

STAFF REPORT: APRIL 10, 2024 MEETING

APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2024-00142

ADDRESS: 3627 LINCOLN

HISTORIC DISTRICT: WOODBRIDGE FARM

APPLICANT: RICHARD CHASE

PROPERTY OWNER: RICHARD CHASE

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: MARCH 25, 2024

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: MARCH 28, 2024

PREPARED BY: A. DYE

SCOPE: ERECT FRONT PORCH

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The dwelling at 3627 Lincoln was erected, circa 1875. The description from the Woodbridge Farm Historic District Final Report states:

Italianate in style, this two-story brick house has a shallow hip roof, elongated windows, a three-sided bay on the south-side of the first floor front façade, and evenly spaced double-hung sash windows with heavy stone window hoods above. At attic level is a round arched window in a heavily molded frame. On the south elevation is a cross gable sheltering a box bay. The porch brackets are very simple, as is the rest of the porch detail; it is more a product of the newly invented jigsaw.



Staff photos, March 28, 2024.

The red brick walls are contrasted by stone sills, carved window hoods and the slightly above grade water table. An extension on the north wall of the house balances the slight extension and box bay at the south wall.

The front and side porches have been missing from the house since at least 2011, according to photos within the city’s property folder. The window openings have aluminum-clad wood double-hung windows and solid painted panels cover the bay window’s wall surface.

The existing front doors are solid non-historic panel units with small diamond-shaped glass openings, which have been in place since at least 2011. The side porch door is a wood paneled door with a large glass area above and is likely historic age.



PROPOSAL

- Erect a low-slope hip roof, wood porch atop the existing masonry/concrete pad base.
- Install wood railings between porch posts, and iron railings at stairs on top of existing masonry wing walls.
- Install fiberglass entry doors, [PlastPro Oak Series](#), color: not specified

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Woodbridge Farm Historic District was enacted on December 13, 1991.
- In 2017, HDC staff issued a COA for the installation of 1-over-1 double-hung aluminum-clad wood windows (with retention of wood brickmould).
- At the December 13, 2023 meeting, the Commission issued a COA for the erection of a new, three-car, 22'x40' garage, as well as the removal of the rear yard fence.

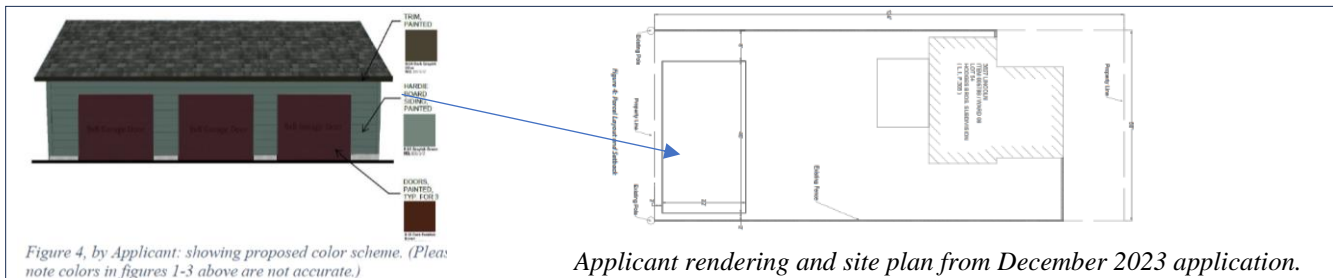


Figure 4, by Applicant: showing proposed color scheme. (Please note colors in figures 1-3 above are not accurate.)

Applicant rendering and site plan from December 2023 application.

- When an element of a property is missing and proposed for replacement, the review of the work item(s) is based on compatibility with the historic appearance and character of the building.



Existing conditions. Staff photo, March 28, 2023.



Applicant rendering.

- The ghost images of the historic pilasters are visible against the brick, confirming the location of the original entry porch and width of its supporting components. The applicant's narrative states that the intact wood porch from a neighboring house (of similar age and architectural style) was used as a base point for the new design. It is staff's opinion the new porch offers a level of filigree appropriate to an Italianate house but doesn't recreate the opulent detailing on the 19th century porch, allowing this porch to read as new construction.



Intact 19th century porch at 3644 Lincoln. Nearby property referenced by applicant. Staff photo.

ISSUES

- The porch and railings, based on their design, materiality, and finishes, are compatible with the historic appearance and character of the building. However, it is staff’s opinion that the selected door is not compatible with the primary façade due to its materiality, texture, and visual qualities:
 - The selected door is a fiberglass product that “mimics” the texture of wood grain. Based on the promotional material on the company’s website, this door is likely similar to vinyl siding products that offer a raised grain to “mimic” wood siding, overlooking the fact that real wood products don’t have highly visible, raised grain surfaces. A fiberglass door stain kit is sold as a finish color option.
 - The door opening is a focal point of the primary façade. The materiality, texture, and finish (i.e., no sheen) should be compatible with the late 19th century historic appearance and character of the masonry building, as well as with the proposed new wood porch and iron railings.
 - Wood doors, whose material and texture are compatible with the building and setting , are readily available on the market.
- To fully ascertain the finish of the proposed doors, staff will ask that a sample be provided so the Commission can review its appearance and texture at the meeting.



Partial view of exterior (stained?) surface of six panel door, copied from PlastPro website.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation One – Denial – Installation of fiberglass door with oak grain finish

Staff finds that the proposal for the fiberglass doors with oak grain finish will alter the features and spaces that characterize the property and does not meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the following reasons:

- The selected door is a fiberglass product that “mimics” the texture of wood grain, however real wood products don’t have highly visible, raised grain surfaces.
- The door opening is a dominate element on the primary façade. The materiality, texture, and finish (i.e., visual qualities) should be compatible with the late 19th century historic appearance and character of the masonry building, as well as with the proposed new wood porch and iron railings.
- Wood doors, whose material and texture are compatible with the building and setting , are readily available on the market.

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the work as proposed, as it does not meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, specifically Standards 6 and 9:

- 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.*
- 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.*

Recommendation Two – COA – Erection of front porch and stair railing.

Staff finds that the proposal for the remaining work items is compatible with and preserves the historic character of the property and therefore recommends the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as proposed as it meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and the Elements of Design for the district.