

STAFF REPORT: 11-13-2019 MEETING
APPLICATION NUMBER: 19-6454
ADDRESS: 1925 LONGFELLOW
HISTORIC DISTRICT: BOSTON EDISON
APPLICANT: KELLY ADRIDGE
DATE OF COMPLETE APPLICATION: 10/18/2019
DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 10/29/2019

PREPARED BY: J. ROSS

SCOPE: FENCE ERECTED IN VIOLATION OF GUIDELINES; NEW CONCRETE DRIVEWAY EXPANSION

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The building located at 1925 Longfellow is a single-family home that was erected ca. 1919. The rectangular-plan dwelling is two stories in height and is clad with red brick. The side-gabled roof features a deep overhand with decorative dentils and is topped by three, gabled-roof dormers. Windows are 6/1, wood sash units. An elaborately detailed entry porch at the front elevation shelters the home's primary entrance. A concrete driveway leads from the street to a concrete apron in the rear yard. The driveway is shared with the home which is located directly to the west.

1925 Longfellow





PROPOSAL

With the current proposal, the applicant is seeking the Commission's approval for the following work items:

- **Fence (work completed)**
Erect a new dog-eared, wood fence at the western edge of the property line/driveway, extending forward, past the home's front face. The fence is unpainted. The portion of the fence which extends from the rear yard to the front face of the home is 6'-0" tall, and drops down to 3'-0" in height as it pushes north past the front face of the house, towards the sidewalk
- **Expand concrete apron at rear yard parking garage (work completed)**

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The applicant stated that she erected the fence because she has **had issues** with her neighbor
- The fence was erected without HDC approval and/or permit. The applicant/property owner had received a COA for general rehab work in 2016, which indicates that she was aware that the property was located within a local historic district.
- Please see the following timeline re: the reporting of the work completed at this address without approval and/or permit:
 - 7/29/2019 – HDC Staff received a complaint via email re: the newly-erected fence and the expansion of the rear concrete apron. Staff forwarded the complaint on to the Detroit Building, Safety, Engineering, and Environmental Department (BSEED) that day.
 - 8/5/2019 – HDC Staff received a second complaint (from a different resident) via email re: the new fencing. Staff forwarded this second complaint on to BSEED that day
 - 8/6/2019 – HDC staff received a third complaint from "See Click Fix". Staff forwarded this third complaint on to BSEED that day
 - 8/7/2019 – HDC received an email from BSEED noting that an inspector had visited the

- property that day and issued a stop work order, as well as a notice of violation for the fence
- 9/2019 and 10/2019 – The applicant visited HDC staff on two occasions seeking direction on next steps so that she might resolve the situation. HDC staff directed her to complete and submit an application for the work so that it could be reviewed by the HDC.
 - Typically HDC staff can approve the installation of new fencing. However, the new fence does not conform to the HDC’s Fence and Hedges Guidelines as it extends past the front face of the home and it is unpainted. Staff has therefore forwarded the application to the Commission for review.
 - The location of fencing down the middle of the shared driveway and/or its extending past the front face of the home is not common within Boston Edison HD
 - Note that the portion of the fence which typically faces towards the interior of a yard (the posts) currently faces towards the adjacent home and is highly visible from the right of way. The fence is also unpainted. It is staff’s opinion that the fence presents a discordant/incongruous element which detracts from the historic character of both 1925 Longfellow and the adjacent home.

ISSUES

- As noted above, staff has the following issues with the new fence:
 - The location of fencing down the middle of the shared driveway and/or its extending past the front face of the home is not common within Boston Edison HD
 - The portion of the fence which typically faces towards the interior of a yard (the posts) currently faces towards the adjacent home and is highly visible from the right of way. The fence is also unpainted. It is staff’s opinion that the fence presents a discordant/incongruous element which detracts from both the historic character of both 1925 Longfellow and the adjacent home

RECOMMENDATION

It is staff’s opinion that the fence which has been erected without HDC approval detracts from the district’s and property’s historic character. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission deny the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness for the existing fence because it does not meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, 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* and #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.*

In re: to the new concrete which has been added at the rear yard’s parking apron, staff recommends that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for work because it meets the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation, standards #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.*

To Historic Commission Review:

Application for 1925 Longfellow Detroit, MI 48206

In August a wood fence was installed along the property line separating the driveways. A survey was performed and installation is within the lot line. When I inquired at the City of Detroit, three different times, I was told it was not required that a fence permit be obtained. The only requirements I was told was that if it is a solid fence it needs to be a maximum of 3 feet high in front of the home.

This style fence is installed at just about every home in the area.

I was reluctant to install this fence because the access using the driveway is restricted now because the drive is not wide enough for a car.

The home was once on the blight list to be torn down. I purchased the home from the Land Bank in 2016. A Building Permit from the City and Certificate of Appropriateness from the Historic Commission was obtained.

There is a serious safety issue concerning this property. The neighbor that has the adjacent driveway will not permit me to use my driveway as she parks her cars in the driveway which does not allow me to fit through. She uses my driveway regularly, parks over the property line, her gate is on my property and the dogs have pushed through my wire fence.

Several times a day her gate is opened and the dogs run into my back yard. I have lived in the home and at times I could not leave for hours as the dogs were out in my front yard. One time my son was mowing the lawn and the three dogs surrounded him. I moved out of the home.

Of course I have called the Dog Patrol regularly and the neighborhood police. The bad behavior continues.

This home has been on the market to sell since the construction completion. No one wants to buy a home with three Rottweilers that bark constantly.

I believe not only are the dogs a serious threat, but the owner is as well. She has threatened me, harassed me, and visited my broker while having an open carry gun in view.

I think we can all agree that dogs are a serious issue in the City of Detroit and should not be ignored until there is a tragedy.

I have included videos and photos.

Kelley Aldridge
1925 Longfellow

HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION PROJECT REVIEW REQUEST

CITY OF DETROIT
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
2 WOODWARD AVENUE, ROOM 808, DETROIT, MI 48226

DATE: 9/11/19

PROPERTY INFORMATION

ADDRESS: 1925 LONGFELLOW AKA: _____
HISTORIC DISTRICT: BOSTON EDISON

APPLICANT IDENTIFICATION

Property Owner/ Homeowner Contractor Tenant or Business Occupant Architect/ Engineer/ Consultant

NAME: KELLEY ALDRIDGE COMPANY NAME: _____

ADDRESS: 388 OAKLAND AVE CITY: B'HAM STATE: MI ZIP: 48029

PHONE: 248 410 4045 MOBILE: _____ EMAIL: KelleyMarieAldridge@gmail.com

PROJECT REVIEW REQUEST CHECKLIST

Please attach the following documentation to your request:

- Photographs** of ALL sides of existing building or site
- Detailed photographs** of location of proposed work (photographs to show existing condition(s), design, color, & material)
- Description of existing conditions** (including materials and design)
- Description of project** (if replacing any existing material(s), include an explanation as to why replacement--rather than repair--of existing and/or construction of new is required)
- Detailed scope of work** (formatted as bulleted list)
- Brochure/cut sheets** for proposed replacement material(s) and/or product(s), as applicable

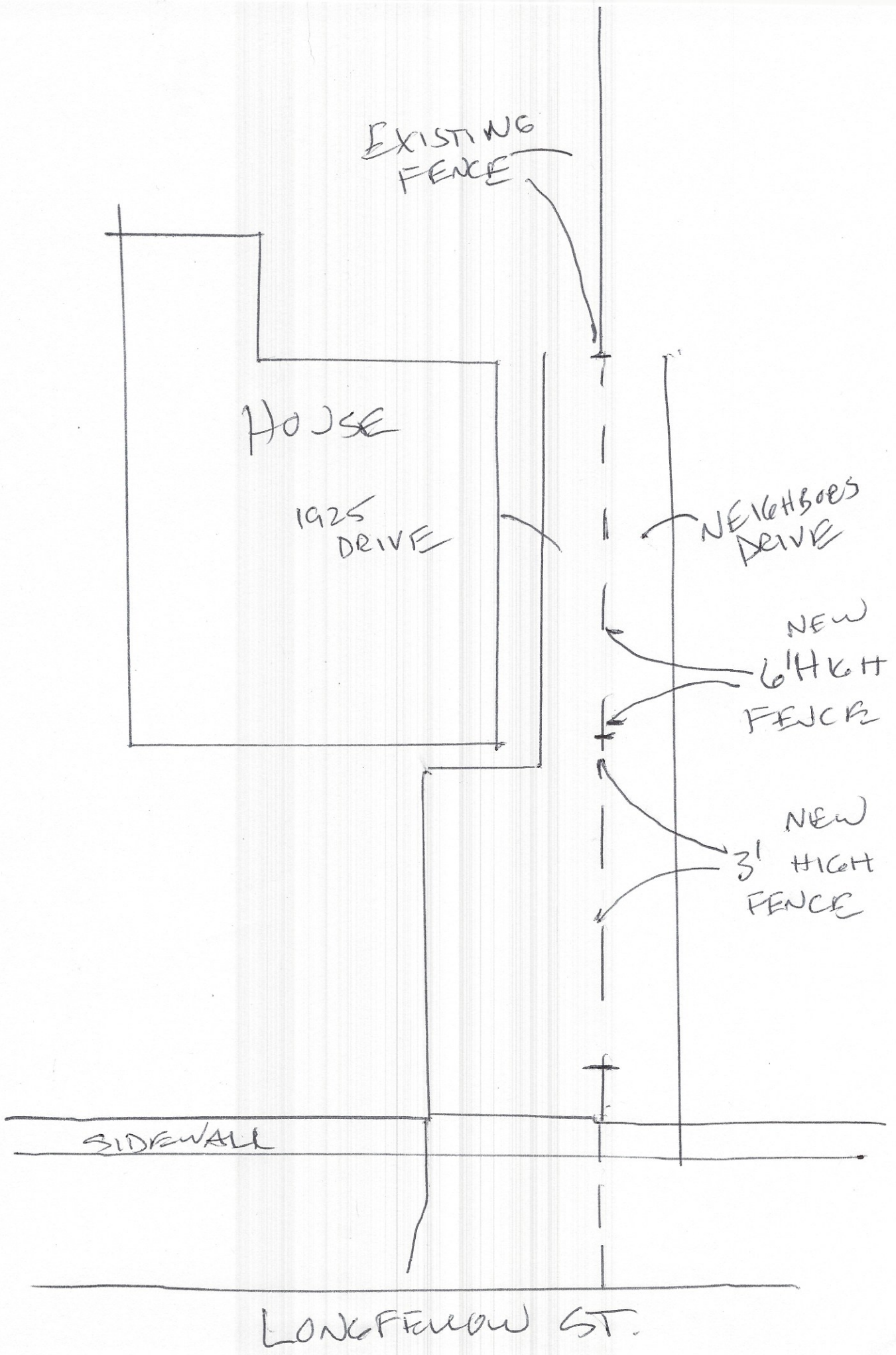
NOTE:

Based on the scope of work, additional documentation may be required.

See www.detroitmi.gov/hdc for scope-specific requirements.

Upon receipt of this documentation, staff will review and inform you of the next steps toward obtaining your building permit from the Buildings, Safety Engineering and Environmental Department (BSEED) to perform the work.

SUBMIT COMPLETED REQUESTS TO HDC@DETROITMI.GOV













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