

STAFF REPORT: 12-10-2025 REGULAR MEETING

PREPARED BY: G. LANDSBERG

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2025-00723

ADDRESS: 84 EDMUND PLACE

HISTORIC DISTRICT: BRUSH PARK

APPLICANT: YASH CHAUDHARY/DMC CONSULTANTS, INC.

PROPERTY OWNER: 84 EDMUND PLACE LLC

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 11-21-2025

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISITS: 11-26-2025

SCOPE: REVISE FAÇADE/WINDOWS (*REVISION TO PREVIOUSLY APPROVED DESIGN*)



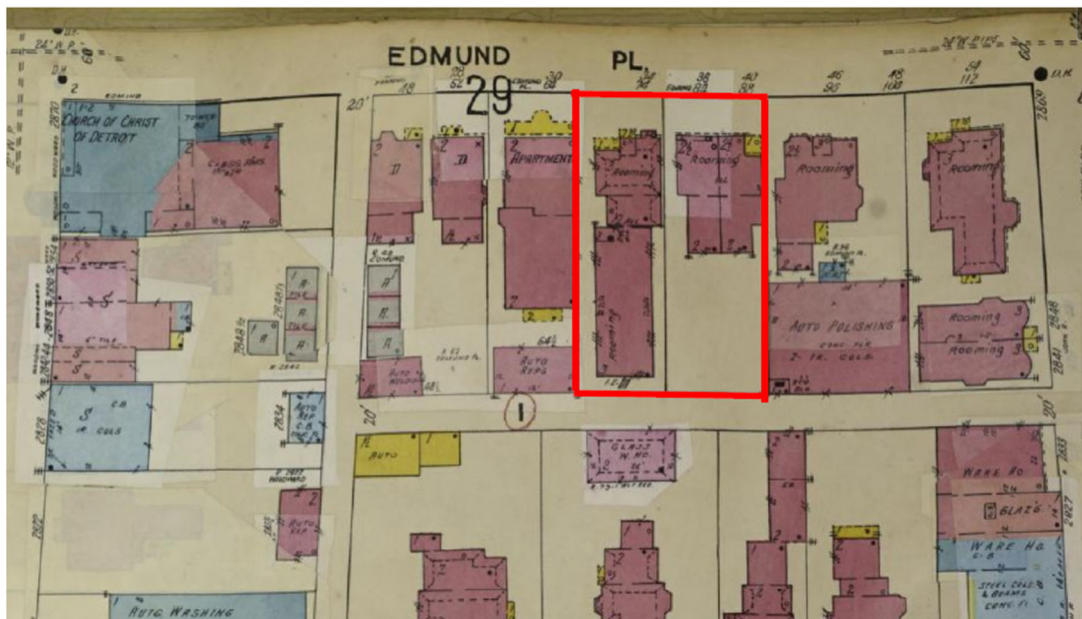
View of project site, looking south towards Renaissance Center. Staff photo, November 26, 2025.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The property, located on the south side of the first block east of Woodward (towards John R) is currently occupied by a grassy lawn with a partial non-historic fence along the Edmund Place sidewalk. The southern half of the parcel is paved.



Subject site outlined in yellow. North is up. Detroit Parcel Viewer.



84-88 Edmund Place, circa 1950 (Sanborn Map). Current development parcel (outlined in red) once held two large brick homes altered into rooming houses, one with a large addition to the south. Note historic density of this vicinity.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

At the December 2022 Regular Meeting of the Historic District Commission, duly subject to noticing requirements and a Public Hearing, the HDC approved the construction of two new multi-family buildings on the site, referred to as the “Main” Building along Edmund Place, and a “Mews” building fronting on the alley. The full 2022 staff report and Commission COA (with conditions) is found on the current property page adjacent to this staff report.



December 2022 design, as approved with conditions. Main façade, above. Non-primary elevations visible below.



The project was approved with a condition that *“the design be further developed at the non-primary elevations consistent with input from PDD Design Review and Historic staff. Upon receipt of an updated design, staff may approve the revisions for permit if consistent with the Elements of Design and the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards, or return the design to the Commission for further review if necessary.”*

This design condition was proposed by staff in the 2022 staff report, and adopted by the Commission in their decision, to address concerns about the “lack of adequate texture and articulation” in the non-primary elevations, making them seem “flat and disconnected.” Staff had recommended that “while these exposures would not have to be as well-developed as the primary facades, certain textures, shadow lines and other elements present at the front should be carried around to the sides and rear.” Importantly, staff further opined that *“there may be a number of different ways to accomplish this in a modern spirit, including the addition of materials and detailing present on the main facades, more deliberate recess and framing of window openings, adding additional paired openings, etc.”* However, the explicit conditional language in the COA did not apparently allow staff to approve revisions at the front (primary) elevation, beyond the “minor changes” typically allowable.

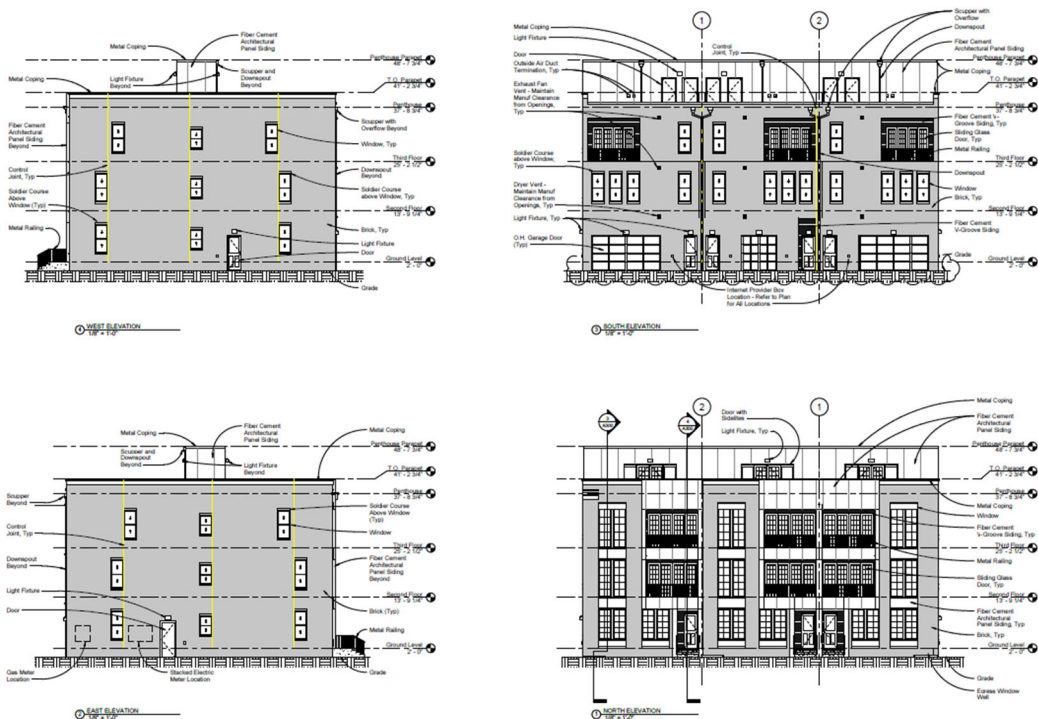
In late 2025, beginning in September, both buildings (separate permits) for the project were finally submitted to HDC staff for permit review, with a proposal for textured brick at the non-primary elevations. This resulted in additional technical and design questions returned to the applicant. In subsequent meetings and communication between HDC staff, PDD Design Review, and the applicant team (including a new design lead), developed and presented a revised design was proposed in late October focused on alterations to the (front) façade of the previously approved Main building. As discussed in the sections below, these design revisions found immediate favor with both PDD Design Review and HDC staff, but go beyond the scope of the COA condition requiring design development at the non-primary elevations. As such, while staff is in agreement that the building’s design and historic compatibility have improved, the revisions were deemed to be beyond staff authority to approve under either the conditions of the 2022 COA, or the separate authority of staff to approve “minor changes consistent with Commission intent.” Thus it has been returned to the Commission for your review.

REVISED PROPOSAL

The revisions to the previously approved project include, most prominently, the enlargement and redesign of the windows at the Edmund Place façade. Additionally, the coloring of the accent panels has been markedly darkened. These and other revisions are depicted in the submitted drawings and documents.



Rendering from applicant's submission materials, above. Elevations below (not to scale).



STAFF OBSERVATIONS & ANALYSIS

- The revised design exchanges the former simplistic punched windows and light-colored accent panels at the main façade into a well-integrated multi-lite, multi-story window design that adds considerable architectural expressiveness to the building. The colors of the accent panels, cornice line, and windows (including those at the non-primary facades) have been darkened.
- The revisions, in staff's analysis, are a better complement to Brush Park's historic buildings, which revel in natural brick/stone while featuring expressive and robust detailing often rendered in moody, dark earth tones. The new building is distinctive, which is true of all of Brush Park's historic buildings, but is easily readable as a contemporary addition, as dictated by National Park Service guidance.

ISSUES

- No issues. Staff assesses that the revised design is more compatible with the important historic features of Brush Park than the original design was, achieving added texture, articulation, and robustness while moving to a darker, natural color palette established by historic prototypes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

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

Staff recommends that the proposal for revising the previously approved design at 84 Edmund Place should qualify for a Certificate of Appropriateness, as it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and the Brush Park Historic District's Elements of Design.