

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**Staff Report****ADDRESS:** 221 Eighth Street, Application Number HDC22-1115**DISTRICT:** Old West Side Historic District**REPORT DATE:** July 14, 2022**REPORT PREPARED BY:** Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator**REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE:** Monday, July 11, 2022

	OWNER	APPLICANT
Name:	Chris Coverly	Same
Address:	221 Eighth Street Ann Arbor, MI 48103	
Phone:	(734)	

BACKGROUND: Per Polk City Directories, this two-story side-gable house was first occupied in 1920 by Otto C. Hack and his wife Emma. Otto was a meat cutter, first at Washington Market, then at Eschelback Market. The Hacks lived in the house until at least 1960. The house features a nearly full-width front porch, shingle cladding on the upper floors with vinyl below, a shallow bay window on the first floor, south elevation, and a unique gambrel dormer facing the street.

LOCATION: The site is located on the east side of Eighth Street, south of West Washington.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to construct a bilevel rear deck 6'6" to 8'6" above grade (over a walkout basement), made of composite wood with an aluminum guardrail.

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

- (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.
- (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 or Neighborhood Setting

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

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 on a case-by-case basis

Installing flooring made of wood or composite wood.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. The house has an existing door on the rear elevation that used to lead to a deck that has been removed. The new deck would run the width of the back of the house, deeper on the south side to fit into the rear wall. Stairs would run off the north side of the deck, down to a lower deck. These stairs would be visible at the end of the driveway. The backyard of this house slopes toward the rear. The lower deck fills a space between the house and shed, flush with the end of the driveway, which is a couple of feet above the backyard grade. The lower deck is a landing pad for the 6' of stairs that come down from the upper deck. These stairs will be visible at the end of the driveway. The homeowner has provided a photo of the previous set of stairs in the same location leading to the same deck height as a visual aid (see email at end of attachments). Stairs off the back of the lower deck lead to the backyard. There is also a small pad on the north side of the shed for trash and recycling bin storage.
2. Materials include composite decking and an aluminum rail system. Composite is an acceptable material for rear decks. The aluminum rail system is simple and staff believes it is compatible. The *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* say that non-wood guardrails will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
3. The work is inconspicuous from the right of way and doesn't impact character-defining features of the house. The work is visually compatible with the house and surrounding historic buildings.
4. Staff finds the work generally compatible in exterior design, arrangement, material, and relationship to the rest of the building and the surrounding area, and finds that it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation, and the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines.

POSSIBLE MOTIONS: (Note that the motion is only a suggestion. The Review Committee, consisting of staff and at least two Commissioners, will meet with the applicant on site and then make a recommendation at the meeting.)

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 221 Eighth Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to construct a bilevel rear deck with a section 6'6" to 8'6" above grade (over a walkout basement) made of composite wood with an aluminum guardrail, and a section of composite wood deck at driveway grade. The work as proposed is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the rest of the building and the surrounding area and meets the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines*, in particular the guidelines for residential decks and patios, 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 or neighborhood setting.

MOTION WORKSHEET:

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 221 Eighth Street in the Old West Side Historic District

_____ Provided the following condition(S) is (ARE) met: 1) STATE CONDITION(s)

The work is generally compatible with the size, scale, massing, and materials and meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, standard(S) number(S) (*circle all that apply*): 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10

ATTACHMENTS: application, photos, drawings2008 Survey Photo, 221 Eighth Street



Description of project

- To build a new construction two level composite deck.
- Upper deck will be attached to the home with one set of stairs to the lower deck.
- Lower deck will be free standing with one set of stairs to the back yard.
- Westbury aluminum railing 36" H.
- All ground posts will be below frost line 42" D with cement

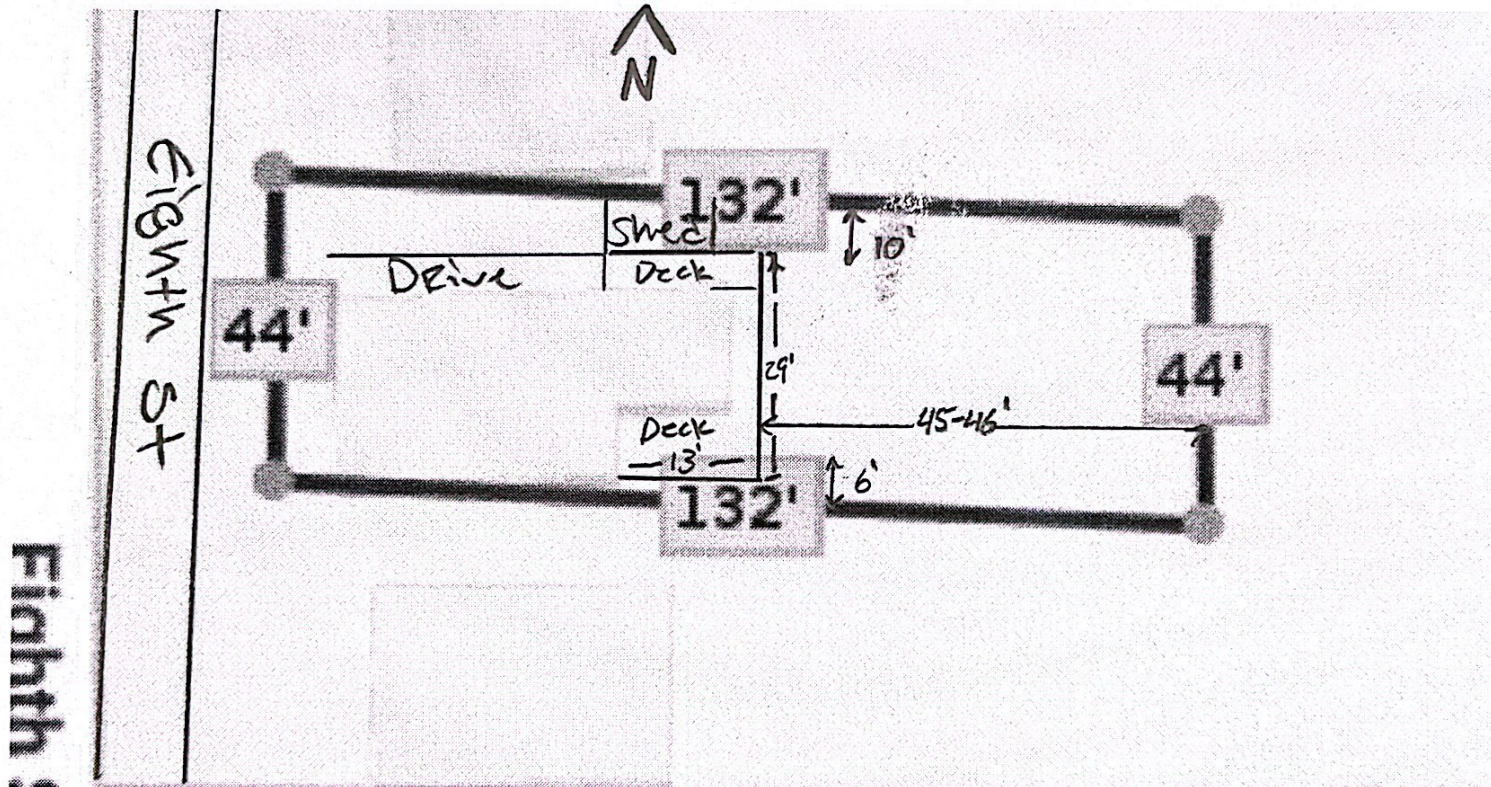
Deck square footage

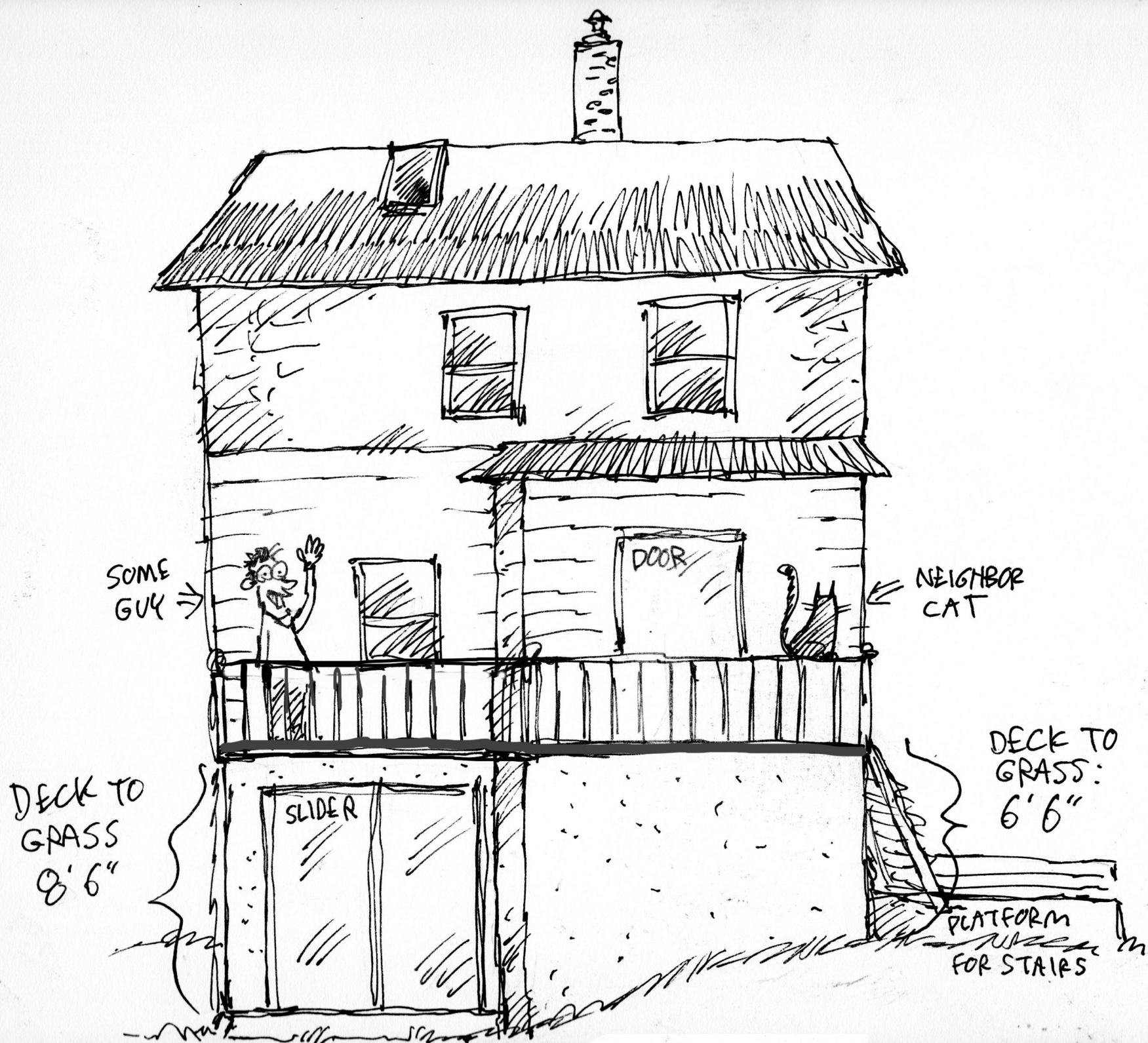
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Project value \$34,000.00

6/5/22, 10:50 AM

221 eighth lot lines.jpg





—COVERLY HOUSE - REAR VIEW—





Name: [redacted]
Address: [redacted]
City: [redacted]
State: [redacted]
Zip: [redacted]

The message was sent from a mobile device. Please do not send text, voice, or other communications to this number unless you recognize the source of the email and know the contact is safe.

If, when we build our shed, I remember someone coming over here and looking at it. It helps to get an idea of placement.

The small deck next to the driveway will have one step onto the deck. You'll be able to walk from the driveway to the steps of the deck. If we don't do that then we'll have to walk down two steps into grass and mud and then up more stairs to the deck (see the picture below). Yes, it extends beyond the house so that you can walk up the stairs. Yes, you'll be able to see the stairs, just like our old deck. The lower deck is 8' 0" x 17' in the stairs that go to the back yard (the measurement also includes the stairs that go up to the deck). You can see this on the builder's drawing, which also shows the steps to the lower deck.

Here's a picture of my old stairs on my former deck, the new stairs will look better because they won't start from the grass, they'll start from the lower deck. That's my dad building the remaining wall (no shed yet) with my now 27 year old daughter.

We live on a hill, I think the measurements we've given are sufficient, but if you need a better idea, just stop by sometime. It really does help to see it. Chris



On Jul 6, 2022, at 8:26 AM, Thatcher, JD <JTThatcher@2pm.org> wrote:

Hi Chris,

I'm writing up my staff report for your deck and need your help understanding the application. If you could respond to these questions, I will add the email to your application. Thank you!

1. On the north side, will the deck be flush with the north elevation of the house? Or will it extend beyond the house wall to the north or be inset (if so, how much)?
2. I'm having trouble visualizing the stairs and lower deck. I get that the lower deck extends between the house and shed, and it looks like there is a retaining wall between the end of the driveway and the backyard. Will the lower deck be flush with the driveway, and run along the trim board on the side of the shed? What are the lower deck dimensions?
3. From the given site sketch, I can't tell where the stairs start and end. Do they get from the upper to the lower deck. Will those end at the northeast corner of the house? I have for and do they extend before hitting the lower deck?

Is it possible to have a side drawing that shows a view down the driveway and the stairs coming off the house and where they'll land, and another of the north elevation at the back corner? Sketches don't need to be fancy, but it's important to make clear how visible the stairs will be from the driveway. I can see why you don't want the stairs to go straight off the back into the backyard (that's a long way away, and on a sloped yard).

Thank you in advance for clarifying. The better the information, the easier it is for the ISC to understand and consider the application. Any questions, let me know!

Best,
JD

Please note planning staff continues to work remotely and are constrained by responding as soon as possible.
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