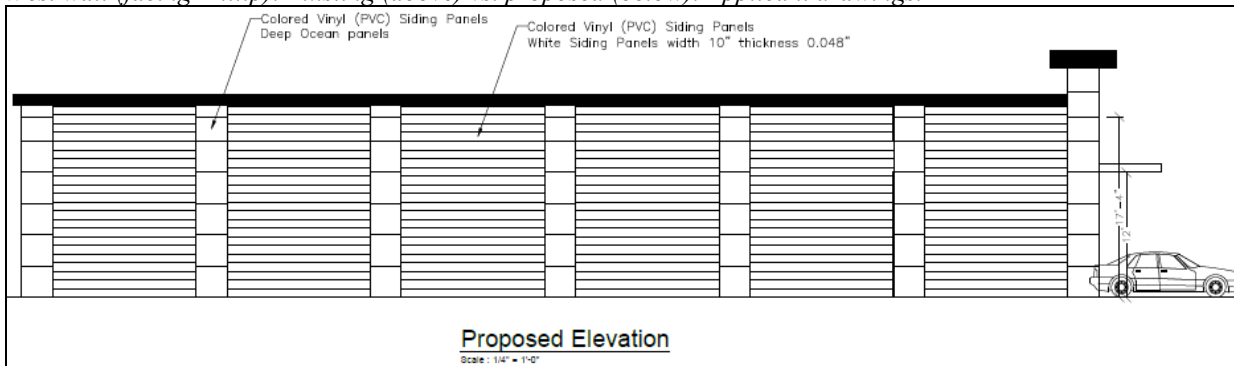
- Lighted sign.
- \$6 wash sign
- Flagpole
- Vacuums (3 sets)



Façade: Existing (left) vs. proposed (right). Applicant drawings.



West wall (facing Philip): Existing (above) vs. proposed (below). Applicant drawings.



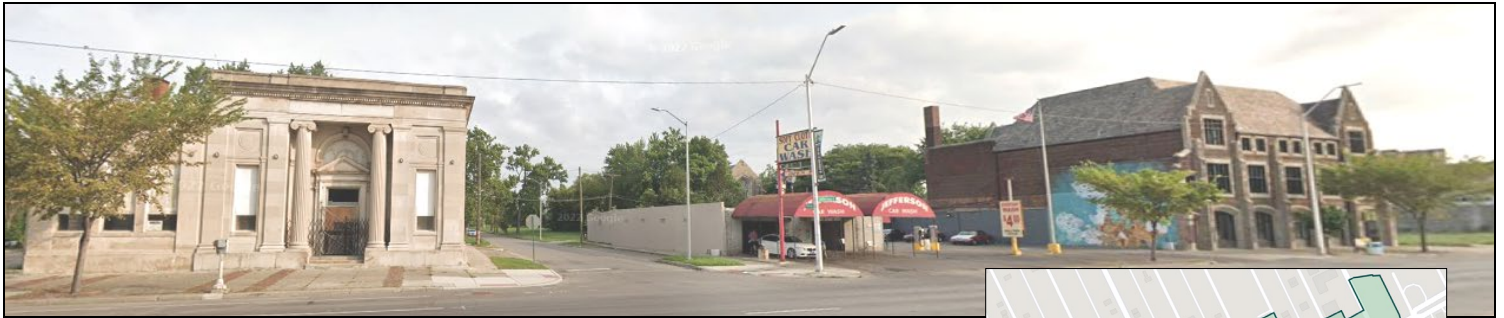
- The existing building has brick cladding on the front wall of the building, but the remaining walls are exposed concrete block and vinyl siding. Staff commends the proposed design that specifies a unified cladding material and design for all four walls; however, the vinyl siding proposed for the exterior cladding is not an appropriate material within a historic district with an early 20th century period of significance.
 - Vinyl siding has visible vertical joints and does not match the surface texture, finish, edge details, and at times width and reveal, of a historic building material, such as wood siding or brick.
 - Vinyl siding is a panelized product with molded edges that also imparts a sheen, all of which is in contrast with crisp edges of wood siding with a painted matte finish.
- The proposed color scheme is white vinyl lap siding and “deep ocean” blue vinyl vertical panels. This is a highly contrasting color palette that is not consistent with the general characteristics and atmosphere of the district.
- The district’s elements of design are regularly used when reviewing applications for new construction and building alterations. As alterations within this application relate to a car wash, an atypical building within the district, the elements of design to be considered are limited to the materiality of the building and associated colors and textures, which are discussed within elements 7, 8 and 9:

7) Relationship of Materials – The majority of materials in the district are brick and cast stone...Face brick on fronts of buildings often extends into the side elevations but changes to common brick for the majority of the sides and rear.

8) Relationship of Textures – A variety of textures exist in the district, the most common being textured or pressed brick with mortar joints juxtaposed to cast stone trim...

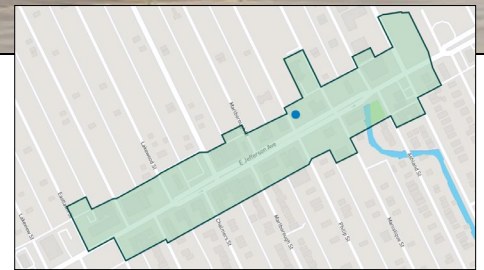
9) Relationship of colors – Natural brick colors, red, beige, yellow, orange, brown and buff, and beige limestone, are major façade colors in the district. Light cast stone trim provides contrast to the darker materials.

- The plans identify the height of the existing structure is 13’-3”. The proposed wall height (including parapet) for the east and west walls, and a portion of the north wall for the altered structure is 19’-6”; the front wall is to be 21’ (plus the height of the overhanging decorative trim). The taller, rectilinear massing and lack of applied ornament is a compatible design within the district. Additionally, as the historic structures on either side of 1000 Philip/14615 E. Jefferson are three stories tall (and 14635 E. Jefferson is over three stories tall when taking into account the height and massing of the steeply pitched roof), the additional height for the car wash structure will create a more proportional relationship to the adjacent buildings, increasing the compatibility of this noncontributing property.



Above: This street view captures the car wash with the adjacent historic/contributing properties. Google maps photo.

Right: HDC map of the Jefferson-Chalmers Business historic district; the blue dot identifies location of the car wash.



- As seen in the streetscape photo above, the half-round awnings are the dominant feature of the existing car wash. The proposed flat, 12’-high metal clad awning that will extend over both automobile exits will be a minimally visual feature at the front of the car wash.

ISSUES

- The car wash building is a non-contributing structure within the historic district and should be secondary - physically, architecturally and visually - to the district’s contributing historic buildings. The proposed exterior cladding material and color palette are in contrast to the surrounding buildings and not appropriate for this building within the Jefferson-Chalmers Business Historic District.
 - Vinyl siding is a panelized product that has visible vertical joints and does not match the surface texture, finish, edge details, and at times width and reveal, of a historic building material, such as wood clapboard siding or brick. Vinyl siding also has a plasticity in its appearance and sheen and is not a compatible finish against the dominant cladding materials in the district, which are brick and cast stone.
 - White vinyl siding is typically bright white, and the other selected color “ocean blue”, would create a stark and highly contrasting color palette that is not consistent with the general characteristics and environment of the adjacent early 20th century buildings.
- At the time of completing this report, some details of the proposed design and finishes remain to be clarified: the color(s) of the aluminum awning and roof coping, material (glass?) within the opening on the pedestrian doors, and the design/materiality of the trash enclosure (walls: page A-16 shows concrete block as the wall material, but the written description still specifies a fence-like material.)

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 Jefferson-Chalmers Historic Business District, with the conditions that:

- The car wash, as a noncontributing structure within the historic district, will remain a secondary building and site - physically, architecturally and visually - to the district's contributing historic buildings. The proposed exterior cladding material and color palette are in contrast to the surrounding buildings and not appropriate for this building within the Jefferson-Chalmers Business Historic District.
 - A wall cladding material that is compatible with the dominant cladding materials in the district, brick and cast stone, will be selected, as will a neutral color (or colors) that fall within the range of natural brick colors. Material samples will be submitted for staff review.
- Remaining cut-sheets will be submitted, confirming the design, material, finish and color for all materials and building and site components, for staff review, and drawings will be corrected, if necessary to capture recent changes in design and materials.
- Should signage be part of this project, dimensioned drawings, sections and material and lighting specifications will be submitted for staff review.