

October 30, 2023 Homeowners of 2465 Chicago – Hassan and Maurita Mussawwir

All of the alterations present at 2465 Chicago Blvd were present during our prior hearing in March 2022. If we have deviations that require an application, how can we be sure this is an exhaustive list? One concern we have is guidelines can be made up with no transparency when they take effect and now we have to adhere to standards that were not written. We have also looked to the HDC Bylaws which govern how the Board operates but they do not elaborate on specific standards that homeowners refer to. We indicated at the time it would take years to renovate the inside and exterior items. We also testified before the board that the removal of the original brick porch and installation was done prior to our purchase of the home. We are currently being asked to retroactively adhere to guidelines that weren't written for: glass block windows and security cameras. We have concerns that all properties in Boston Edison are not being asked to comply with said standards and that this process is inherently discriminatory and subjective. There properties on our street with said deviations that do not adhere to said guidelines and no evidence that these properties appear on a deviation list or ever submitted applications to the board. This Board has stated in public hearing on December 2021 that it can reverse decisions of previous boards if deemed not appropriate with the only current homeowner experiencing consequences of said decisions, with no accountability to the HDC, HDC staff and or conflicting city processes.

1. Installation of Basement Glass Block Windows.

The guidelines for glass block windows were not written at the time of our March 2022 hearing, nor was this mentioned as a deviation. This is not new work but was present per our original staff report. When new guidelines are issued how are homeowners notified? New guideline references historic vents. Need further guidance if that is a screen or metal and clarification on when required on glass block windows on the side of the home.



Photo 1 – Front



Photo 2 – Rear



Photo 3 – Side of home



Photo 4 – Side of Home

2. **Replacement of front porch steps, wingwalls, and railing.**

We stated during our March 2022 hearing that the porch and all such items were changed prior to our purchase. We also stated that we did engage the HDC at the time and was not given guidance that we would have to renovate all exterior items that do not match the original design. The definition of wing walls are not defined on the current HDC website and this appears to be a masonry term with multiple definitions that usually refer to bridges. There is no diagram to indicate which part of the porch this refers to. We need clarification so that we can respond. There was also no photo for 2465 Chicago available per the HDC or architectural plans that would aid in restoration. We have just found said picture from 1974 within the last 2 years after we owned that home and even that photo appears to have deviations from the original design. Refer to photo 6 as purchased wingwall, porch and railing not present.



Photo 5 – 1974 image. Non-Historical materials and changes already made to the home



Photo 6 – Home as purchased with new porch

3. **Alteration of landscaping.**

This change was already present during our March 2022 hearing and was not mentioned was made then that we needed to address this change to the exterior. Homes in 1920s were built without a grade to allow water to flow away from the home as modern homes. We are requesting consideration to this deviation as the home currently requires waterproofing. Current photos will show gutters and an attempt for exterior drainage to direct water away from the home. We can provide proof that we were also pursuing additional interior work to control flow of water around the perimeter of the home as

proof that we are attempting to do recommendations that most waterproofing companies recommend. We also unclear about the guidelines for landscape design. Refer to Photo 7 for retaining landscaping. Photos show proof of moisture in the basement. Photo 1 shows the retaining wall along the flower beds.



Photo 7 Moisture in basement

4. Installation of Cameras on walls

New guidelines were written after our March 2022 hearing. This is not a new installation during 2022 or 2023. The cameras are hardwired into the property several years ago. We have been a victim of furnace theft prior to the security system installation. Also, we have had at least two additional break in attempts with no arrest of suspects. We are requesting that said cameras remain as is. When cameras were installed the soffits and materials closer to the roof were rotten and not suitable for camera installation. We are currently still unable to inhabit the home as original scope of work has been delayed due to multiple revisions required to our application for approvals, delays for materials due to COVID, unclear HDC guidelines, and conflicting requirements between multiple city departments.

Photo 8



