

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION**Staff Report****ADDRESS:** 226 Buena Vista Street, Application Number HDC23-0153**DISTRICT:** Old West Side Historic District**REPORT DATE:** September 14, 2023**REPORT PREPARED BY:** Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator**REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE:** September 11, 2023

	OWNER	APPLICANT
Name:	David Hancock	Jason Ennis
Address:	226 Buena Vista Ann Arbor, MI 48103	Center Design Studio 1346 Ravenwood Ave Ann Arbor, MI 48103
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BACKGROUND: This 1 ¾ story gable-fronter features gable end returns, a full-width front porch with tapered round columns, stucco on the first floor (and artificial shingles covering the second floor), and a triple window in the front gable. This address does not appear in Polk City Directories through at least 1945, which suggests the house was moved to this lot sometime after WWII.

LOCATION: The site is located on the west side of Buena Vista, south of West Washington and north of Crest Avenue.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to demolish and replace the rear porch; alter rear door and windows; infill a window on the south side elevation; replace the south side door; and add two skylights.

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

- (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 materials, features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property will be preserved.
- (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):

Windows

Not Recommended: Changing the number, location, size, or glazing pattern of windows, through cutting new openings, blocking-in windows, and installing replacement sash which does not fit the historic window opening.

Removing or radically changing windows which are important in defining the historic character of the building so that, as a result, the character is diminished.

Changing the historic appearance of windows through the use of inappropriate designs, materials, finishes, or colors which noticeably change the sash, depth of reveal, and muntin configuration; the reflectivity and color of the glazing, or the appearance of the frame.

Entrances and Porches

Recommended: Designing and installing additional entrances or porches when required for the new use in a manner that preserves the historic character of the buildings, i.e., limiting such alteration to non-character-defining elevations.

Not Recommended: Cutting new entrances on a primary elevation. Altering utilitarian or service entrances so they appear to be formal entrances by adding paneled doors, fanlights, and sidelights.

From the Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines (other Guidelines may apply):

Residential Porches

Appropriate: Installing a new porch and entrance on secondary elevations may be appropriate if it does not diminish the building's architectural character and the design and materials are compatible with the building and the site.

Residential Doors

Appropriate: Replacing a missing original or non-original door with a design that matches original doors remaining on the house, or with a compatible new design and material that fits the style and period of the house and the existing opening. The Commission will review materials on a case-by-case basis.

Retaining, repairing, and maintaining original doors, hardware, and trim, including transoms, sidelights, and surrounds

Replacing original doors that are deteriorated beyond repair with a door that matches the existing exactly in design, size, proportions, profile, and material.

Windows

Not Appropriate: Removing or radically changing a window that is important in defining the overall historic character of the property.

Changing the number, location, and size or glazing pattern of windows by cutting new openings, blocking-in, or installing replacement sash which does not fit the historic opening.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. *Porch.* The roof/ceiling structure of the current porch may be from the period of significance, though this should be confirmed by the Review Committee. The posts have been replaced, the corners sit on concrete blocks, and the decking and stairs are deteriorated to the point of needing replacement. The door on the rear elevation is a character defining feature of the house, with its five panels and bead molding below the window. The first-floor awning window was probably above either a piano or a sideboard historically. Its sash appears to be quite plain.

The new porch is larger than the existing and accessed by a pair of French doors that would replace the awning window. The material of the porch is not specified, except the decking is Trex 1"x 6" or similar. The current door would be removed and infilled, and a pair of double-hung windows would be installed in the wall to the south. New windows are proposed to be Andersen 400 series vinyl clad.

2. *Window infill.* A window on the first floor of the south elevation near the back is proposed to be infilled with stucco that is inset 2" and new trim installed to mimic the current trim. Please see the application for a detailed narrative on sheet 11. The window has weights, ropes and pulleys, which are clear indicators that the window is from the period of significance (pre-1945). Typically complete removal and infill of a visible window from the period of significance is not appropriate per the guidelines and standards used by the HDC. If the HDC finds this work to be appropriate, recessing the infill to leave a record of the window's former location and size is appropriate.
3. *Skylights.* The proposed pair of skylights are near the back of the house and appropriate.
4. *Side door.* From photos, the side door appears to be from the period of significance. If this is accurate, it needs to be repaired. If the door is beyond repair, the HDC may allow a replica wood door to be installed. The proposed replacement door is the same style, a half lite over three horizontal panels. A comparison of the glass size from the existing to the proposed would be helpful.
5. Two motions are suggested by staff; one for the side window and one for the remainder of the work. Commissioners may of course combine these into one or create additional motions as they see fit.

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.)

Side Window:

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the portion of the application at 226 Buena Vista Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to remove a window on the south elevation of the house, infill it with recessed stucco to match the surrounding wall and install trim around the opening. This proposed work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the rest of the building and the surrounding area and meets *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, in particular standards 2 and 5 and the guidelines for windows, as well as the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines*, particularly as they pertain to windows.

Rear Elevation:

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the portion of the application at 226 Buena Vista Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to demolish and replace the rear porch; alter rear door and windows; replace the south side door; and add two skylights. This proposed work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, texture, material and relationship to the rest of the building and the surrounding area and meets *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, in particular standards 2, 5, 9 and 10, and the guidelines for windows, and entries and porches, as well as the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines*, particularly as they pertain to windows and residential porches.

MOTION WORKSHEET:

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 226 Buena Vista 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: drawings, photos, narratives.

226 Buena Vista (2011, courtesy Google Streetview)

