

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Staff Report

ADDRESS: 1017 W Liberty St Application Number HDC24-0176
DISTRICT: Old West Side Historic District
REPORT DATE: December 12, 2024
REPORT PREPARED BY: Mariana Melin-Corcoran, Associate Planner
REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE: December 9, 2024

OWNER

APPLICANT

Name: Gregory Smith	Steven Busch MAKER Design Build
Address: 1017 W Liberty St Ann Arbor, MI 48103	1935 S Industrial Hwy, Suite D Ann Arbor, MI 48104
Phone: (414) 303-0641	(734) 262-3209

BACKGROUND: This stately house first appears in Polk Directories in 1928 as the home of John Huss, who worked in real estate. Mrs. Huss lived in the home until at least 1940. Some of its significant features include brick on the foundation and first floor, wood siding on the second floor, a shallow shed roof facing the street over wall dormers, exposed rafter tails, and a stone 3/4-width front porch supporting square half-columns.

In 2014, a screen porch was approved behind the house (HDC14-061 in Trakit).

In 2022, the HDC approved the paving of a strip between the house and driveway and the replacement of a pair of wood overhead garage doors with steel doors. In 2023, the HDC approved the replacement of the two 8-foot garage doors with one 16-foot garage door.

LOCATION: The house is located on the south side of West Liberty Street, west of Eighth Street and east of Eberwhite Boulevard.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to remove a door on the rear of the house and infill the opening with brick, leaving a one-inch relief to show where the door once existed.



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

- (1) A property will be used as it was historically or be given a new use that requires minimal change to its distinctive materials, features, spaces, and spatial relationships.
- (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.
- (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.

From the Secretary of the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings (other SOI Guidelines may also apply):**Entrances and Porches – Identify, Retain, Preserve**

Recommended: Identifying, retaining, and preserving entrances – and their functional and decorative features – that are important in defining the overall historic character of the building such as doors, fanlights, sidelights, pilaster, entablatures, columns, balustrades, and stairs.

Not Recommended: Removing or radically changing entrances and porches which are important in defining the overall historic character of the building so that, as a result, the character is diminished.

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

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

Not Appropriate: Enlarging, reducing, or otherwise changing the door opening size.

STAFF FINDINGS:

- 1) The door opening is located on the rear (south side) of the house and is not visible from the public right-of-way. Both the door opening and the door appear to be original to the house. The door is utilitarian and does not feature any decorative elements such as surrounds. The door is a wood, paneled, half-lite door.

- 2) The applicant proposes removing the door and infilling the opening with brick and mortar similar to or the same as the existing brick exterior. The infill will be inset approximately one inch to show where the door once existed. The opening size will not change.
- 3) The removal and infill of the door will allow the applicants to expand their kitchen at the interior. This change will not necessitate any new door openings on the house.
- 4) The work will impact the door and opening, which are both presumed to be historic. However, the door and opening are very simple, not character-defining, and not visible from the right-of-way. Staff feels that infilling the opening with a one inch inset to show the door's historic location is appropriate, and the work is reversible if it were desired to reinstall a door in original opening in the future.

POSSIBLE MOTION: (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 1017 W Liberty St, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to remove a person door on the south elevation and infill the openings with brick, leaving a one-inch relief to show where the door once existed. The 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 1, 2, and 9 and the guidelines for entrances and porches, as well as the *Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines*, particularly as they pertain to residential doors.

ATTACHMENTS: application materials, drawings.



1017 W Liberty, north elevation (2014)



1017 W Liberty, south elevation (2014)



1017 W Liberty, south elevation (2023)

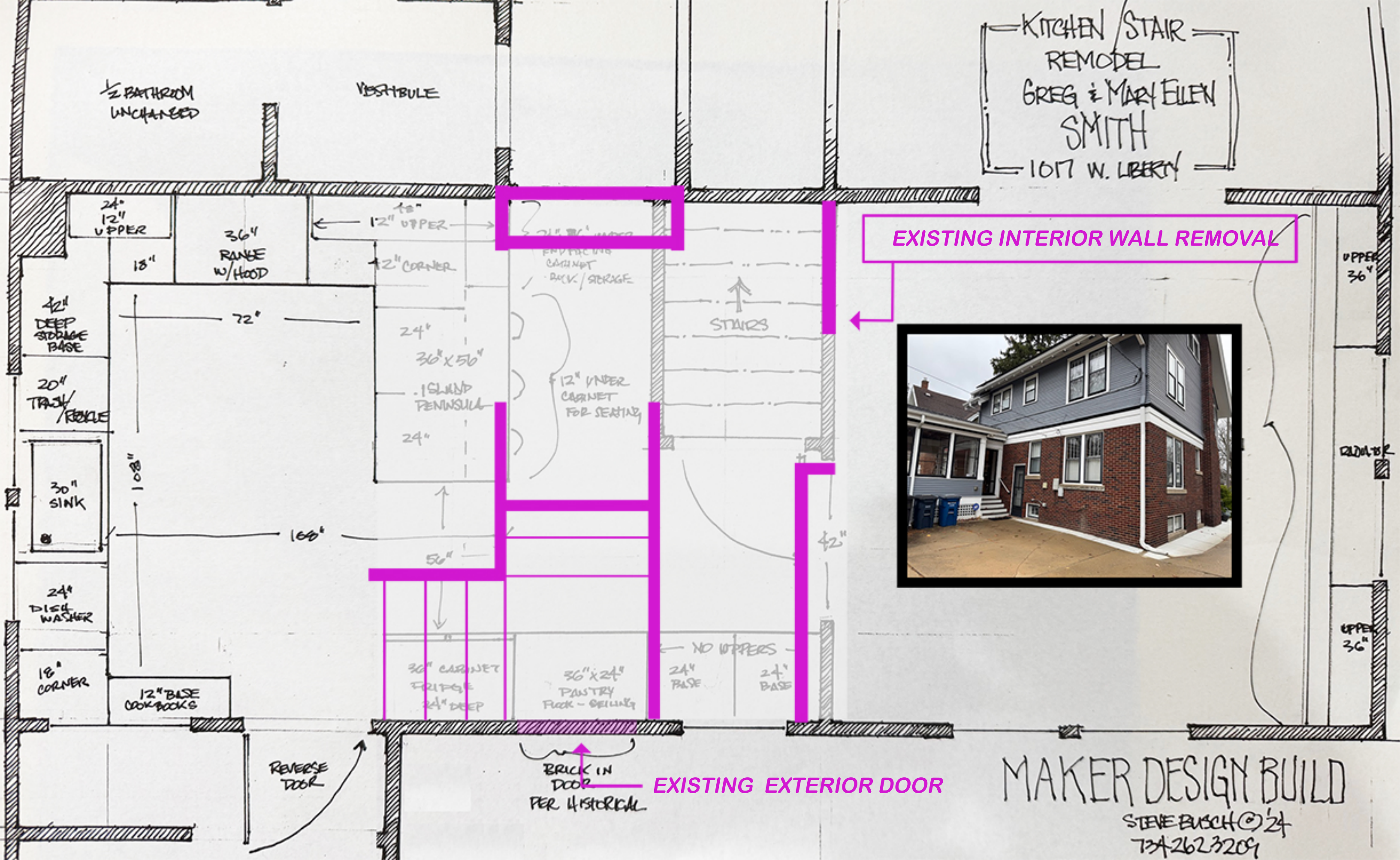
KITCHEN / STAIR
 REMODEL
 GREG & MARY ELLEN
 SMITH
 1017 W. LIBERTY



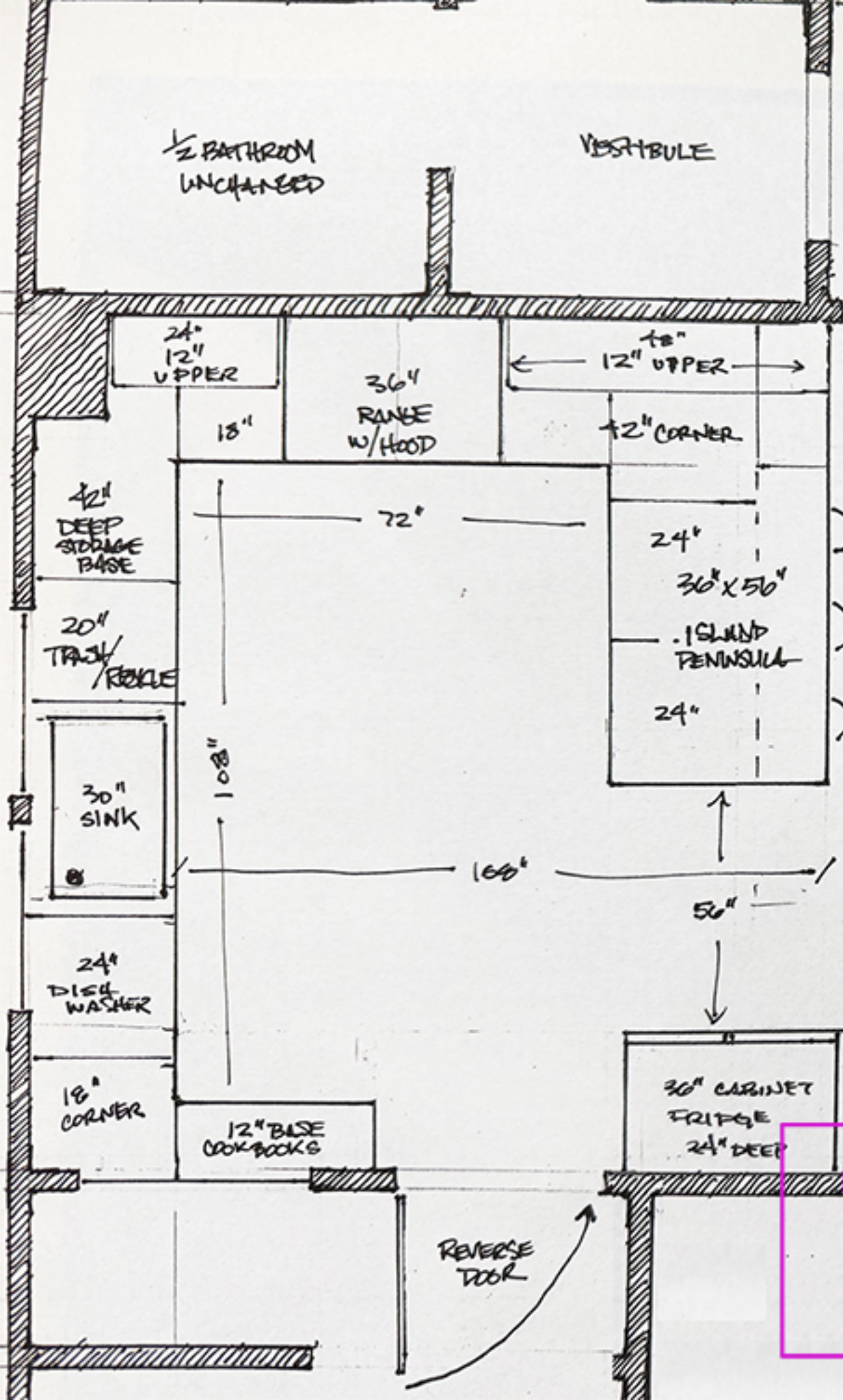
MAKER DESIGN BUILD

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24" x 36" UNDER
 END FAC W/ B
 CABINET
 RACK / STORAGE

12" UNDER
 CABINET
 FOR SEATING

WOOD
 CUSTOM
 BUILD IN

BRICK IN COMPLETE OPENING
 WITH A 1" RELIEF UTILIZING
 SAME OR NEAR SIMILAR BRICK.

MAK

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