

**REVISED 05/07/2024 (PLEASE NOTE CHANGES WITH STRIKETHROUGH AND RED TEXT)**

**STAFF REPORT: 05/08/2024 REGULAR MEETING**

**PREPARED BY: D. RIEDEN**

**APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2024-00116**

**ADDRESS: 1459 EDISON**

**HISTORIC DISTRICT: BOSTON-EDISON**

**APPLICANTS: ~~SHERYL MURPHY (TYKEY HOME SOLUTIONS)~~ **TRAMAR CLAY (THE CLAY GROUP) AND STEVEN LUCARELLI (CEO OF RED POINT VENTURES)****

**PROPERTY OWNER: ~~SHERYL MURPHY (TYKEY HOME SOLUTIONS)~~ **STEVEN LUCARELLI (CEO OF RED POINT VENTURES)****

**DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 04/17/2024**

**DATES OF STAFF SITE VISITS: 07/19/2023, 04/19/2024**

**SCOPE: ERECT GARAGE (WORK COMPLETED WITHOUT APPROVAL), REHABILITATE EXTERIOR OF DWELLING**

### **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

Built in 1917, the property at 1459 Edison has a cross-gabled roof which features half-timbering and stucco details under the front-facing gable. The eaves are bracketed under a broad fascia, and the house is clad in dark red brick on the first and second floors. The symmetrically placed windows, which feature wood, true divided-light vertical mullions in the upper sash, are partially missing due to a fire that has damaged the second and third floor. Cast stone sills have been painted since at least 1980 and match the painted coping of the front porch brick wall and brick columns. The front entrance has a roof supported by the brick columns. An awning once overhung the ribbon of double hung windows on the first floor, which has since been removed without approval. At the rear of the property a new concrete block structure with an incomplete roof, which has been built by a previous owner, is proposed to be completed as a garage in this application. A 2004 COA has permitted the replacement of the asphalt roof, gutters and downspouts, but no other approvals have been found on file.



*Site Photo 1, by Staff April 19, 2024: (South) front elevation showing fire damage at front gable and missing windows.*



*Image, 1980: (South) front elevation showing original windows and porch condition.*

## PROPOSAL

The applicant is a property manager and proposes to complete the structure started by a previous owner in the rear yard as a garage, install new windows, install aluminum soffits, and complete the repair of the front face of the house.

### ERECT GARAGE (Work completed without approval)

- Erect 22'8" x 25' (566 SF) garage with roof 2:12 roof pitch on a concrete slab as shown in attached photos and images.
- Exterior of garage is clad with concrete block with a Hardie board (white) gable and Timberline Natural Shadow Weathered Wood algae resistant architectural shingles.
- Install 8'x7' Clopay Gallery Collection steel garage door, color white.



*Aerial 1 of Parcel # 06002409, by Detroit Parcel Viewer, showing the proposed garage location (arrow).*

### WINDOWS

- Replace four (4) upper window openings on front elevation with aluminum clad wood Pella Architect series.
- Replace all side and back windows by Hawthorne Line by Alliance, vinyl windows.

### REPAIR OF FRONT FACE OF HOUSE

- Repair half-timbering and stucco at front of house damaged by fire with in-kind materials (wood and stucco), color to match to existing: paint trim board antique white, paint stucco areas antique red.
- Cover soffit areas with aluminum.



Front Garage Elevation



Left Garage Elevation



Back Garage Elevation



Right Garage Elevation

1459 Edison  
Existing Cinder Block Garage  
New Roof / Door

*Fig 1, by Applicant: Proposed garage elevations.*

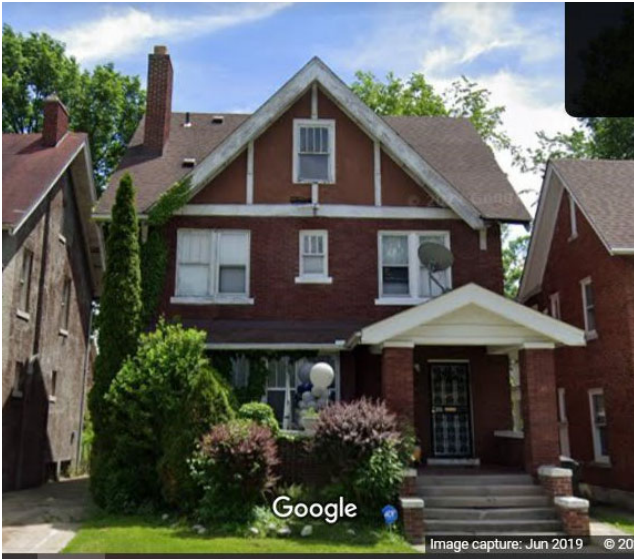


Fig 2, by Google Street View, July 2019: (South) front elevation showing conditions prior to fire damage.



Site Photo 2, by Applicant: (Looking east at rear of property) showing partially constructed garage structure (without approval).

## STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Boston-Edison Historic District was established in 1974.
- Staff did receive confirmation that the garage does include a 6” concrete pad installation internal to the garage but no new driveway or sidewalk. Also, the garage does not include any new external light fixtures or windows. However, staff has not yet received a response to the following questions as of the date of this report:
  - A full window schedule that clarifies locations of each window replacement, window repair, material, design, operation, SDL (simulated divided light), and trim color. (Example was provided.)
  - Detail window drawings that shows a windows’ head, sill, jamb, check rail and divided light.
  - Detail that shows how the window is installed in the window opening, showing dimensions and use of existing brick mould or coil stock (or not). Show sample cross sections. (Examples were provided.)
  - Provide color update based on conversation we had on color choices for application color choices using Color System D. HDC Color Guide was provided.
  - Confirmation to add brick cladding to the garage.
- Besides the unapproved construction of the garage, staff observed other work that was completed without approval that has not yet been addressed the applicant since the time of this report (*see site photo 3*):
  - Rear door and window openings bricked in.
  - Rear porch/balcony removed.
  - Front awning removed.
- **The applicants provided an update on May 7, 2024 informing staff that the original applicant, Ms. Murphy is no longer representing this property or proposal. The new applicants have provided a letter confirming the ownership and that the application as presented is accurate to date.**



Site Photo 3, by Applicant: looking north (rear) side of the house, showing unapproved removal of balcony/porch, bricked-in openings of the rear door and windows.

## GARAGE

- Although partially completed without approval, staff observed that the overall scale, roof pitch and location of the garage is appropriate for the district and meets the Elements of th Design. However, the use of concrete block as final external material is not appropriate and would be considered incomplete and inconsistent if left unfinished. Staff recommends an appropriate cladding that matches the primary structure to complete the design of this structure or a finish compatible with the district.
- The remaining materials, including the hardie siding, dimensional asphalt shingles and the steel garage door are appropriate new construction in for the district, in staff's opinion. However, staff recommends that the colors of the siding and garage door be selected from the HDC Color Guide to more accurately coordinate with the historic color palette of the house, which is Color System D.

## WINDOWS

- Although the applicant has indicated a general desire to install aluminum clad wood windows at the front elevation and vinyl windows at the rear and side elevations, there is not substantial clarity on whether this is meant only for missing windows or to include partially damaged and other existing wood windows that remain. Furthermore, there is no clarity on how the windows would be installed, whether the existing brick mould or mullions would remain, and with which design, material, and operation of the window. The proposed windows have not been clearly identified. The conditions of the existing windows to be repaired (or replaced) has not been identified. Staff considers this portion of the application incomplete at the time of this report.
- While aluminum-clad wood windows may be an appropriate material for missing windows where no windows are found, vinyl windows are not appropriate for historic districts.
  - Vinyl windows and wrapped brickmould offer a plasticity and flat/thick appearance that does not adequately match the profile/dimensionality and appearance of historic windows, such as wood.
  - Consumer grade vinyl windows weather poorly, deteriorate rapidly, and exhibit poor detailing and detracting color/sheen.
  - The framing material, glazing, and seals (which keeps the argon gas intact between the insulated glass) of vinyl windows break down more quickly in ultraviolet light than wood or steel-framed windows.
  - Vinyl also lacks rigidity and can expand and contract more greatly than wood and steel. This can result in discoloration and warping of the vinyl frames, as well as condensation between the glass layers.



*Site Photo 4, by Staff April 19, 2024: (South) front elevation showing detail of missing windows, soffit, stucco and half-timbering.*

## REPAIR OF FRONT FACE OF HOUSE

- It is staff's opinion that the proposed repair of the front face of the house with in-kind materials and matching color schemes is appropriate.
- It is staff's opinion that the bracketed soffits and fascia board are distinctive, character-defining features of the house that characterize the architectural style of the house. The proposal to cover the soffit areas with aluminum is inappropriate in staff's opinion because it hides the architectural detailing, changes the materiality and alters the design which greatly reduces and alters the roof's distinctive, character defining historic features.

## ISSUES

- While the proposed garage, with modest gable pitched roof, Hardie siding at the gable, garage door, and modest scale are an appropriate scale and form that complements the house, the materiality of the concrete block is not appropriate. Staff recommends a brick cladding that matches the house would be an appropriate solution. Staff recommends also recommends that the color white for the siding and the garage door be updated to one that is selected from the HDC Color Guide, Color System D, for English Revival architectural styles.
- The window application is incomplete and requires more information to understand the location the of proposed window units, design, operation, and material. More information is required to understand the intention for the existing windows, mullions and brickmould. The applicant has not responded to inquiries at the time of this report.
- To meet the Standards, where historic windows exist, they must be repaired. When they are too deteriorated to repair, selection of the replacement windows must be guided by Standard 6, meaning that the new window shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities, and if possible, materials. Many damaged windows in the house may fall in this category and require specific window information that has not yet been received. Where windows have been identified as lost by the fire, aluminum clad wood windows would be an appropriate material. In either case, vinyl windows as alternative material is not appropriate for historic districts.
- It is staff's opinion that the covering the original wood bracketed soffits with aluminum destroys historic character-defining features by altering the original *scale*, *design*, and *material* of these elements that characterize the English Revival architecture of the house and therefore does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.

## RECOMMENDATION

### Section 21-2-78, Determination of Historic District Commission

#### Recommendation 1: Replace Original Wood Windows with Aluminum Clad or Vinyl Windows, Cover Soffits with Aluminum

Staff finds that the replacement of the four original wood windows with aluminum clad and remaining wood windows with vinyl windows, and the covering of soffits with aluminum does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the following reasons:

- No documentation establishing that the original condition of the windows are beyond repair was submitted or available.
- The application lacks information indicating the specific proposed design, operation, material, installation method and window profile of each proposed window installation.
- The replacement of the original wood windows with vinyl windows is not compatible with historic architecture in the house in that they:
  - destroy the distinctive, character-defining features of the original windows, particularly the true-divided lights and radial transom detailing,
  - introduce a new operation, configuration, design, and scale,
  - introduces a new material, vinyl, which is not historically appropriate material and does not conform to the District's Elements of Design.
- Covering the bracketed soffits with aluminum destroys distinctive, character-defining features and creates a new element that is not compatible with the historic features of the English Revival architecture of the house.

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the above work items, as it do not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, specifically Standards:

*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.*

*5. Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.*

*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.*

Recommendation 2: Erect Garage (Work Completed without Approval), Repair Half-Timbering and Stucco

It is staff's opinion that the erection of the proposed garage and repair of the half-timbering and stucco is appropriate. Staff therefore recommends the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as proposed because it meets the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and the Boston-Edison District Elements of Design.

*Staff recommends the COA be issued with following conditions, subject to staff review:*

- The applicant submits a design that shows exterior cladding, such as brick, that is compatible with the property and/or district.
- The applicant provides HDC staff with a garage door and siding color that is selected from HDC Color Guide.