

STAFF REPORT: 9/10/2025 REGULAR MEETING

PREPARED BY: E. THACKERY

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2025-00476

VIOLATION NUMBER: 23-790, 23-00091 (both for the garage)

ADDRESS: 14833 STAHELIN

HISTORIC DISTRICT: ROSEDALE PARK

APPLICANTS/PROPERTY OWNERS: TAMEKKA COLEMAN/ DARRIN COOPER

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 7/22/25

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 8/26/25

SCOPE: EXPAND DRIVEWAY, DEMOLISH GARAGE, ERECT NEW GARAGE (WORK COMPLETED WITHOUT APPROVAL)

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Built in 1928, the house at 14833 Stahelin is a 2-story, Tudor Revival-style residence on the west side of the street between Chalfonte and Eaton Avenues. The house is clad in red bricks on the first floor and wood shakes on the second, and is cross-gabled and features a large, front-facing gable with a smaller nested gable. The smaller gable projects forward and includes the off-centered, rounded entry door accented with cut stone. The side gable has a gambrel roof. Flared eaves separate the upper story from the lower, and a continuous shed dormer runs the width of the house.

A driveway is along the house's south side. At the end of the drive behind the house's southwest corner is a garage, erected without permit. The garage is one story, 40 feet wide and 22 feet deep. From the sidewalk, a viewer can see a portion of the one-story garage and overhead door. Behind the house, however, the garage extends further. The historic garage (now demolished) was a modest, hipped-roof building built along with the house in 1928. In 2023, it was reported that the historic garage was demolished, a new driveway was installed, and a new garage was underway. That same year, this garage was proposed to the Historic District Commission and was denied (HDC2023-00091).



Site Photo 1, by Staff, 8/26/25: (East) front elevation.



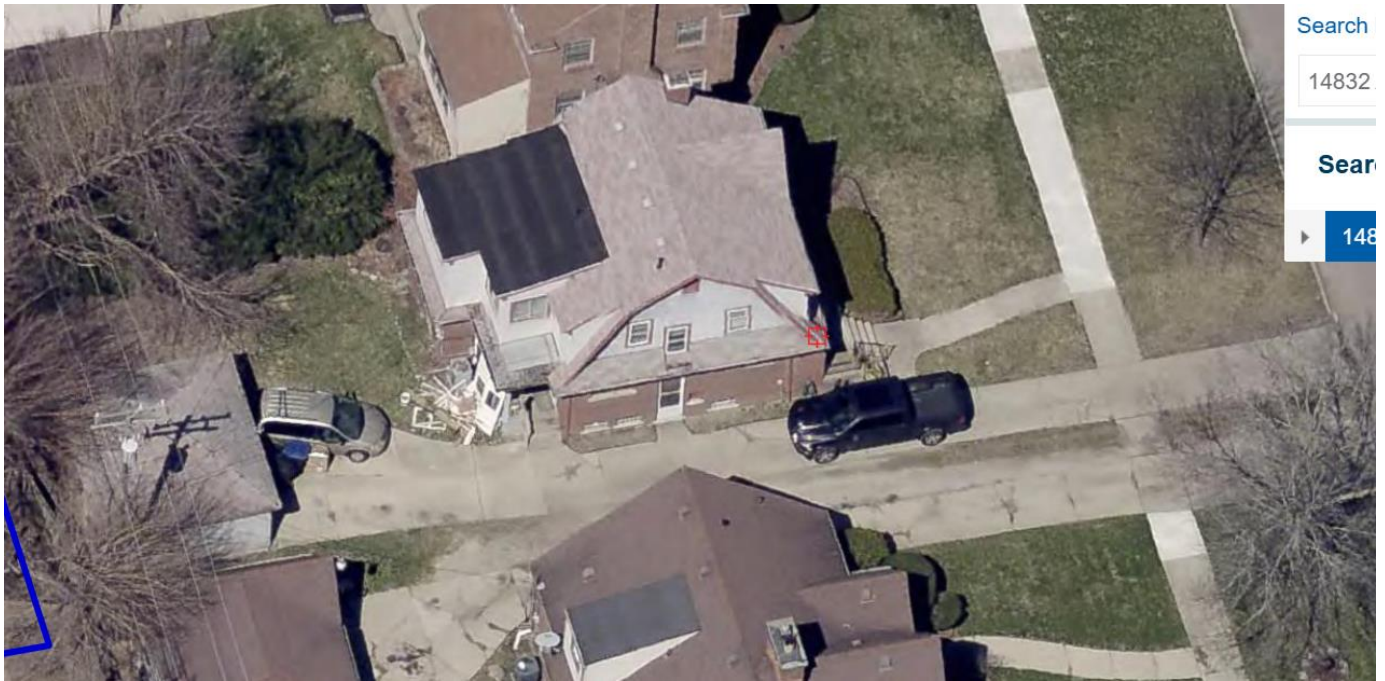
Site photo 2 by staff, 8/26/25, expanded driveway and partial view of new garage.



Detroit Parcel Viewer. Aerial view of Parcel 22083667, 14833 Stahelin (outlined in yellow), with the old garage visible in the southwest corner of the lot.



Google satellite view, 14833 Stahelin. The new driveway has eliminated any lawn between 14833 and its neighbor to the south. A rear deck is also visible but that element is not part of this application.



ConnectExplorer, April 2022.



ConnectExplorer, April 2024. With the installation of the new concrete, the small planting strip and approach to the side door, along with any lawn between the houses and the grass behind the house, have been eliminated. A larger garage has been built, and a rear deck has been added. The rear deck is not part of this application.



Google streetview August 2009, historic garage, and old driveway visible.



Google streetview July 2025. Wider drive and new garage and garage door visible.

PROPOSAL

The applicant is seeking the Commission's approval to demolish a historic garage, install a new driveway and concrete pad, and erect a new garage (all work completed) per the submitted documents. **Staff notes that the application includes the original documents from 2023 when vinyl siding was proposed to side the garage, and the included photo showed a half-finished structure. The garage has since been sided on some elevations with cementitious siding that is intended to look like shakes, instead of vinyl.** The applicant provided the pictures of the completed garage below.



Applicant-provided photo, completed garage, 2025, east elevation. The composite siding, installed garage door, and installed window are visible. Next to the window is the unsided area where the sliding glass door is proposed.



Applicant-provided photo, completed garage, 2025, east elevation. The composite siding, installed garage door, installed window, and skylights are visible. Next to the window is the unsided area where the sliding glass door is proposed.



Applicant-provided photo, 2025, completed garage, southeast corner and south elevation, composite siding, unpainted surface, and new steel hinged door visible.



Applicant-provided photo, completed garage, 2025, northeast corner and north elevation. The composite siding and unfinished plywood are visible. A window has been installed near the garage's northeast corner, as per the plan. Materials were not specified.



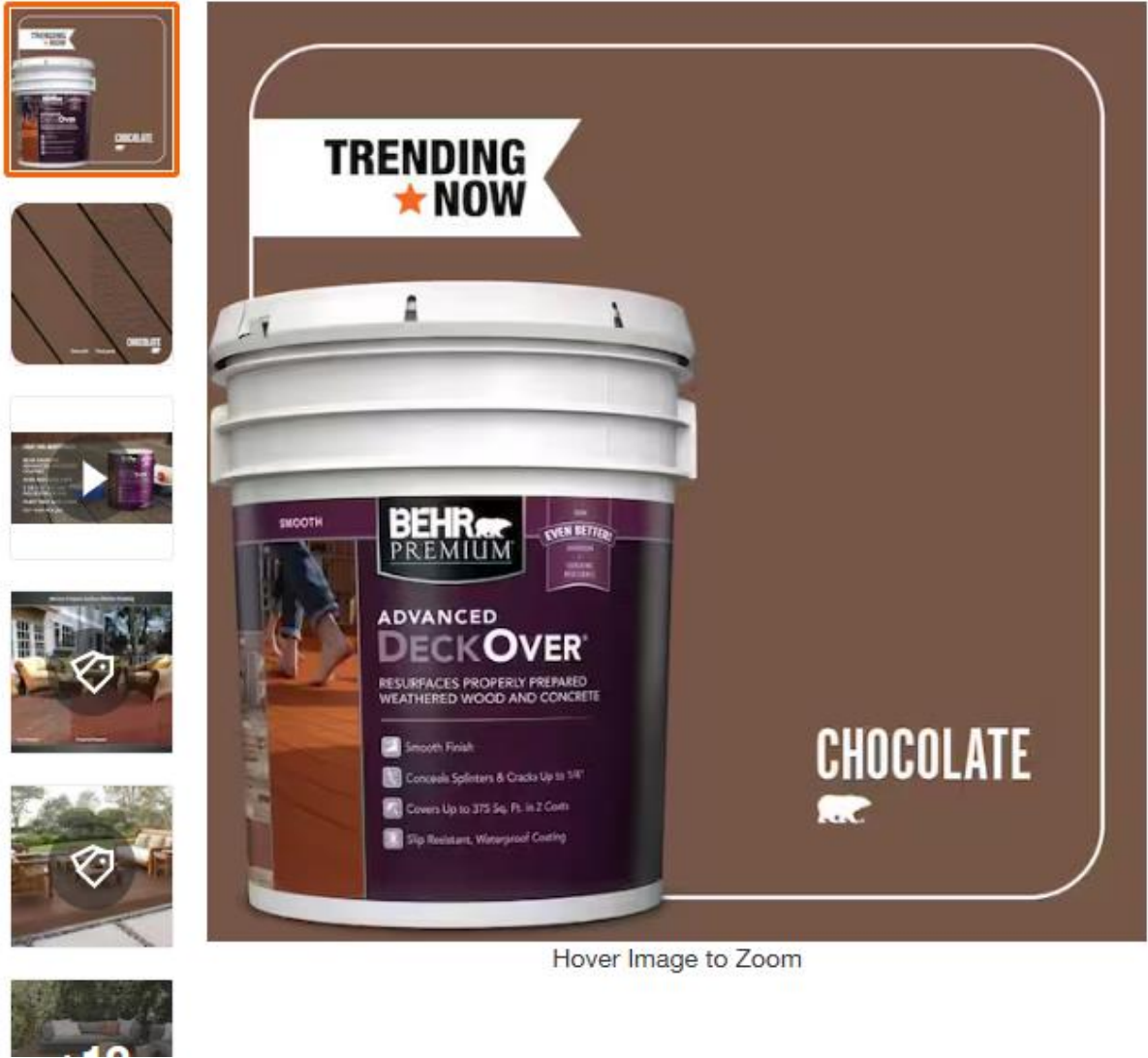
Applicant-provided photo, completed garage, 2025, rear (west) elevation. Unfinished plywood surface visible..

The applicant explained in an August 27 email to staff that “The brand and color of paint that we will be using is Behr Deckover Chocolate. The lower half of the garage will be wood and painted.” It is not clear whether the applicant intends to paint the plywood substrate directly, or if additional wood cladding is proposed. Staff found this color sample on the Home Depot site and provided it below:

BEHR Premium Advanced DeckOver

5 gal. #SC-129 Chocolate Smooth Solid Color Exterior Wood and Concrete Coating

★★★★★ (3411) Questions & Answers (1129)



STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Rosedale Park Historic District was established in 2007.

- Applicant applied for this garage in 2023 and the commission denied the application. At the time, the Commission cited in their denial that the original garage contributed to the district, related to the house, and was demolished without approval and without documentation that it was beyond repair. The commission also noted in their denial that the new garage does not relate to the historic house in design, scale, or materiality, and that it conflicts with the district’s Elements of Design—specifically the vinyl siding and vinyl windows were found to be inappropriate and conflicting with the Elements of Design. The denial also stated that the widened driveway destroys the modest scale of the old driveway, detracting from and altering the open lawn feature of the historic landscape, and that the rear open yard was a distinct character-defining feature representative of the spatial organization and land pattern of the historic district and its removal for concrete altered that pattern. **The current application is the same as the 2023 application in terms of design and scale, but the siding material has changed.** Proposed is cementitious shake siding (on at least some of the building) instead of vinyl. The windows still appear to be vinyl, and the sliding door material was not specified.

Demolition of Garage (work completed)

- In their proposal, the applicant described that the garage was leaning and so it was demolished and that there are no photos of it before demolition. The permit cards in the Building Department do not give dimensions of the 1928 garage.
- The original garage was of historic age (contemporary with the house) and would have been considered contributing to the district because it helped tell the story of early garages in suburban developments at this time. The period of significance for Rosedale Park is 1917-about 1955, according to the City’s Rosedale Park Historic District Final Report, and that report states that one of the reasons the district is significant is “its association with streetcar and automobile suburban development in relation to early twentieth century transportation corridors...” The district’s final report describes how, along with buyers in the district selecting their homes’ architectural styles with care, garages “also figured prominently in the building tastes of Rosedale Park homebuilders and homebuyers...[T]he automobile played an increasingly important role in the lives of Rosedale Park residents....The majority of builders and homeowners tended to select modest, utilitarian designs, ‘settling for the simple box garage with a gable or hipped roof, double doors, and perhaps a stock window or two.’” (City of Detroit City Council Historic Designation Advisory Board Proposed Rosedale Park Historic District Final Report, page 10, available at <https://detroitmi.gov/sites/detroitmi.localhost/files/2018-08/Rosedale%20Park%20HD%20Final%20Report.pdf>)

New Concrete Driveway and Pad (work completed)

The 2009 Google streetview photo above shows that there was some cracking concrete in the old driveway. The new driveway is wider, and the new concrete pad behind the house eliminated any backyard greenspace. Those changes to the backyard cannot be seen from the front of the house. The new driveway is wider than the old, but staff does not think it is so noticeably different as to be demonstrably incompatible. Rosedale Park’s Elements of Design #13 (“*Relationship of significant landscape features and surface treatments*”) mention that there is typically a single-width driveway leading to a garage. The widened driveway is still single width.

New Garage (work completed)

- While the application is generally complete, staff did note that the installed skylights were not mentioned in the proposal or plans, and that the product specs, colors, and materials were not included for the following elements:
 - soffits and fascia
 - windows (installed)
 - gutters and downspouts
 - skylights (installed)
 - sliding glass door

Also unclear is whether the unsided areas of the garage are planned to be sided. Staff contacted the applicant via email and requested that the above-listed information be submitted and asked about the unfinished areas.

- Considering the **Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings**, Standard 9 states that related new construction will not destroy historic materials that characterize the property, and that it will be differentiated from the old and compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment. **The removal of the original garage was in violation of this Standard, and the new garage, in staff’s opinion, is not compatible with the massing, size, scale, or architectural features of the historic house to protect the historic integrity of this property and its environment.** The Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings do not recommend introducing new construction onto a site which is visually incompatible in terms of size, scale, design, materials, color, and texture. It is staff’s opinion that this garage is incompatible in terms of size, scale, design, materials (the visible plywood boards, even if painted, do not seem compatible with the historic district and seem not to be an acceptable finish material), and color.
- The following is an outline of staff’s opinion of the new garage design’s conformance to the district’s **Elements of Design** that mention garages or that seem to staff to be applicable to garages:
 - “(1) *Height. The height of the single-family residential structures in the Rosedale Park Historic District range from one story to 2½ stories tall, the half-stories contained within the roof...Garages are generally one-story tall.*”
Staff analysis - The proposed garage reflects this element of design.
 - “(5) *Rhythm of spacing of buildings on streets. The spacing of the buildings is generally determined by the lot sizes and the setbacks from side lot lines. There is a general regularity in the widths of subdivision lots from one block to another, and a shared rhythm and cadence along the streetscapes. Generally, all residences or parts thereof, including cornices, balconies, pergolas and porches, are not nearer than three feet to the side lot line, or as defined by specific subdivision or deed restrictions.*”
Staff analysis - Staff finds this proposal and garage placement consistent with the existing rhythm of driveways between primary structures with garages at the end of the drives (set back behind the houses), and all sides of the garage are at least three feet to the lot line.
 - “(7) *Relationship of materials. Masonry is the most significant material in the majority of houses in the Rosedale Park Historic District in the form of pressed or wire cut brick, often combined with wood, stone, and/or stucco. Wood is almost universally used for window frames, half-timbering, and other functional trim...Garages, where they are contemporary with the residential dwelling, often correspond in materials.*”
Staff analysis - This garage seeks to be compatible with the house by using siding that is similar to the siding on the house’s second story. However, the garage’s areas not sided with the shingles appear to have no material relationship to the historic house. The materials of the windows, sliding door, and soffits and fascia would need to be known in order to evaluate their compatibility. Vinyl trim and windows/doors would not be compatible with this element of design.
 - “(9) *Relationship of colors. Colors used on garages should relate to the colors of the main dwelling.*”
Staff analysis - The garage that existed on this site before had a roof, overhead door, and trim that matched the colors of the house. The current garage has a black roof and yellow paint, and neither of those colors are reflected on the historic house. The proposed brown color also to be used on

the garage is not found on the historic house, either. **The proposed colors for the new garage do not relate to the colors of the main dwelling.**

- *“(10) Relationship of architectural details. The architectural elements and details of each structure generally relate to its style.”*
Staff analysis - While this element of design seems to apply most to primary buildings in the district instead of secondary buildings, staff wanted to mention that the house is English Revival-influenced, while the garage with its horizontal emphasis, midcentury-inspired overhead door, and planned glass sliding door all seem to lean more toward Modern in design.
- *“(11) Relationship of roof shapes. A variety of roof shapes exists, relating to the style of the dwellings. Common on English Revival buildings are steeply sloped pitched or hipped roofs with complex arrangements of secondary roof shapes, including steeply sloped gables, clipped gables, and shed roofs. These roofs are commonly interrupted by gabled, shed, and multi-sided dormers, and substantial chimneys which are sometimes clustered...Roofs of houses built later in the period of development of the district, such as those of modern inspiration, tend to have significantly lower slopes.”*
Staff analysis – The simple gable roof of the new garage does not closely relate to the historic house, but it does not seem to staff to be incompatible with it, either.
- *“(14) Relationship of open space to structures. ... All houses have ample rear yards as well as front yards. Wider lots in Rosedale Park permitted side drives with garages at the rear of the lots...Garages, when original, often correspond in materials to the main body of the dwelling, but are of modest, one-story, simple box design with single- or double-doors...About half of the original garages in the district have been removed and/or replaced.”*
Staff analysis – The new garage is a single story with a single door wide enough for two cars. It is not modest with a simple box design, however. It is much larger than the old garage and has windows, skylights, and a proposed sliding glass door. Additionally, the removal of the entire lawn for concrete seems to staff to be in violation of the aspect of this Element of Design that states that all houses have ample rear yards.
- *“(18) Relationship of lot coverages. The lot coverage for single-family dwellings ranges generally from 25 percent to 35 percent, including the garage, whether freestanding or attached.”*
Staff analysis – City of Detroit Parcel Viewer states that this lot’s size is 5793 square feet. HDC staff previously estimated that the house’s footprint is 26’ x 42’ (1,092 square feet) and the application materials state that the new garage is 40’ x 22’ (880 square feet). The buildings on the parcel total approximately 34% of lot coverage, which falls within the 25-35% range as described in the Elements of Design.

ISSUES

- It is staff’s opinion that the removal of the original garage was in violation of Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation #2, 5, and 9.
- It is staff’s opinion that the proposed new garage design is generally inappropriate. Staff finds that it is not compatible with the massing, size, scale, or architectural features of the historic house to protect the historic integrity of this property and its environment. Staff finds that the new garage is not sufficiently subordinate to the historic house in size or scale, and its architectural features (midcentury-inspired overhead door, proposed sliding glass door, overall horizontal emphasis, and skylights) seem to staff to be differentiated without compatibility, failing to meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for

Rehabilitation, Standard 9. Staff also finds that the new garage design fails to meet Rosedale Park's Elements of Design #9, 10, 14, and 18.

- It is possible that once the materials are fully understood (for windows, soffits and fascia, gutters and downspouts, skylights, and sliding glass door, and whether any cladding for the visible plywood is proposed), the new garage will fail to meet Element of Design #7 as well.
- The proposed (now completed) concrete pad behind the house has removed all lawn/greenspace in the backyard, removing a character-defining feature of the property according to the district's Elements of Design #14.

RECOMMENDATION

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

Recommendation #1 of 2 Denial: Demolish garage, erect new garage, and installation of concrete pad

Staff recommends that the proposed demolition of the historic garage, the erection of the new garage, and the installation of the concrete pad behind the house as proposed in the submitted materials will be inappropriate according to the Rosedale Park Historic District's Elements of Design and the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, specifically Standards #2, 5, and 9:

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.

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.

and Elements of Design #9, 10, 14, and 18.

For the following reasons:

- The demolition of a historic building on the site contradicts the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings.
- The new proposed (and built) garage has a much larger footprint than the historic garage had and it is not appropriately subordinate to the historic house, making the new garage incompatible with the massing, size, and scale of the historic house and undermining the historic integrity of this property and its environment.
- The new garage's architectural features, including its excessive horizontal emphasis, midcentury-inspired overhead door, proposed sliding glass door, and skylights, are differentiated from the old garage and the historic house without achieving the necessary compatibility.
- The new concrete pad behind the house does not meet the historic district's Elements of Design #14 in that a character-defining feature of the district is that all houses have ample backyards and this new concrete pad has completely changed the nature of the backyard from a lawn/greenspace typical of the district to a completely paved space.

Recommendation #2 of 2 Approval: Installation of new concrete driveway

Staff recommends that the proposed installation of a new concrete driveway to the south of the house will be appropriate according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Rosedale Park Historic District's Elements of Design.