

ANN ARBOR HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Staff Report

ADDRESS: 529 Sixth Street, Application Number HDC15-012

DISTRICT: Old West Side Historic District

REPORT DATE: February 12, 2015

REPORT PREPARED BY: Jill Thacher, Historic Preservation Coordinator

REVIEW COMMITTEE DATE: Monday, February 9, 2015

	OWNER	APPLICANT
Name:	Justin & Allison Waugh	Lewis Greenspoon Architects
Address:	529 Sixth Street Ann Arbor, MI 48103	440 S Main, Suite 2 Ann Arbor, MI 48104
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BACKGROUND: This two-story gable-fronter first appears in the 1890-1891 Polk City Directory as 9 Sixth Street, the home of Frederick C. Strecker, a driver for John Ross. A Strecker lived in the home until at least 1910. The house features some original two-over-two windows and a bump-out on the north side. The two-story addition, the addition behind it, and the screen porch were added sometime after 1971.

LOCATION: The site is located on the east side of Sixth Street, south of West Jefferson and north of West Madison.

APPLICATION: The applicant seeks HDC approval to expand the existing non-original front porch; install a new canopy over the north side door; install a new roof with a steeper slope on the north side bump-out; construct a new gable over the addition at the south-west section of the house; demolish a modern screen porch on the rear and construct a new, larger one with an adjacent deck and pergola; move a window on the rear of the post WWII addition 27"; remove the aluminum siding on the entire house and restore the underlying wood; install 7" cementitious lap siding on the non-original portions of the house; and on the garage, alter the doors, install photo voltaic panels, and reside it to match the house.

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.



- (3) Each property will be recognized as a physical record of its time, place, and use. Changes that create a false sense of historical development, such as adding conjectural features or elements from other historic properties, will not be undertaken.
- (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):

Additions

Recommended: Considering the attached exterior addition both in terms of the new use and the appearance of other buildings in the historic district or neighborhood. Design for the new work may be contemporary or may reference design motifs from the historic building.

Locating the attached exterior addition at the rear or on an inconspicuous side of a historic building; and limiting its size and scale in relationship to the historic building.

Designing new additions in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new.

Not Recommended: Attaching a new addition so that the character-defining features of the historic building are obscured, damaged, or destroyed.

Designing a new addition so that its size and scale in relation to the historic building are out of proportion, thus diminishing the historic character.

Building Site

Recommended: Identifying, retaining, and preserving buildings and their features as well as features of the site that are important in defining its overall historic character.

Retaining the historic relationship between buildings and the landscape.

Not Recommended: Removing or radically changing buildings and their features or site features which are important in defining the overall historic character of the property so that, as a result, the character is diminished.

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

Design Guidelines for 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.

Design Guidelines for Residential Porches

Appropriate: Using replacement features that match the documented historic design. If no documentation exists, using a simple, plain design.

Not Appropriate: Creating a false historical appearance by adding a porch, entrance, feature, or detail that is conjectural or comes from other properties.

Guidelines for All Additions

Appropriate: Placing a new addition on a non-character-defining or inconspicuous elevation and limiting the size and scale in relationship to the historic property.

Placing new walls in a different plane from the historic structure in a subordinate position to the historic fabric.

Designing a new addition in a manner that makes clear what is historic and what is new.

Not Appropriate: Designing an addition that overpowers or dramatically alters the original building through size or height.

Designing a new addition so that the size and scale in relation to the historic property are out of proportion.

STAFF FINDINGS:

1. *Front Porch*. The application proposes extending the front porch south to make it a usable size and help tie in the large addition to the remainder of the house. The expanded porch would be constructed of wood, with asphalt roof shingles to match the existing. Porch posts would match the ones on what's left of the porch, and the skirting would be square lattice. Since the pediment and posts of the existing porch will remain as is, staff feels that this work is appropriate and complementary to the house.
2. *North Side Door Canopy*. The proposed small gable roof over the side door would help shield both pedestrians and the door from the elements. It is unknown whether the house ever had a covered entrance here. The addition of one would not detract from the historic features or overall character of the building, and would provide a basic amenity in the smallest size possible. Its simple design would not create a false historical appearance. The canopy would also be mostly hidden behind the bumpout.
3. *Roof of North Bumpout*. The bumpout on the north elevation (just in front of the side door) has a nearly-flat roof. Draining is insufficient, water infiltration is occurring, and the

applicants would like to increase the pitch to 12/3 to facilitate runoff (see esp. drawings 9 and 15). The change in appearance would be negligible and correct a problem that could cause serious damage to a significant architectural feature of the house.

4. *New Second Floor Gable.* The existing large two-story addition on the south side has a low-pitched shed roof that makes a rather awkward connection to the original house. The applicants would like to install a south-facing gable that spans about half the width of the addition and ties in below the ridge of the original house. The applicants are taking great pains to delineate the original house from the addition (see also *siding*, below), and are proposing to restore the appearance of the missing eave on the original house to this end. The original eave is 12", and the new gable would have an 8" eave. The gable would lend the house more of a traditional upright-and-wing feel.
5. *Screen Porch, Deck and Pergola, and Move a Window.* The existing 7'10" x 10'2" screen porch was constructed after 1971. It would be expanded roughly 3' to the east and south, and the door would be moved to the south side to open onto a new 9'9" x 12' deck with a pergola. This deck fits within the back corner formed by the original house and a one-story rear addition, and is inset a foot from its south side wall. The design of the pergola is simple and ties the deck into the house without feeling heavy or imposing. There is a window on the rear addition overlooking the deck that would be moved 27 1/2" north. The addition also dates to post-1971. Staff has no objections to the larger screen porch, deck, or window shift, and feels that these modest changes to modern parts of the house would very positively contribute to its livability.
6. *Siding.* The aluminum siding was presumably installed when the addition was built after 1971. Removing the aluminum and restoring the underlying 4" wood is very appropriate. On the large two-story addition and smaller one-story behind it, aluminum is the original cladding so the owners have chosen cementitious lap siding with a 7" reveal for those sections of the house. Their goal is to distinguish the additions from the original house block, and to this end will finish the two parts differently – the original house will feature corner board trim and a skirt board, while the additions will have wrapped corners and no skirt board.
7. *Garage.* The work proposed for the two-car garage is appropriate. It will result in a classier, more traditional feel that is compatible with the house. Photo voltaic panels installed on the south-facing roof will be nearly invisible from the street or sidewalk, and in a backyard installation, staff believes the use of black-on-silver panels is acceptable.
8. Staff feels the work is compatible with the rest of the building and the surrounding neighborhood, finds that it meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards and Guidelines for Rehabilitation, and finds that the application is entirely positive and

MOTION

I move that the Commission issue a certificate of appropriateness for the application at 529 Sixth Street, a contributing property in the Old West Side Historic District, to expand the front porch; install a new canopy over the north side door; install a new roof on the bump-out; construct a new gable; remove the screen porch and construct a new one with a deck and pergola; remove the aluminum siding on the entire house and restore the underlying wood; install 7" cementitious lap siding on the non-original portions of the house; and alter the garage, as proposed. The work is compatible in exterior design, arrangement, materials, and

relationship to the house and the surrounding area and meets the *City of Ann Arbor Historic District Design Guidelines* for doors, porches, and additions, and *The Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation and Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings*, in particular standards 2, 3, 5, 9, and 10 and the guidelines for Additions and Building Site.

MOTION WORKSHEET

I move that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work at 529 Sixth 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, letter, photos, drawings

529 Sixth Street (April, 2008 photo)

