

STAFF REPORT: 11/12/2025 MEETING

PREPARED BY: J. ROSS

ADDRESS: 1427 EDISON

APPLICATION NO: HDC2025-0065

HISTORIC DISTRICT: BOSTON-EDISON

APPLICANT/ARCHITECT: ELISE DECHARD/END STUDIO

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 10/27/2025

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 10/20/2025

SCOPE: DEMOLISH GARAGE, ERECT GARAGE

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The building located at 1427 Edison is a two-story, single-family dwelling that was erected ca. 1910. The building features a front-gabled roof with a lower, front-gabled porch at the façade. Aluminum currently encloses the roof's eaves. Exterior walls are primarily brick, while lapped aluminum siding is found at the gable ends at the front and rear walls. Windows are double-hung, aluminum-clad, wood units, installed in 2006. The rear yard includes a concrete foundation where a garage once stood.



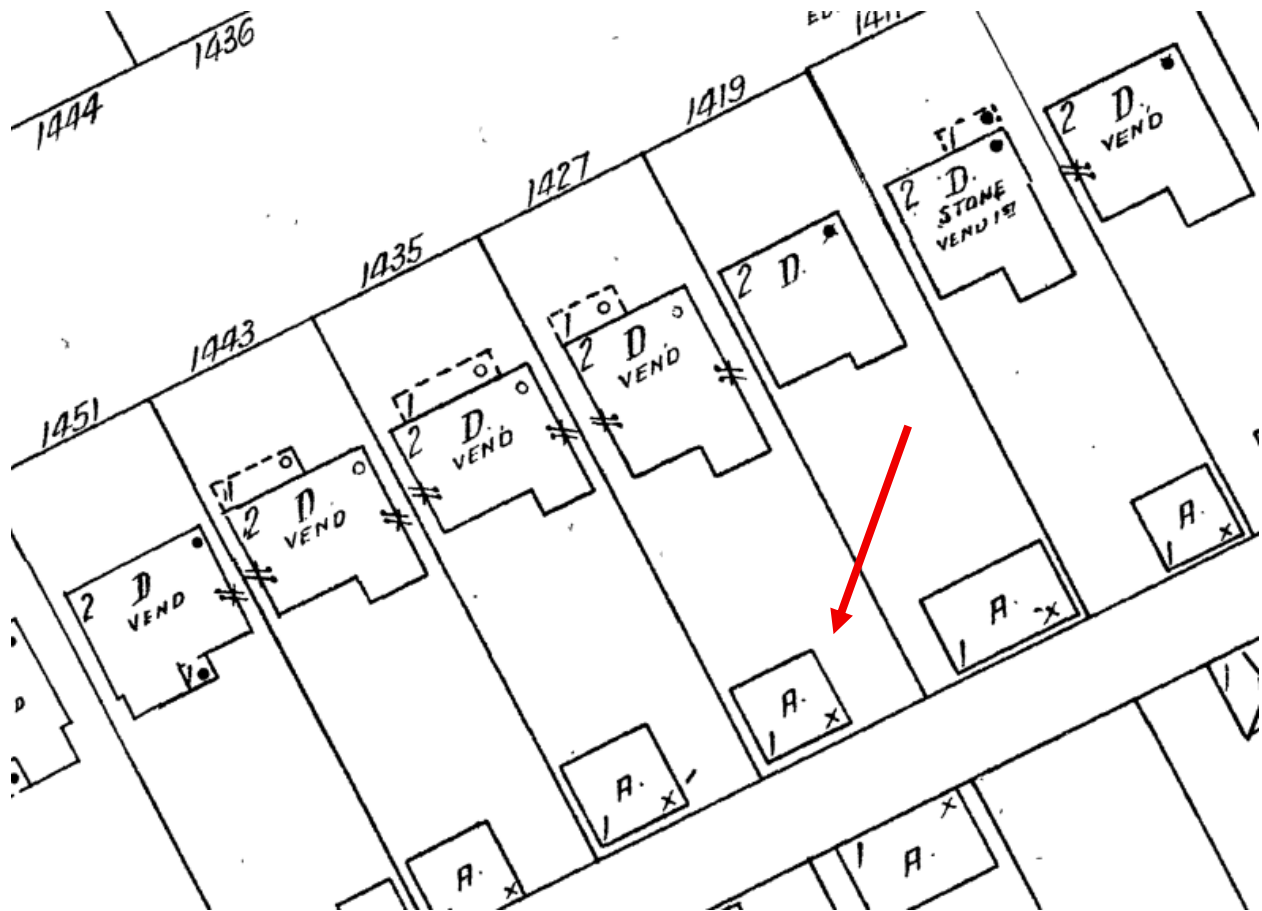
1427 Edison. Photo by staff, taken 10/27/2025 showing current conditions



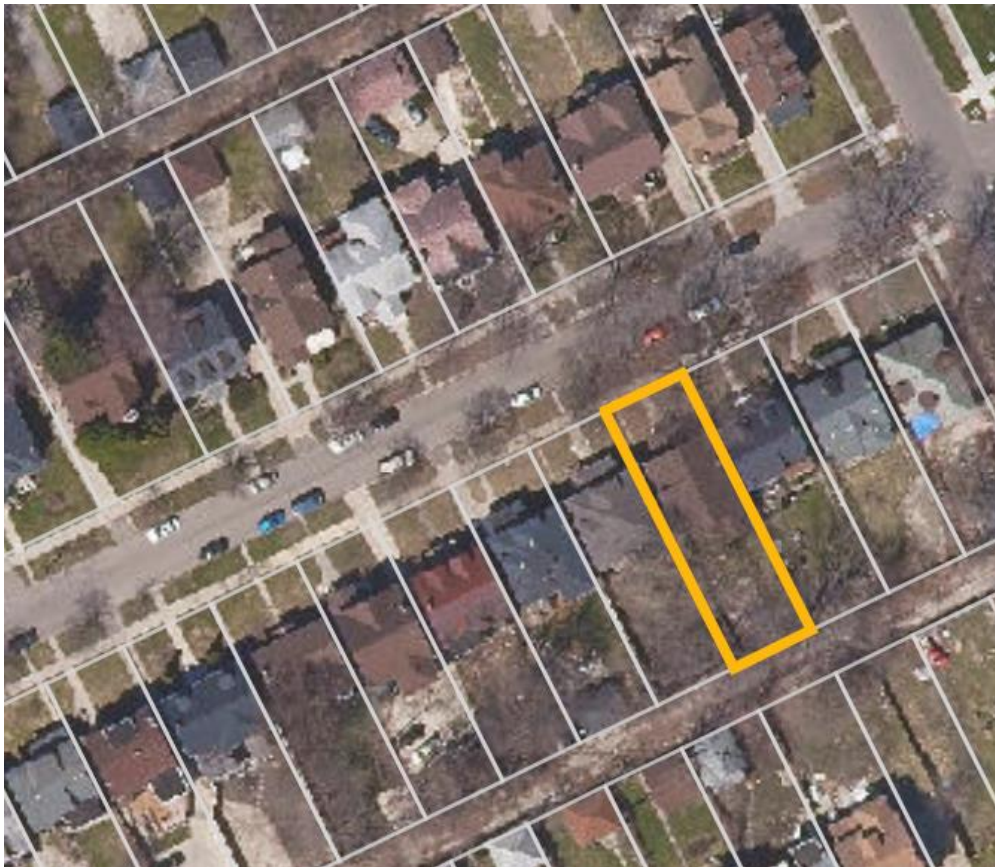
1427 Edison. Photo by staff, taken 10/27/2025 showing current conditions at rear yard



Photo taken by HDAB in 1974, at time of the district's designation. Note aluminum siding in main roof and porch gable ends.



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, 1969. Garage at rear yard indicated by red arrow.



Detroit Parcel Viewer. 1427 Edison, outlined in yellow

PROPOSAL

Per the submitted drawings and narrative, the applicant is seeking the Commission's approval to remove the existing concrete foundation at the rear yard and erect a new garage. The garage will be erected according to the following:

- The garage will have a 32'x24' footprint (576 SF)
- The height will be 19'-10"
- Exterior walls will be clad with a lapped cement fiber siding with a smooth finish and arctic white color
- A front-gabled roof with asphalt shingles of a color to match the house's roof will top the garage
- A set of hinged, paired doors will be located at the north façade, while two overhead doors will be located at the south/rear wall (material not specified)
- Windows are double-hung units (material not specified)
- Exterior lights are gooseneck-style fixtures

The application also proposes to add a new 140SF concrete patio within the rear yard, towards the front of the garage, to regrade the alley approach, and add a new concrete driveway within the alleyway.

Finally, the applicant is seeking a Certificate of Appropriateness for the demolition of a garage, which was completed without permit and/or HDC approval sometime between 2006 and 2011.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

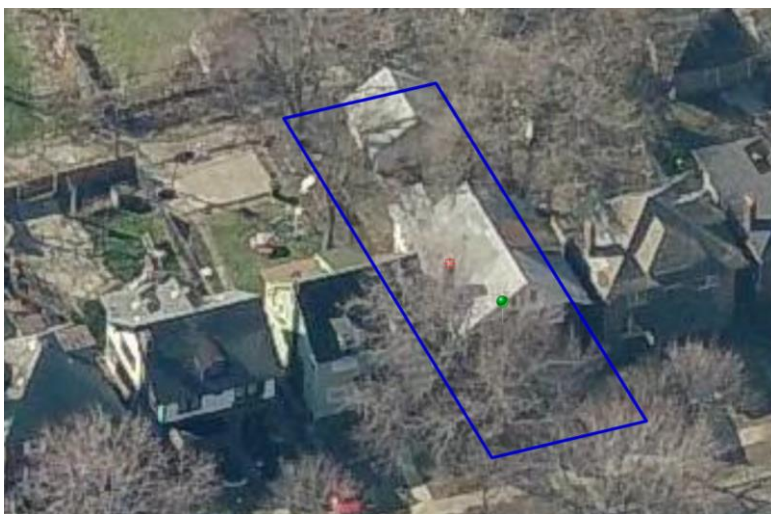
- The Boston Edison Historic District was designated in 1974
- Per the above designation slide, taken in 1974 by the HDAB, the current aluminum siding located in the building's gable ends was present at the time of the district's designation
- A review of property files maintained by HDC files indicated that staff issued a Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for the current windows in 2006. Also, the building received a COA for the reconstruction of its front porch in 2017.
- Per the above Sanborn Map, a small garage was present at the same location as the proposed new garage/current concrete slab in 1969. A review of birds eye images of the property (see below) indicates that this garage was demolished sometime between 2006 and 2011. Staff notes that the HDC does not have a COA on file for the garage's demolition. Staff therefore reached out to the applicant to note that the current application would be considered incomplete unless the demolition of the garage was added to the current scope. This was required because a new garage cannot be built at the location of the old garage without a legal/HDC-approved removal of the previous structure. The applicant is therefore seeking the Commission's "after-the-fact" approval for the removal of the property's garage. Staff acknowledges that the current owners purchased the property in 2025/the unapproved garage demolition was completed by a previous owner. However, note that existing violations remain with the property until legally addressed.



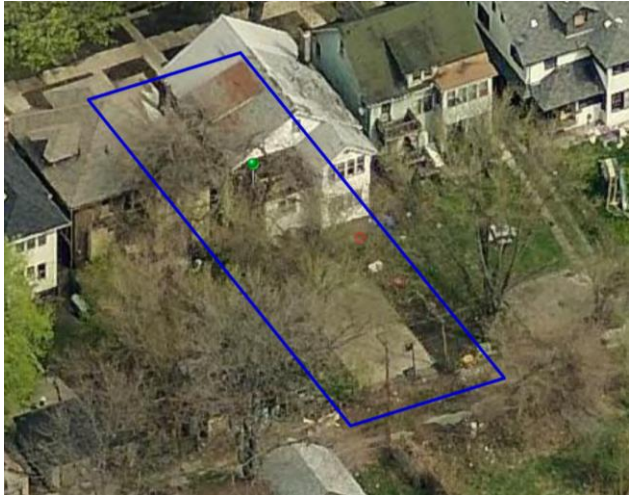
1427 Edison outlined in blue. Bird's eye view, 2006. Note that the garage is present to the rear of the house



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1427 Edison outlined in blue. Bird's eye view, 2011. Note that the garage has been demolished at this point, leaving only a concrete pad



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- With respect to the former garage's removal, the applicant has noted that the current owners purchased the property in 2025 and are unaware of the garage's appearance at the time of the unapproved demolition.
- Staff has no photographic documentation of the garage prior its demolition beyond the above Sanborn Map and bird's eye view images. As such, staff cannot opine on the garage's condition at the time of its demolition, nor can staff recommend that the resource contributed to the historic district. Furthermore, the contributing status of the garage is not provided in the district's National Register of Historic Places listing and a report for the local historic district was not completed by the Detroit Historic Designation Advisory Board upon its designation.
- With respect to the new garage's design, it is staff's opinion that the proposed building is compatible with the property and its historic surrounds. The new garage will occupy the same footprint as the former structure and its height, gabled roof, and lapped siding are in keeping with the appearance of extant nearby historic-age garages. However, while the style of the new garage's exterior doors and windows are compatible with the historic house's character, their material has not been specified in the current application.

ISSUES

- Staff cannot recommend that the former garage be considered as a contributing resource to the district because adequate documentation of its appearance and condition at the time of demolition does not exist.
- The application does not outline the material of the new garage's windows and exterior doors.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation - Section 21-2-78 -Certificate of Appropriateness – Demolish garage , erect garage

It is staff's opinion that the project meets the Standards and is in keeping the district's Elements of Design. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issues a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work with following conditions:

- HDC staff shall be afforded the opportunity to review and approve the material of the garage windows and doors prior to the issuance of the project's permit.