



January 16, 2023

Ms. Jennifer Ross  
City of Detroit  
Historic District Commission  
Coleman A. Young Municipal Center  
2 Woodward Avenue, Suite 808  
Detroit, Michigan 48226

RE: 1452 W. Alexandrine – Request for Approval of New Addition & Rehabilitation  
1452 W. Alexandrine, at the northeast corner of Alexandrine Avenue and Trumbull Avenue, in the  
Woodbridge Farms Local Historic District

Dear Ms. Ross:

Edward Potas, the owner of the building at 1452 West Alexandrine, requests that the Historic District Commission grant approval for the proposed rehabilitation of the building's façade in conjunction with a new walk-in addition proposed at the building's northwest corner and various site improvements. Proposed plans for the renovation are attached as Exhibit A. Following approval, the Owners intend to proceed with build out and construction work per the approved certificate of appropriateness for the exterior work.

## **Background**

The building is a 1-story concrete block structure with a flat roof. The building's overall footprint is rectangular, with the building measuring 52 feet along Alexandrine Avenue and 27 feet along Trumbull Avenue in overall dimension. The building is situated at the northeast corner of the site, abutting the northerly and easterly property lines. The building is clad in porcelain enamel steel panels which have been painted light blue. The two primary decorative facades face south on Alexandrine Avenue and west on Trumbull.

The primary, south-facing facade contains a rounded corner entry storefront system that wraps around to the Trumbull avenue facade and features a corner entrance. The opening has been infilled with wood framing and plywood, and smaller replacement windows have been installed. A man door with a transom above and two single-width service bay doors are the only other openings on the facade. This facade is covered in porcelain enamel steel panels, which have been painted blue.

The west-facing primary facade contains the corner storefront mentioned above, and an additional man door that has been infilled with plywood. A small alcove at the north property line once contained an additional service door, but this opening has been infilled with concrete masonry units. Like the south facade, this facade is covered in blue painted porcelain enamel steel panels.

The north-facing façade is directly on the north property line and is unornamented. It is composed of painted concrete masonry units.

The east, alley-facing façade is on the east property line and is unornamented. It is composed of painted concrete masonry units capped with a terra cotta coping. Two large window openings were once present

on this side of the building, but they were infilled at some point with concrete masonry units to match the surrounding facade.

The site is surrounded by a deteriorated chain link fence, and is paved in broken concrete and asphalt.

Per Sanborn maps, the building was constructed between 1921 and 1950, and replaced an earlier single family house and garage. No architect or designer is known at this time. The building was originally constructed as a gasoline and service station, but it has been most recently utilized as an auto repair garage. The current owners have recently purchased the building, and plan to rehabilitate the building, add site improvements, and convert the building into a neighborhood restaurant and bar.

The building sits within the Woodbridge Farms local historic district.

## **Scope of Work**

The following describes the proposed exterior work planned for the building and site, which includes: Replacement of all existing door and window systems, Repair and painting of the porcelain enamel panel facade panels, painting of all concrete masonry units walls, Construction of a new walk in cooler addition, replacement of selected site concrete, replacement of the remainder of the site concrete with decomposed granite, construction of a new masonry, metal, and wood screen wall at the north property line, and construction of a new trash enclosure. The following is a detailed description of each work item:

### **Window and Door Replacement**

On the south and west elevations, all windows and man doors will be replaced with new black anodized aluminum storefront units. One man door appears to date to the building's construction, but is deteriorated and patched together with plywood. The other man door is a later replacement unit. All doors will be single lite aluminum and glass doors to match the surrounding storefront system.

The two overhead doors are wood doors with vision lights that appear to date to the building's construction. These doors are deteriorated, particularly at the bottom rails and bottom panels, which show signs of deterioration, rot, and repair. These doors are proposed for replacement with new black aluminum and glass sectional doors to provide maximum visibility and transparency into the restaurant. These doors, while more transparent than the original doors, still evoke the style and rail panelized construction of the original doors and seeks to maintain the overall character of the building.

This proposed scope of work meets the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation Standard #2: The historic character of a property will be retained and preserved. The removal of distinctive materials or alteration of features, spaces and spatial relationships that characterize a property will be avoided.

### **Facade Painting**

On the south and west elevations, the owner plans to repair porcelain enamel steel panels where damaged. The metal panels will then be prepped, primed, and painted in Sherwin Williams "Bluebell" (SW 6793) and Sherwin Williams "Dress Blues" (SW 9176) in the stair step pattern as indicated on the

drawings. At the east elevation, the stair step design will continue as indicated on the drawings, and the existing concrete masonry units will be prepped, primed, and painted in Sherwin Williams “Bluebell” (SW 6793) and Sherwin Williams “Dress Blues” (SW 9176). The north-facing facade will be prepped, primed, and painted in Sherwin Williams “Bluebell” (SW 6793).

This proposed scope of work meets the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation Standard #6: Deteriorated historic features will be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature will match the old in design, color, texture and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features will be substantiated by documentary and physical evidence.

### **New Addition**

The owner proposes to erect a new, 1 story, 5’-0” by 8’-0” addition in the alcove at the northwest corner of the building to accommodate a new walk in cooler. The new addition will be constructed of concrete masonry units, and painted to match the rest of the exterior facade. It is anticipated that the addition will be minimally visible from Trumbull avenue, as it is located in a recessed area. It is not visible from the Alexandrine avenue frontage.

The National Park Service Technical Preservation Briefs state that an addition should be subservient to the historic building. As such, the building is designed to set back slightly from the Trumbull avenue primary facade of the original building.

This scope of work meets Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation #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 #10: New additions and adjacent or related new construction shall be undertaken in such a manner that if removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the historic property and its environment would be unimpaired.

### **Exterior Lighting**

No historic-age lighting remains. Black wall sconce lighting will be provided where indicated on the drawings. Refer to the cut sheets included with the application.

This proposed scope of work meets the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation Standard #9 and Standard #10 as referenced above.

### **Site Improvements**

The owner proposes to remove all of the existing concrete and asphalt paving. A flexible plaza will be created, which will be paved in a decomposed granite to reduce stormwater runoff. The plaza is designed to be flexible, and to accommodate movable furniture and fire tables.

The existing chain link and barbed wire fencing will be removed in its entirety. 36" high metal tube railings will be installed along the Trumbull and Alexandrine frontages to enclose the outdoor dining and drinking area from the public right of way per city ordinance. A planting strip will exist between the sidewalk and the metal tube railings to further delineate the plaza from the public sidewalk and soften the appearance of the metal railings.

At the north property line, a metal mesh screen with greenery and a gabion basket base will be installed to screen the plaza from the neighbors to the north. The metal mesh will alternate between corten and galvanized steel meshes to provide visual interest. This screen will be 8'-0" high, but will step down in height as it approaches Trumbull Avenue.

At the east property line, a steel and metal mesh trash enclosure will be constructed to screen and house trash cans from view.

This proposed scope of work meets the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation Standard #9 and Standard #10 as referenced above.

## Conclusion

The items listed above and attached exhibits provide a synopsis of the Owner's proposed scope of work for the rehabilitation of the building at 1452 West Alexandrine Avenue. All of the proposed rehabilitation work meets the Secretary of Interior Standards for Rehabilitation Nos. 1-9, as well as the specific standards mentioned above. As such, we believe that this plan should be approved.

Sincerely,  
Infuz Architects Ltd.



Allan Machielse, RA, NCARB  
Architect

## **Scope of Work - 1452 West Alexandrine**

1452 West Alexandrine Avenue; Woodbridge Farms Historic District; as follows:

- Replacement of all existing door and window systems with new anodized aluminum storefront systems and matching aluminum and glass overhead doors.
- Repair and painting of the porcelain enamel panel facade panels, and painting of all concrete masonry units walls.
- Construction of a new 1-story block walk-in cooler addition.
- Installation of new exterior lighting.
- Site improvements, including replacement of all site concrete with a flexible plaza constructed of decomposed granite, landscaping, construction of a new masonry, metal, and metal mesh screen wall at the north property line, and construction of a new trash enclosure.