

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Staff Report

ADDRESS: 115 Crest Street, Application Number HDC24-0080

DISTRICT: Old West Side Historic District

REPORT DATE: June 13, 2024

REPORT PREPARED BY: Mariana Melin-Corcoran, Associate Planner

REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE: June 10, 2024

OWNER/APPLICANT

Name: Kristen Pettit
Address: 115 Crest Avenue
 Ann Arbor, MI 48103
Phone: (815) 355-3530

BACKGROUND: This two-story house features a gable roof and a central dormer on the street-facing elevation. There is a one-story bump out on the south elevation. According to city directories, the house was built in 1929. The occupant that year was Clarence W. Beuerle. The house does not appear on the 1931 and 1948 Sanborn maps because the maps did not survey this particular area of Ann Arbor.

In 2016, the former owners of the house replaced the building foundation, and as part of the work, the rear brick patio and front and back deck and steps were reset and rebuilt. The front porch was redesigned with a gable awning. That same year, areas of damaged siding were replaced to match the existing non-historic siding and a non-historic rear window was replaced with a slightly larger window opening.

LOCATION: The house is on the east side of Crest Avenue, south of West Huron Street and north of West Washington Street.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to demo an existing rear stair and landing to build a new 24' x 14' square foot patio above existing hardscaping. Additionally, the applicant seeks to install 33 feet of aluminum fence between the new deck and the garage.



APPLICABLE REGULATIONS:**From the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation:**

- (9) 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.
- (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.

From the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (other SOI Guidelines may also apply):**District/Neighborhood**

Not Recommended: Introducing new construction into historic districts that is visually incompatible or that destroys historic relationships within the setting.

Setting

Recommended: Retaining the historic relationship between buildings and landscape features of the setting. For example, preserving the relationship between a town common and its adjacent historic houses, municipal buildings, historic roads, and landscape features.

From the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines (other guidelines may apply):**Residential Decks and Patios**

Appropriate: Installing a deck in the rear of the property that is subordinate in proportion to the building.

Installing a deck that is free standing (self supporting) so that it does not damage historic materials.

Installing railings made of wood. Custom railing designs will be reviewed case-by-case

Installing flooring made of wood or composite wood.

Not Appropriate: Installing railings with spindles attached to the sides and top and bottom rails.

Installing top and bottom rails that are vertically proportioned (taller than wide like a 2 x 6 turned vertically).

Residential Fencing and Walls

Appropriate: Repairing and maintaining historic fences and walls using standard preservation practices to retain their historic materials and appearance.

Locating new fences and walls on lot and setback lines whenever possible.

Installing fences and walls that meet Chapter 104 of the Code of the City of Ann Arbor, and that are no higher than 3 feet in the front yard and 6 feet in the rear yard.

Using hedges in place of fencing, and planting vegetation along fencing.

Using wood (picket or alternating board), wrought iron or metal (wrought iron style), or chain link (rear yards only) for fencing.

Using brick or stone for new walls. Custom masonry products will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Using custom design which will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Not Appropriate: Removing a repairable historic fence or wall.

Installing fences or walls over 3 feet in height in the front yard and over 6 feet in height in the rear yard.

Impeding clear vision at intersections by exceeding a height of 30 inches within 25 feet of an intersection.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. This proposal is to construct a deck behind the house. Per the application, the deck would be structurally freestanding and will not be attached to the house. The existing stairs and landing in the rear of the house would be demolished. These were rebuilt in 2016. The proposed deck will measure 24 ft by 14 ft, which is larger than the existing landing but will follow the footprint of the existing brick patio behind the house. This patio was also reset in 2016. The new deck will be 3 ft in height. New stairs will be installed on the west of the deck to provide access to the backyard. The deck is inset 3 ft from the northern elevation of the house and is not labeled but at least 3 ft from the southern elevation. As such, it will not be visible from the public right of way.
2. The decking will be TimberTech composite board with a wood-look finish. Railings will feature simple metal balusters and a TimberTech composite drink rail that matches the decking. There will be no covering over the deck.
3. The railing design, composite with aluminum balusters, is modern, but, because it most likely won't be visible at all from the sidewalk, staff feels it is appropriate.
4. The applicant also proposes 33 ft of new fencing. The fence will be parallel to, but not

next to the property line. Instead, it will run east-west from the northeast corner of the proposed deck to the garage, following the existing paved driveway. The fence will be aluminum to match the deck rail and will have a simple aluminum gate.

5. Staff believes the deck meets historic preservation design guidelines, no historic materials will be affected, and it will not detract from or compete with the appearance of the historic home or other historic buildings in the district. Additionally, staff believes that the proposed fence meets historic preservation design guidelines for the rear yard and will not detract from the appearance of the historic home.

MOTION

(Note that the motion is only a suggestion. The Review Committee, consisting of staff and at least two Commissioners, will view the site and make a recommendation at the meeting.)

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 115 Crest Avenue, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to demolish an existing landing and stairs to build a new 24 ft x 14 ft deck and to add 33 ft of fencing in the rear yard. The work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the surrounding resources and meets the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* for Residential Decks and *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, in particular standards 9 and 10 and the Guidelines for District/Neighborhood and Setting.

ATTACHMENTS: narrative, photos, drawings



115 Crest Ave, rear, 2024 (courtesy of applicant)



115 Crest Ave, 2008 (photographed by K. Kidorf)



115 Crest Ave, 1982 (photographed as part of the Old West Side Historic Architecture Survey)

115 Crest Ave, Deck and Fence

Homeowners: Kristen Pettit and Andrew Jazowski

Contractor: Nick of Time Construction (Nick Pucas)

Plan

- Replace existing back patio with deck, maintaining same footprint
- Add small area of fence (with gate) from end of deck to garage



Straight on view

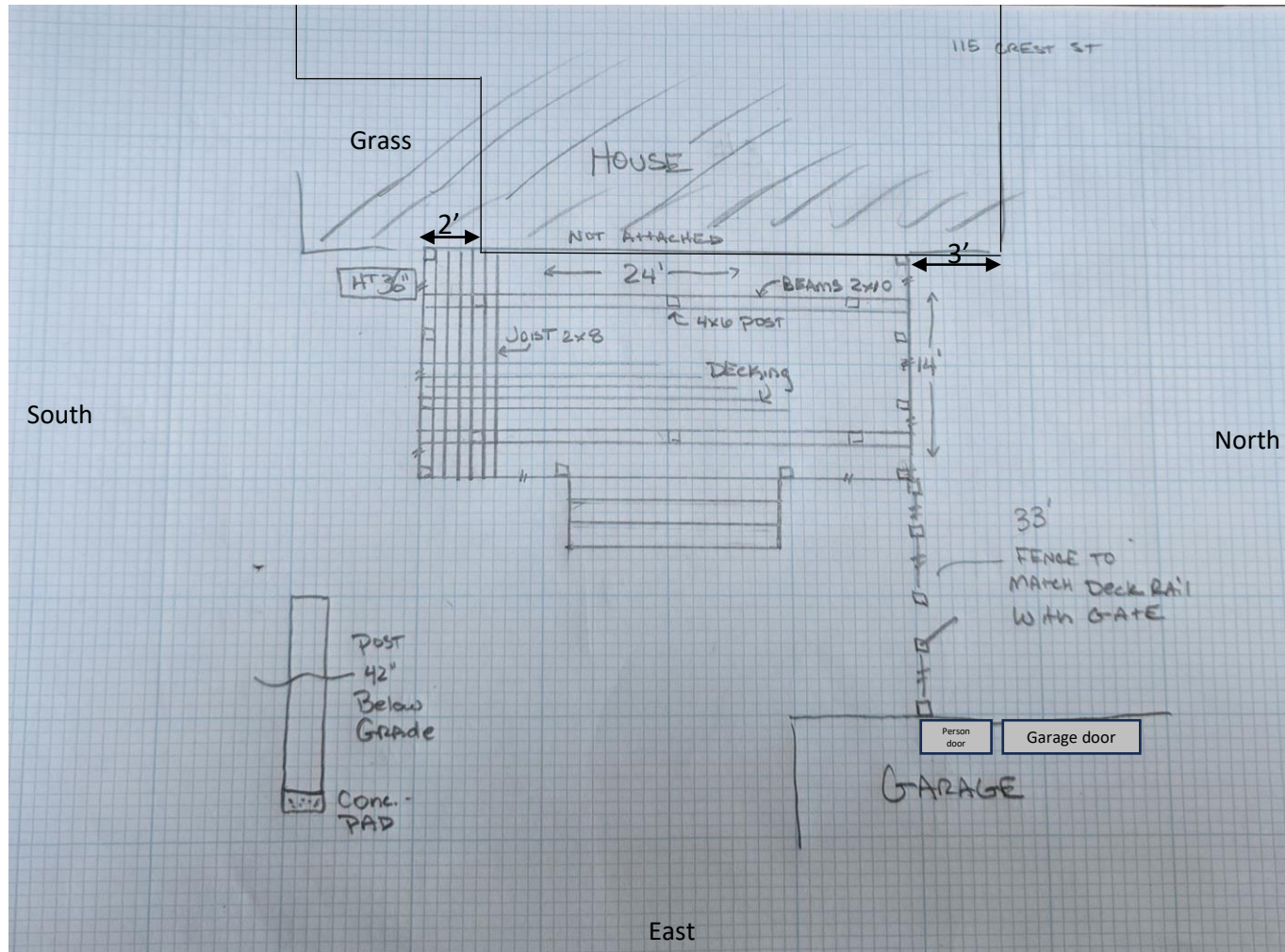


Facing South



Facing North

Plan and Measurements



Deck dimensions: 24' x 14'

- Same as current patio
- Offset to allow for current driveway (exact same footprint as current patio)

Fence length: 33'

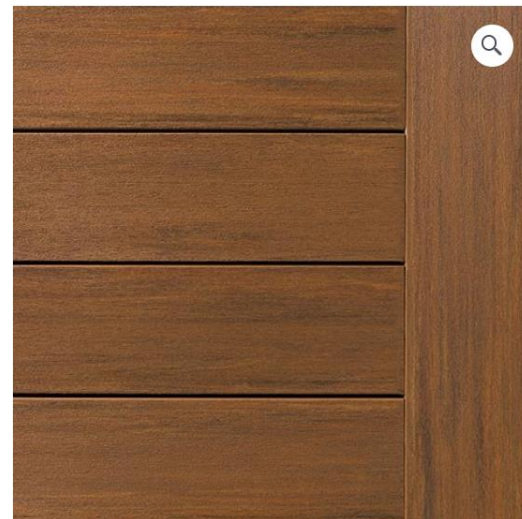
- From deck to garage, including gate
- Remainder of yard is already fenced

Materials – Deck

TimberTech Composite

- Vintage Collection
- Color: Cypress

TimberTech



TIMBERTECH ADVANCED PVC

Vintage Collection®

Exotic Hardwoods

Get the sought-after look of premium hardwoods such as ipe, mahogany, and teak, without the rigorous maintenance of wood. Our capped polymer decking features proprietary materials technology that delivers sophisticated, real wood aesthetics you'll never have to sand, stain, or seal.

COLOR CYPRESS



SAMPLE SIZE

1' Sample

FREE \$0.00

Materials – Deck Railing

TimberTech Impression Rail Express, Drink Rail

- Balusters: Metal (aluminum), vertical, black
- Drink Rail: Composite (same deck boards), cyprus



TimberTech®



METAL RAILING

Impression Rail Express®

Sleek Designs & Clear Sightlines

Made from powder-coated aluminum, TimberTech aluminum railing delivers a durable, corrosion-resistant design with stylish, wrought-iron-inspired aesthetics. Plus, with its pre-assembled, panelized design, our aluminum railing is simple and straightforward to install.

Choose from multiple top rail designs, infill options, and other accessories to customize your railing. [See options.](#)

Samples are not available. Visit your local dealer or retailer to see this railing.

TOP RAIL SHAPE Drink Rail



COLOR Black

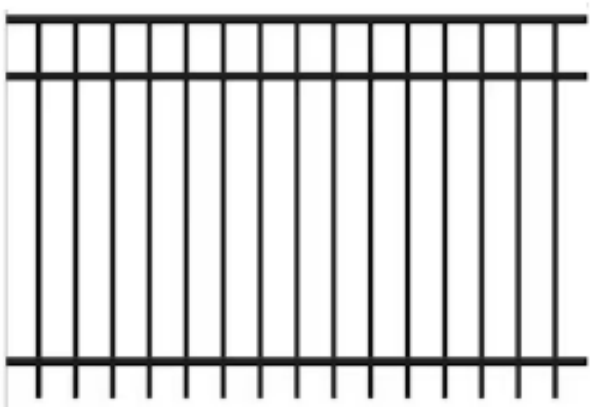


Materials –Fence

Freedom New Haven 4-ft H x 6-ft W Black Aluminum Spaced Picket Flat-top Decorative Fence Panel

- Metal (aluminum) ballusters, black
- Height: 4 foot
- Gate: 4' x 4' Matching Freedom New Haven Black Aluminum, flat-top walk-thru gate
- Location: from Northeast corner of deck, running alongside driveway, to garage (south side of person door). Not on property line.

Fence



Gate

