

STAFF REPORT: 04/09/2025 MEETING
APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2025-00063
ADDRESS: 114 ERSKINE
HISTORIC DISTRICT: BRUSH PARK
APPLICANT: RACHEL D. SALTMARSHALL / T AND M ROOFING LLC
PROPERTY OWNER: KING DAVID LODGE / FRATERNAL CIVIC CENTER
DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 03/24/2025
DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 03/29/2025

PREPARED BY: L. SAINT JAMES

SCOPE: REMOVE DORMERS, REPLACE ASPHALT ROOF WITH ASPHALT ROOF

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The building at 114 Erskine is a two-and-a-half-story red brick structure in a 20th Century Composite style, designed by Albert Kahn and constructed in 1905. It showcases several character-defining features, including an English cross bond pattern, Bedford limestone trim, a recessed arched entryway, multi-pane wood windows, leaded glass windows, barrel dormers, and ornate wood eaves.

Tabbed limestone detailing can be found around the entrance, a window, and a corner on the north elevation, as well as a grouping of windows on the east elevation. The arched limestone entryway on the north elevation was painted grey without approval some time before October 2011.

The north elevation predominantly features multi-lite wood windows with transoms, along with some single-lite windows. On the east elevation, most of the windows single-lite, though seven multi-lite wood transom windows remain, alongside a grouping of nine leaded glass windows above the east entrance.

The hip roof is adorned with six copper barrel dormers on the north and east elevations, each features nine-lite oval windows, which are the subject of this application. It appears that a layer of EPDM roofing is present over the arch of the dormers.



Staff photo, 03/29/2025. North elevation faces Erskine St.



Staff photo, 03/29/2025.



Staff photo, 03/29/2025. East elevation faces John R St.

The building is located at the southwest corner of Erskine St and John R St.

PROPOSAL

- Remove all six dormers
- Replace asphalt roof with asphalt roof
 - Tamko shingles, Titan XT line, in Thunderstorm Grey
 - Black aluminum flashing

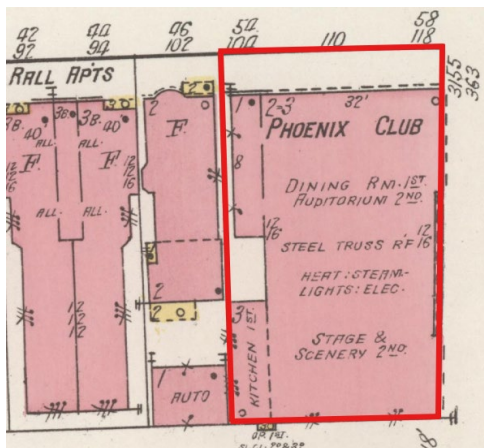


STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Brush Park Historic District was established in 1980.



1980 designation photo by HDAB.



Sanborn Map, Vol. 3, 1921



Detroit Free Press C. 1905

- The copper barrel dormers are certainly historic and unambiguously distinctive character-defining features that are important to the historical character. They are also described in the Elements of Design, adding a prominent visual component to the building.
 - The Elements of Design #10 (Sec. 21-2-120) mention “sheet metal was common” for treated areas such as “dormers” for architectural detail.
- The applicant states the dormers are in disrepair and are “causing much of the damage to the interior” and “have been repaired numerous times over the years” but “continue to leak due to the metal rusting and numerous holes appearing.”



Photo from application showing deteriorated metal.



- The applicant states that “Ornate plaster work was restored back in 2020/2021” for “over 40K” and now “requires a second restoration.”



Photo from application showing interior water damage to plaster.



Photo from application showing interior water damage to plaster.



114 Erskine

226 Erskine

Detroit Parcel Viewer



Photo by Adam Myers of 266 Erskine



Staff photo of 266 Erskine, 03/29/2025

- A similar set of copper barrel dormers adorns a house at 266 Erskine, located down the street from 114 Erskine and constructed in 1911.

ISSUES

- The removal of the dormers is inappropriate, especially given their distinctive form and materials. The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation (quoted in full below) require that historic materials and distinctive features be retained.

- If replacement dormers were warranted (that is, if the historic dormers were demonstrated to be beyond repair), the new dormers would be required to “match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities, and where possible, materials” (Standard #6, quoted in full below).

RECOMMENDATION(S)

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

Recommendation 1 of 2 – Denial – Removal of six historic dormers

Staff recommends that the proposed work will be inappropriate according to the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and the Brush Park Historic District’s Elements of Design, specifically:

Standards #:

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 where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be documented by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence

Elements of Design #: 10, 11

For the following reasons:

- The dormers proposed for removal are historic and distinctive materials and features that contribute to the character of the property.
- The submitted documentation did not indicate that the dormers are deteriorated beyond repair.
- If replacement of the character-defining dormers is necessary, the application does not include information that indicates that it is unreasonable or infeasible to replicate the dormers in-kind.

Recommendation 2 of 2 – COA – Replace asphalt roof for asphalt roof

Staff finds that the proposal for the remaining work items will not alter the features and spaces that characterize the property and district and therefore recommends the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as proposed as it meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and the Elements of Design for the district.