



**PLANNING AND
DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

Coleman A. Young Municipal Center
2 Woodward Avenue, Suite 808
Detroit, Michigan 48226

Phone 313•224•1339
www.detroitmi.gov

SR-2 – STAFF ADVISORY REPORT (03-06-2026)

This advisory report, prepared by staff, represents the opinion and advice of professional staff, and does not represent nor direct the separate review and decision of the Historic District Commission. This report serves as an addendum to SR-1, an objective staff summary of the proposal and property.

ADDRESS: 2008 LONGFELLOW

MEETING DATE: 03-06-2026

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2025-00741

VIOLATION NUMBER: 1077

SCOPE: REHABILITATE HOUSE AND GARAGE (WORK STARTED WITHOUT APPROVAL)

ADVISORY STAFF REPORT PREPARED BY: A. DYE

STAFF OBJECTIONS TO APPROVAL:

This first section describes itemized conclusions/concerns, which, in staff's professional opinion, would prevent the issue of an unconditional Certificate of Appropriateness (COA). "None" means staff has no objections and believes a COA is warranted, with no conditions. The Historic District Commission is not required to accept staff opinions or recommendations.

1. The wood siding at the house and garage date from the period of significance and are distinctive character-defining features of the property.
2. The proposal, which seeks to replace the original wood siding at the dormers and garage walls, does not demonstrate that the historically distinctive, character-defining wall cladding is beyond reasonable repair. Wood siding is readily available and can be milled to match the exposure, profile and pattern of the historic wood siding and be painted to match the surface finish of the remaining historic wood siding/trim on the house and garage.
3. Dimensions of one of the remaining historic double-hung window frames, including muntins and recessed dimension from the outer masonry wall, will be submitted to staff.
4. Intact historic wood windows will remain and be repaired as needed. Replacement windows will only be specified for openings in which vinyl windows have been installed and where historic windows were previously removed (i.e., empty window openings).
5. Specifications on the selected Kolbe 'Heritage Series' window line be submitted, as will a window order with all details related to the manufacturing be listed (including glass, screens, muntin profile and dimension, etc.).
6. Should staff determine the selected replacement window is not a match to the historic windows, another window line will be submitted for review.
7. Existing wood brickmold will remain and be repaired. Where brickmold is missing, new wood brickmould, matching the dimension and profile will be installed and painted.
8. The window/wall panel design at the second story rear porch will be revised to match the historic design and proportions.
9. A section drawing or project notes will be added to the drawing set to clarify how the eave returns

will be constructed and finished.

10. Cut sheets for selected asphalt shingle roof, rear entry doors, and gutters and downspouts will be submitted confirming design, dimension, exterior finish and color.
11. Exterior paint colors for all wood surfaces to be painted will be listed on the project drawings.
12. If any hardscape or landscape work will take place at the site, including fencing, a site plan or landscape plan will be submitted for staff review, as well as cut sheets for any items proposed for installation.
13. Should changes be made to the scope of work and/or design of features and components to the buildings and site, staff will review then and forward items to the Commission for review, if necessary.

STAFF ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION:

This second section expands on the reasoning and analysis leading to staff's conclusions given in the first section above. The Historic District Commission is not required to accept staff opinions or recommendations.

2008	Longfellow	878
19171	11-13-19	LOT NO. DATE
USE	dwelling	
CONG.	brick veneer	
REMARKS	Frame garage	O. K.
	Permit N. o. 19172	
	12th-14th	

2008	Longfellow	878
63212	4-28-38	LOT NO. DATE
USE	dwllg	O. K.
CONG.	brick	
REMARKS	reroof house and garage	O. K.
	with asphalt roof.	

2008	Longfellow	878
47008	5-12-70	LOT NO. DATE
USE	Frame Pvt. Garage	
Cons.	600.	
Remarks	Repair fire damage only	O. K.



Permit Cards, BSEED.

Designation photo, 1974, HDAB.

- The building permit for the erection of the house and garage was issued on November 13, 1919.
- The designation photo shows the footprint and design of the original half-circle covered, raised entrance porch, the design of the wall trim and window operation at the side porch (casement units with a 2-wide by 5-high pattern), the window pattern of the wood double-hung windows at the first and second floors (4-over-1, 6-over-1 and 8-over-1 depending on window width) and the operation and pattern of the windows within the Palladian dormer (fixed or casement sash with 9-light pattern flanking an arched double-hung window with divided-light upper sash and undivided lower sash).
- It is interesting to note that the original roof for the house and garage were replaced within 20 years of the structures being built.
- The 1970 fire damage at the garage may have led to the installation of one large 2-car door opening, as this larger opening was in place at the time of district designation.



Historic photos of the houses adjacent to 2008 Longfellow offer angled views of the side walls of 2008 Longfellow.

Left: Outer wall of the one-story porch on the east side of the house. A metal shed/awning roof and wall enclosure is visible extending from the historic/original enclosed porch. The non-historic enclosure was recently removed. 1980, HDAB

Right: Outer west side wall of the two-story rear porch and supporting wood column and railing at the first floor. The 2-car garage door opening is also visible. 1974, HDAB



July 2022 - This Google street view image of the front and west-side walls shows that most of the architectural details were still intact. Some replacement windows appear at the first floor, identified by the brightness of the window frames and trim and lack of division of glass. Both 3-unit window openings at the front, two openings on the west wall (noted above) and window openings on the rear wall (one 3-window opening at the first floor and two windows at the second floor) contain vinyl replacement windows. There is no record of HDC approval for the vinyl windows.

Existing Conditions



Staff photo of façade wall facing Longfellow. The only windows that remain on this elevation are the non-approved vinyl replacement units and the upper wood sash of the dormer Palladian window. The current owner/applicant removed the other historic-age wood windows. However, it appears that the wood mullions are intact at the first floor (wrapped in aluminum), second floor-west window opening and third floor dormer. 02/26/2026



Staff photo, looking northwest, of the east-side wall and porch. The property's garage can be partially seen in the background. 02/26/2026.



Looking northeast. There are two window openings on the west side wall that retain historic wood windows that could be repaired and should not be replaced. Staff photo, 02/26/2026



Rear of house, looking south from the alley. Vinyl replacement windows are easily identified. It appears that the wood brickmold remains in most of the openings on the four sides of the house; only a few openings would need new wood brickmold.



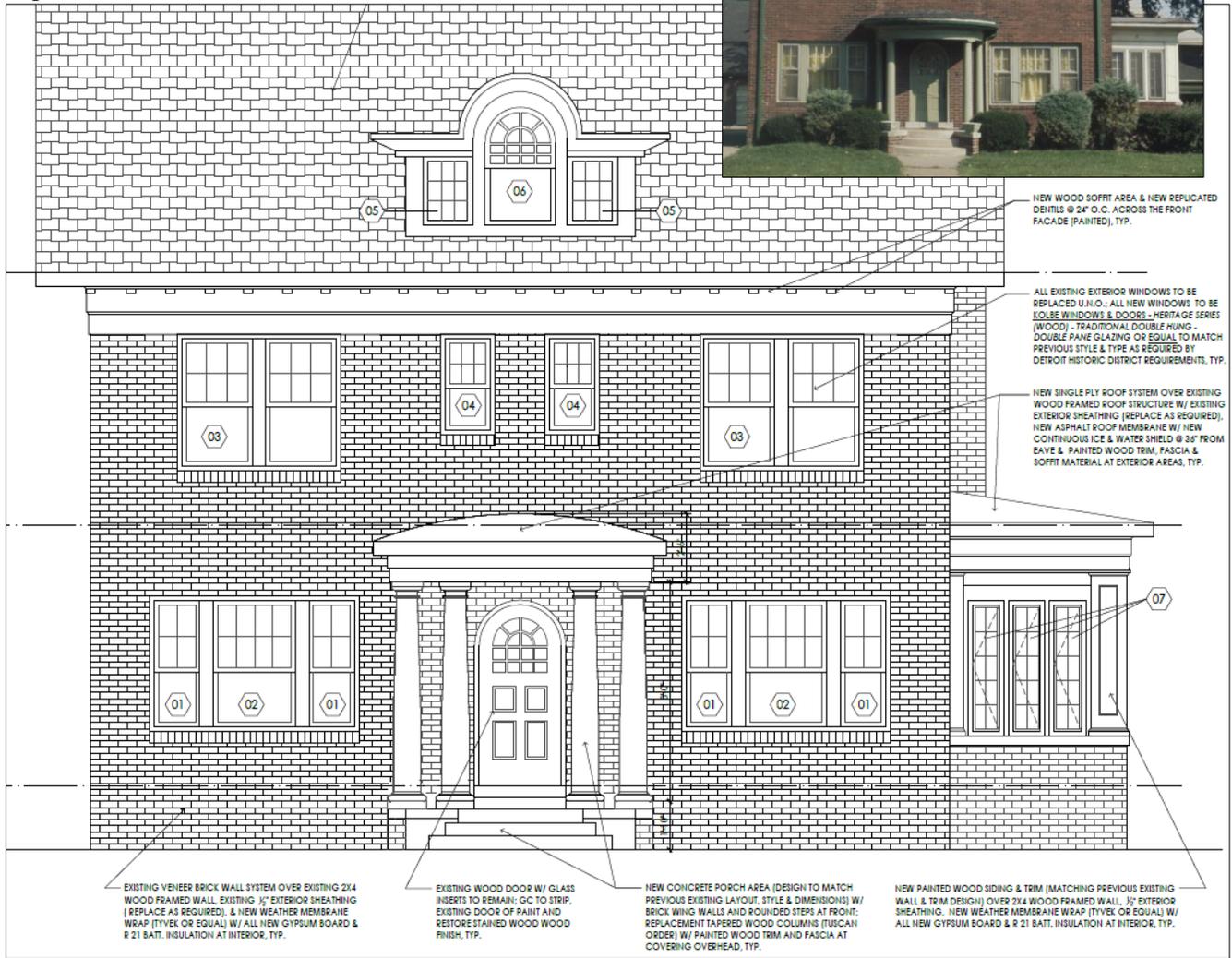
View of garage from Longfellow. Staff photo, 02/26/2026.



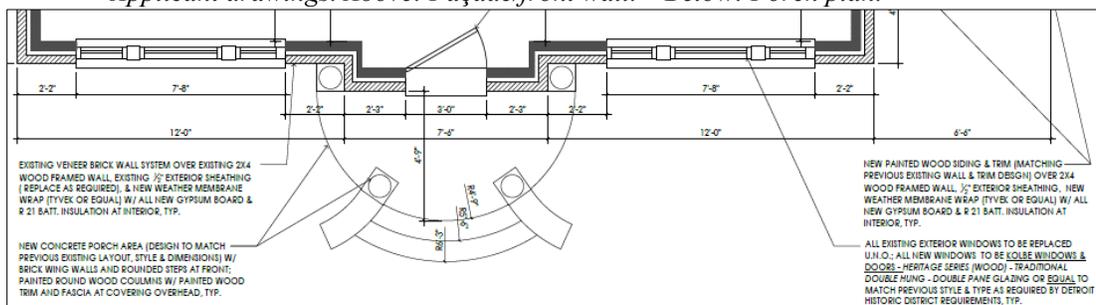
View of rear side of garage from alley. Staff photo, 02/26/2026.

- For the work completed at this property without HDC approval, the scope of work that would meet the requirements of the historic ordinance (Section 21-2-59(e)) is the installation of new components that match the operation, dimension, material, texture and finish of the components that were removed or replaced.

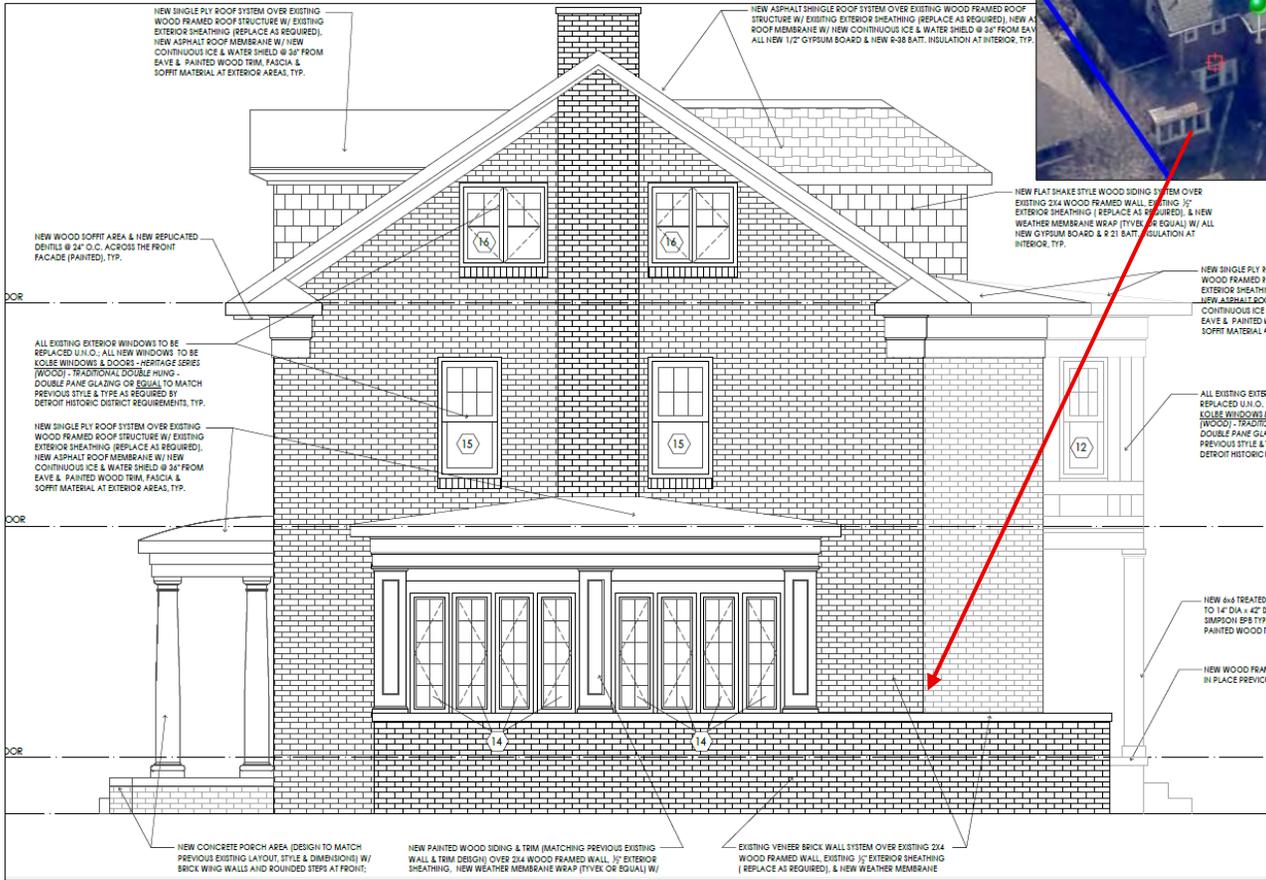
Proposal



Applicant drawings. Above: Façade/front wall. Below: Porch plan.



- The proposed portico matches the historic portico, and wood Tuscan columns have been selected. The floor plan shows structural mullions will be built within the multiple window openings. The new wood windows will match the old windows in operation and material. Staff has requested and will continue to require dimensions of existing windows (frames and setback in opening) to compare against the selected windows to confirm an appropriate match. Additional information needed includes the window line within the Heritage Series, glass and screen specifications, muntin profile and dimension, placement/setback in window opening and confirmation that brickmold will be retained.



Applicant drawing of east side wall. Above: Aerial view of house from the rear yard. ConnectExplorer, May 2024.

- The historic roof/wall/window structure that enclosed more than half of the side porch was demolished by the applicant, rather than repaired. The applicant proposes to rebuild this feature to match the historic design. Additional demolition work recently completed at the property was the removal of a non-historic enclosure of the remaining porch. Ghost lines remain of the now removed roof structure, showing how it wrapped around the side and rear walls, covering a portion of the downspout. This removal (unlike that of the historic porch enclosure) is an improvement to the property, restoring a historic and character-defining element.



Left: Applicant photo of side porch. Note the stone coping at the top of the masonry walls of the open porch, compared with the brick rowlock course on which the wall/window structure of the historically enclosed will sit.

Right: Applicant photo of the now open masonry porch and steps leading to the rear yard.



- One detail that staff questions on the drawings is the eave return. Boxed (closed) eaves are a distinctive feature of this house and are historically designed with eave returns to give the effect of a pediment, as seen here, on the east and west gable walls. The returns are covered with flashing to shed water and effectively “disappear” within the shadow of the overhanging eave.

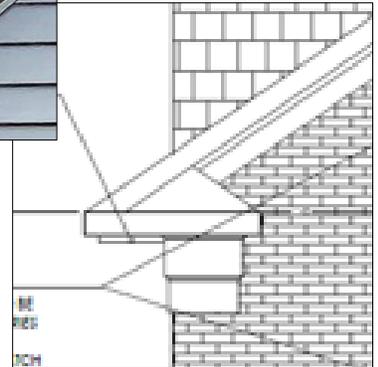


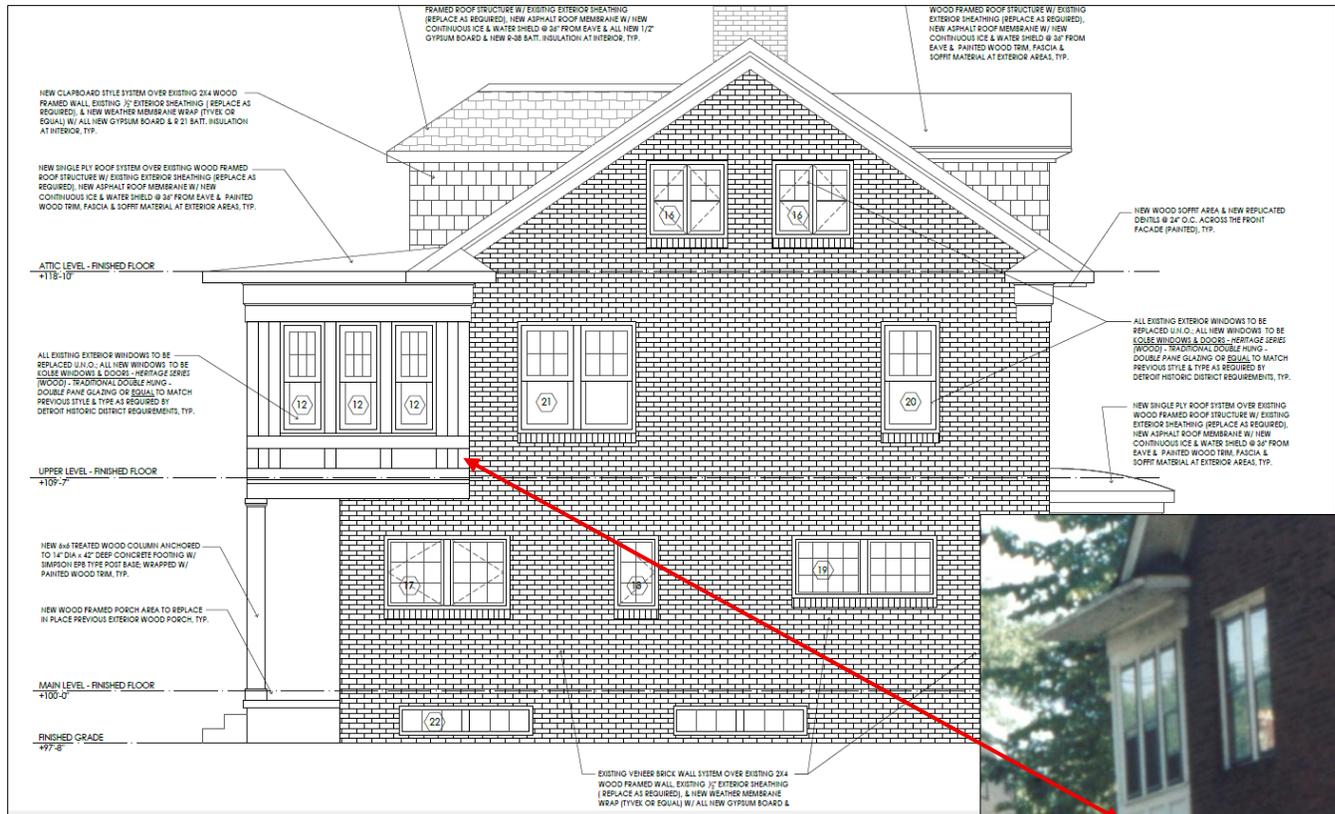
Staff photo of east wall gable/rake. 01/28/26.

- A common occurrence in new construction, or in poor repair efforts at historic houses, is to build these returns out, i.e., capping them, thus creating a chunky and highly visible element.
- The eave return on the applicant’s drawing is confusing as it doesn’t identify a recessed or forward position as well as its finish/covering. Therefore, it is staff’s interpretation of the drawing that the intention may be to “box out” this detail, like the example provided, which would alter this highly visible, distinctive character-defining feature. The drawings should be amended to clearly note how this detail will be reconstructed, which could also be completed by the creation of a section drawing



*Above: Photo from thisiscarpentry.com.
Right: Applicant drawing.*

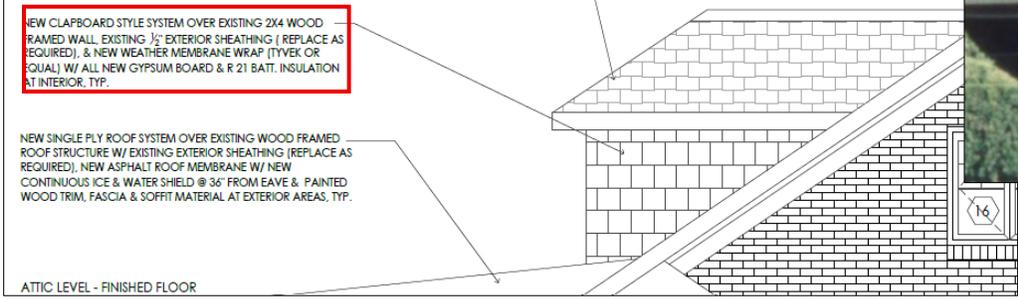




Applicant drawing of rear wall.

Designation photo, 1974

- The applicant's stated intent is to rebuild the rear porch to match the historic design. However, the proportions on the drawing, when compared to a 1974 designation photo, are not duplicative of the original condition.

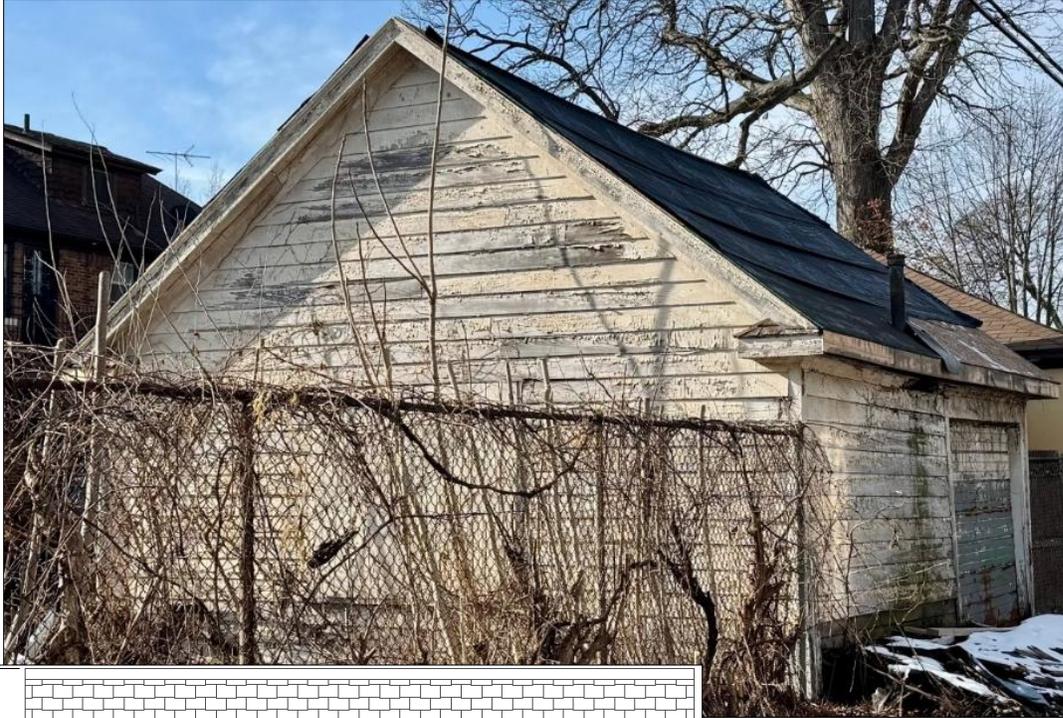


- The drawings state the wood shake shingle siding on the dormers will be replaced with a "new clapboard style system". The shake siding is a historic feature of the house and appears to be in repairable condition. The installation of a replacement siding material does not meet Standard 6.

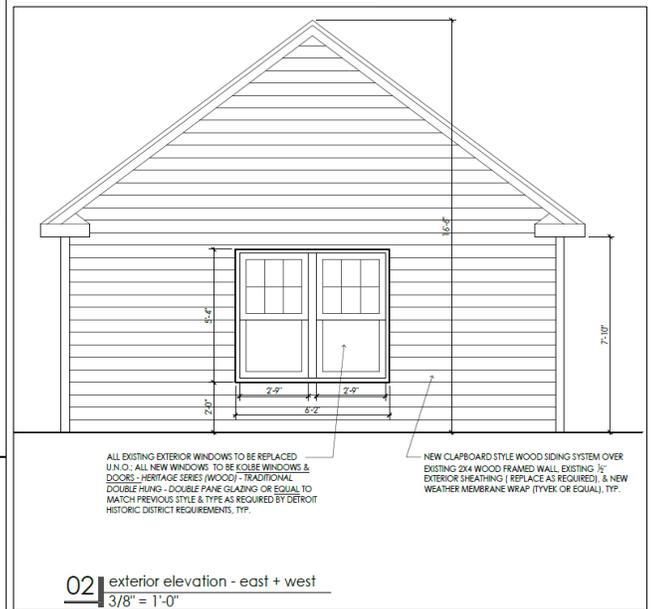
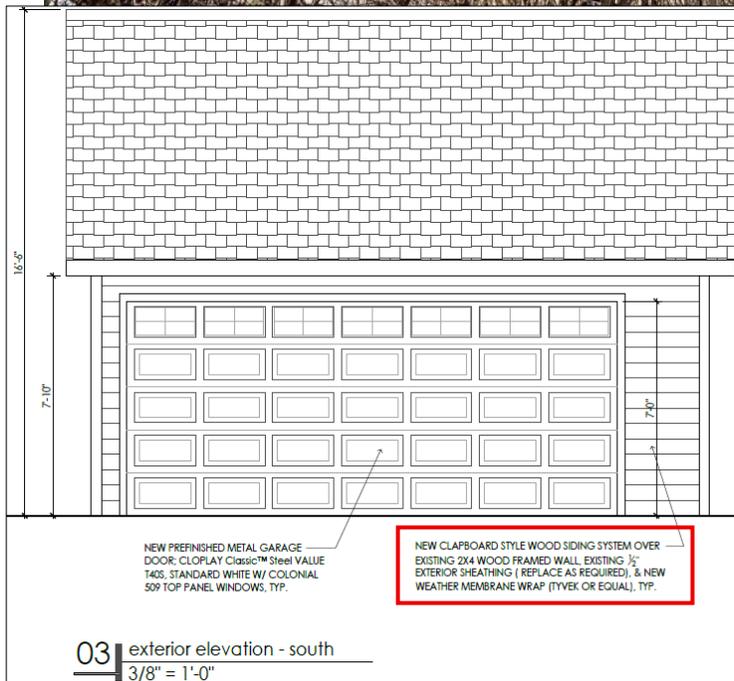


Shake siding condition.
 Left: Front wall dormer. Staff photo, 01/28/26.
 Right: Rear wall dormer. Staff photo, 02/26/2026.





Left: Staff photo of east and rear walls of garage (taken from alley). 02/26/2026. Below: Applicant drawings.



- According to the building permit, the garage was erected the same year as the house (1919). The deep boxed eaves, mullied window openings, side gable roof and eave returns, match details found on the house and are distinctive character-defining features. Staff identifies the garage as a contributing structure within the historic district.
- Similar to the house’s dormers, a proposed work item specifies “new clapboard style wood siding system” to be installed on the garage walls. The historic wood siding and trim are intact and in repairable condition. Even if some replacement boards are necessary, wood siding is readily available and can be purchased/milled to match the exposure and profile of the historic wood siding.
- Staff offers similar concerns on the illustration of the eave returns, as discussed on the house’s gable walls.

The following Boston-Edison Historic District Elements of Design relate to the property and its proposed scope of work:

- **(3) Proportion of openings within the façade.** Windows openings are virtually always taller than wide; however, several windows are sometimes grouped into a combination that is wider than tall. Window openings are always subdivided. The most common window type is double-hung with sashes that are generally further subdivided by muntins or leaded glass. Façades have approximately 15 percent to 35 percent of their area glazed. Sun porches, with a very high proportion of window openings subdivided by mullions and muntins, are common.
- **(6) Rhythm of entrance and/or porch projections.** In those examples derived from Classical precedents, entrances and porches, if any, tend to be centered on the front façade. Other examples display more freedom with entrance and porch placement. Porches and permanently enclosed sun porches are often placed at the side and, sometimes, at the rear of the building.
- **(7) Relationship of materials.** The majority of houses are faced with brick, while many are partially or totally stucco. There are some stone buildings, sometimes combined with stucco; clapboard is rare and is extremely rare as the sole material. Roofing includes slate, tile, and asphalt shingles. Wood shingle roofs were once common and have generally been replaced with asphalt. Wood shake does not exist and there is no known evidence that it was ever used in the district. Stone trim is common. Wood is almost universally used for window frames and other functional trim and is used in many examples for all trim.
- **(10) Relationship of architectural details.** Architectural details generally relate to style. Neo-Georgian buildings display classic details, mostly in wood, and sometimes in stone. Porches, shutters, window frames, cornices, and dormer windows are commonly, although not always, treated. Details on "Mediterranean" style or vernacular buildings, including arched windows, door openings and porches, are often done in stone, brick, tile, and sometimes in stucco. Buildings of Medieval inspiration tend to have details in the form of carved wood or carved stone ornaments on window frames, door frames, and eaves. In general, the various styles are rich in architectural details.
- **(11) Relationship of roof shapes.** A variety of roof shapes exist in the district, depending on building style. Shallow hipped roofs with dormers, roofs with triangular gables, and steep hipped roofs predominate. A few Gambrel roofs exist. Complex arrangements of the gabled and/or the hipped types, with subsidiary or transverse roofs, are not unusual. Dormers are common. Flat roofs are present only as subsidiary roofs on residential structures. Garage roofs generally reflect the style and pitch of the roof on the main house.
- **(20) Orientation, vistas, overviews.** Most of the houses in the district have front entrances, which are oriented toward the streets running east-west. The houses on LaSalle Boulevard, from Chicago Boulevard to Edison Boulevard, are orientated toward LaSalle. Garages are frequently oriented either toward an alley and/or the front drive or toward a side street in the case of corner lots. Almost all garages are detached and are at the rear of the lot.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

This third and final section takes staff's itemized "objections" identified in the first section and presents them in the form of "conditions" in support of a proposed approval recommendation or "reasons" in support of a proposed denial recommendation, in the form required by Section 21-2-78 of the City Code. The Historic District Commission is not required to accept staff opinions or recommendations.

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

Recommendation 1 of 2, Denial: Replace wood shake siding at dormers and wall siding at garage

Staff recommends that the replacement of the wood siding on the house and garage will be inappropriate according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Boston-Edison Historic District's Elements of Design, specifically:

- *Standard 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.*
- *Standard 5) Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.*
- *Standard 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 other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*
- *Standard 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.*

- Elements of Design 11 and 20.

For the following reasons;

1. The wood siding at the house and garage date from the period of significance and are distinctive character-defining features of the property.
2. The wood shake and clapboard siding is intact and appears to be repairable. Wood siding is readily available and can be milled to match the exposure, profile and pattern of the historic wood siding and be painted to match the surface finish of the remaining historic wood siding/trim on the house and garage.

Recommendation 2 of 2, Certificate of Appropriateness: Remaining work items

Staff recommends that the remaining work items will be appropriate according to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and the Boston Edison Historic District's Elements of Design, with the condition that:

- Dimensions of one of the remaining historic double-hung window frames, including muntins and recessed dimension from the outer masonry wall, will be submitted to staff.
- Intact historic wood windows will remain and be repaired as needed. Replacement windows will only be specified for openings in which vinyl windows have been installed and where historic windows were previously removed (i.e., empty window openings).
- Specifications on the selected Kolbe 'Heritage Series' window line be submitted, as will a window order with all details related to the manufacturing be listed (including glass, screens, muntin profile and dimension, etc.).
- Should staff determine the selected replacement window is not a match to the historic windows, another window line will be submitted for review.
- Existing wood brickmold will remain and be repaired. Where brickmold is missing, new wood brickmould, matching the dimension and profile will be installed and painted.
- The window/wall panel design at the second story rear porch will be revised to match the historic design and proportions.
- A section drawing or project notes will be added to the drawing set to clarify how the eave returns will be constructed and finished.
- Cut sheets for selected asphalt shingle roof, rear entry doors, and gutters and downspouts will be submitted confirming design, dimension, exterior finish and color.
- Exterior paint colors for all wood surfaces to be painted will be listed on the project drawings.
- If any hardscape or landscape work will take place at the site, including fencing, a site plan or landscape plan will be submitted for staff review, as well as cut sheets for any items proposed for installation.