



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

**COMMISSION FOR
HISTORICAL & ARCHITECTURAL
PRESERVATION**

Tom Liebel, Chairman

STAFF REPORT



Chris Ryer
Director

February 9, 2021

REQUEST: Construct rear addition and raise roof

ADDRESS: 640 Melvin Drive (Ridgely's Delight Historic District)

PETITIONER(S): Neil Junker (Consultant) and Division LLC - Decceco Dockins (Owner)

STAFF: Eddie Leon

RECOMMENDATION: Approval of Height, Massing and Scale. Final design to return to staff.

SITE/HISTORIC DISTRICT

General Area: The site is located in the middle of the Ridgely's Delight historic district. The district is a wedge-shaped residential neighborhood just south of the University of Maryland downtown campus. It is generally bounded by Pratt Street, Russell Street, and Martin Luther King Boulevard. The district is home to excellent examples of traditional rowhouse architecture and industrial/manufacturing buildings. Ridgely's Delight has always been a socially and economically mixed-use neighborhood. The district's residential buildings represent the first phase of development for Baltimore's rowhouses. The unusual street pattern in Ridgely's Delight produces an intimate human scale and irregular building sites.

Site Conditions: The property consists of a two-story tall and two bay wide formstone covered rowhouse with no cornice. The main building is one room deep on the ground level and two rooms deep on the 2nd floor. It has a one-room rear addition built after 1890. The building is part of a continuous row of similar rowhouses that were built in the early 19th century and designed for the working class. They were originally built with brick and had a single entrance, stood two stories high and had highly detailed Italianate cornices.

BACKGROUND

The building has not been reviewed by the Commission since the creation of the historic district. Staff reviewed minor repairs in 2002.

PROPOSAL

The applicants propose to remove a one-story shed-roofed rear addition with a dirt floor and to construct a two-story rear addition similar in plan and scale to the rear additions on the adjoining rowhouses (638 Melvin Drive) . The plans also call for raising the existing roof height to match the adjacent building with a low gable pitch roof. The rear addition will have no window openings on the exposed westelevation . The rear elevation will have windows and a single door..

APPLICATION OF GUIDELINES

CHAP staff applied the following design guidelines from *Chapter 1, specifically:*

1.18 Alterations and Additions

- *Retain historic character defining features when planning alterations and additions to a historic building.*
- *Design alterations and additions to be compatible and sympathetic to the character of the historic building.*
- *Design additions to be compatible with the existing historic structure in massing, height, form, and scale. Place additions on a secondary elevation.*
- *An addition may be contemporary in design, or it may replicate the historic character of the main building. Where an addition replicates the historic character of the main building, create subtle differences to clearly distinguish it as a later structure.*
- *Document existing historic conditions in drawings and photographs before beginning any alterations and additions.*

Application of Guidelines

The rear elevation of the existing rowhouse has no significant architectural features or details, The shed-roof addition is severely deteriorated and has no significant architectural features. The proposed addition is designed to mimic other additions on neighboring rowhouses in its height, massing and scale. The proposal also includes matching the raised roof slope of the adjoining building to the East,. The new rear addition will copy the shape and form of the other adjacent rear additions but will have subtle differences with applied siding materials and fenestration. The applicants will fully photograph the existing rear addition prior to demolition so that a record exists of this style of rowhouse addition.

NEIGHBORHOOD COMMENTS

The proposal has been shared with the Ridgely's Delight ARC. The committee expressed concerns over the dimensions of the rear windows and the removal of the rear wall.

ANALYSIS

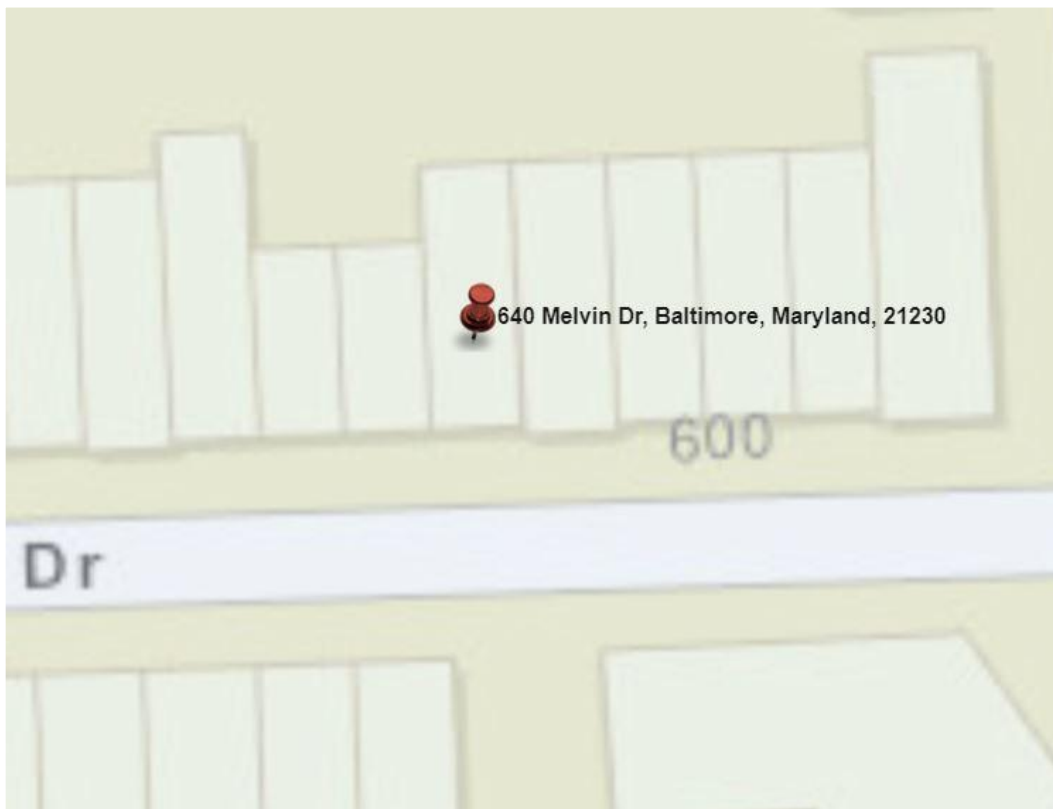
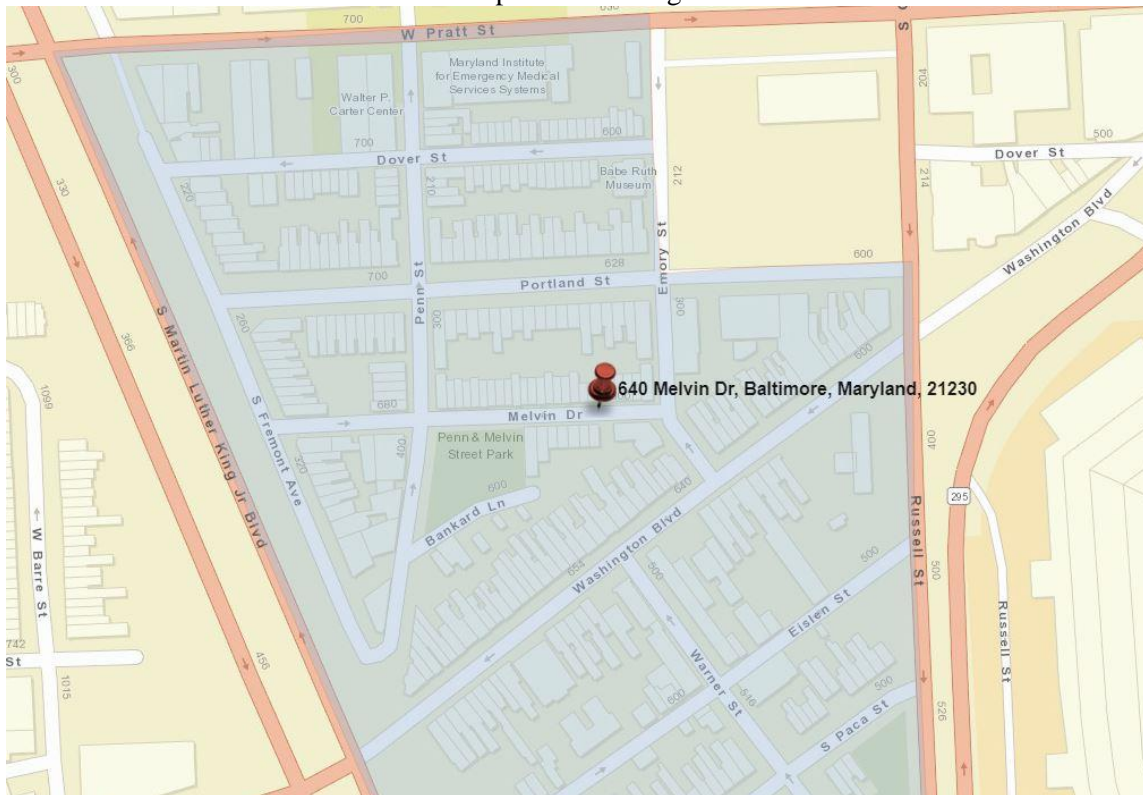
The proposal meets the CHAP Design Guidelines for height, massing and scale. The design is similar to other rear additions that have been approved in this historic district. The proposed addition will be constructed on the rear elevation and will not be seen from any public right of way. The removal of the rear wall is necessary to accomodate the new floor height and roof.

RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the height, massing and scale of the new addition.with the final design to return to staff.

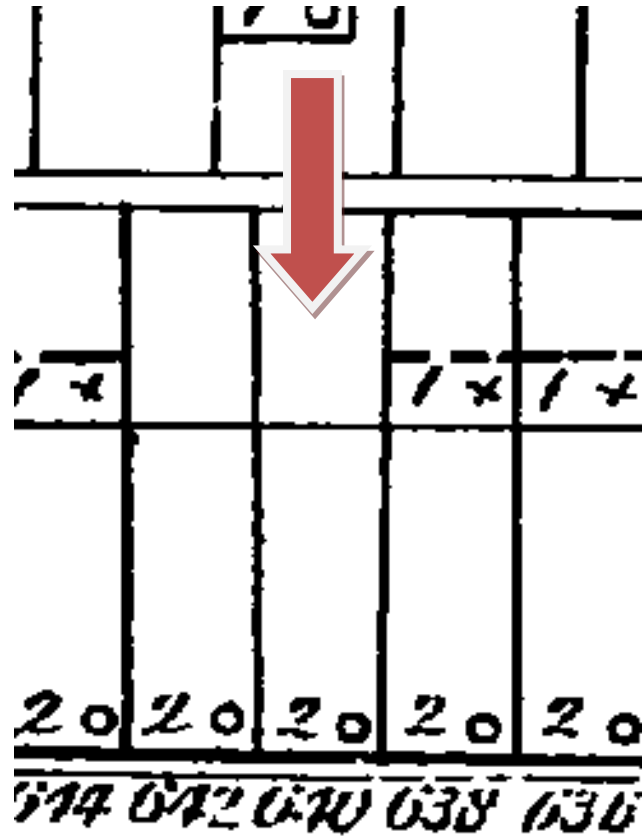
Eric Holcomb Director



Maps and Drawings



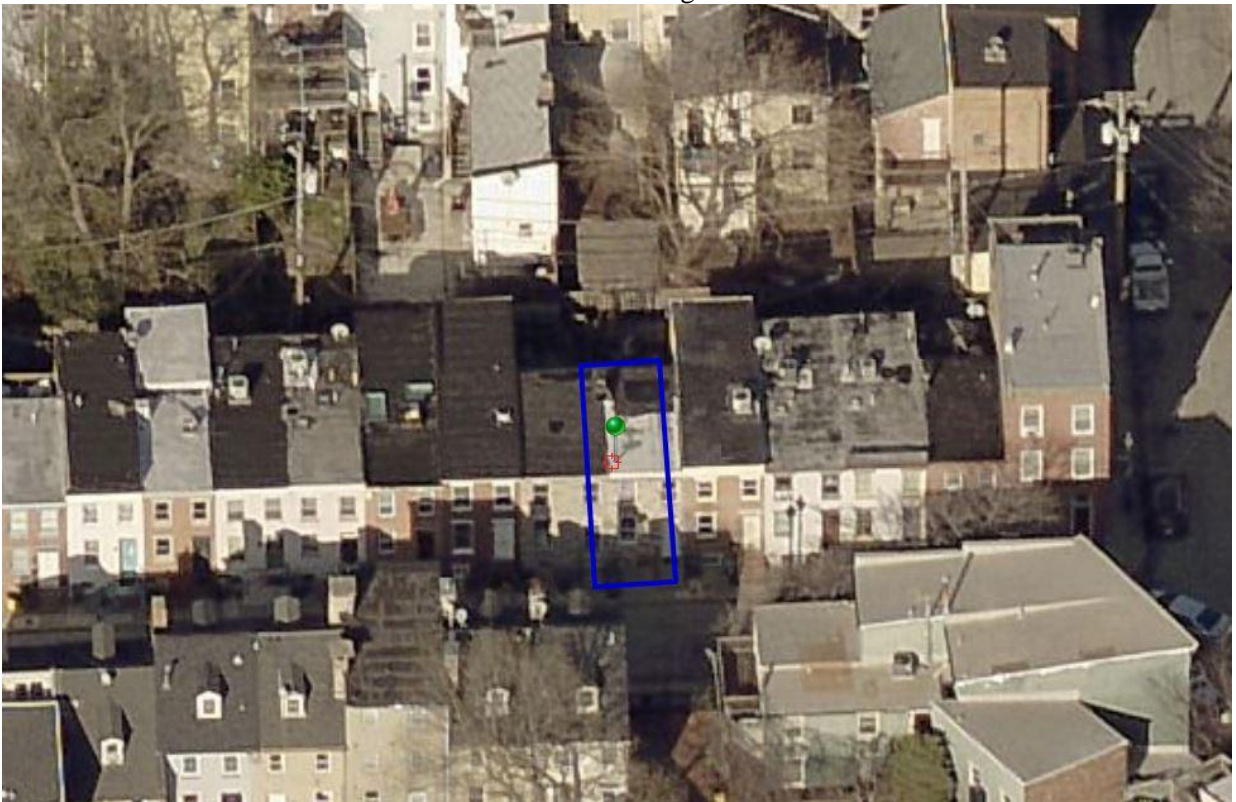
1890 Sanborn Insurance Map of Baltimore



Aerial view of 640 Melvin Drive



View South looking North



View from North looking South



Front Elevation 640 Melvin Drive



Rear elevation of existing one story shed addition



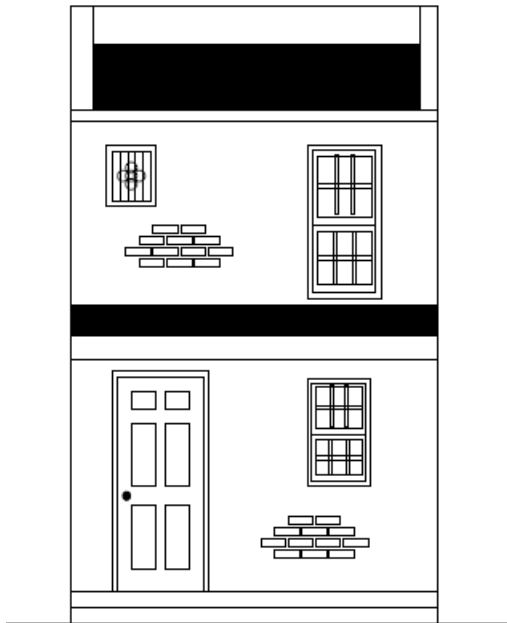
Adjacent rear addition to be copied at 640 Melvin Drive



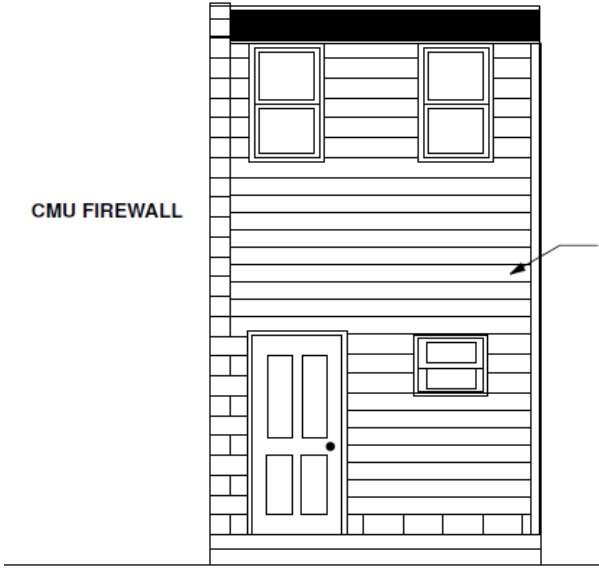
Melvin Drive Streetscape 2020- Google

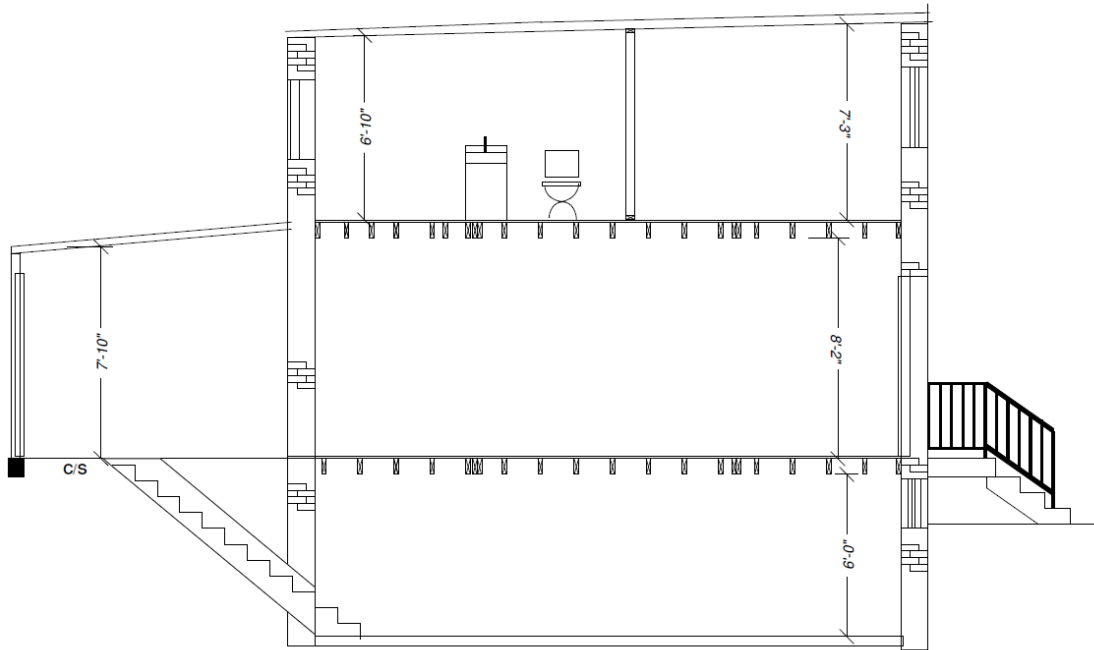


EXISTING REAR ELEVATION

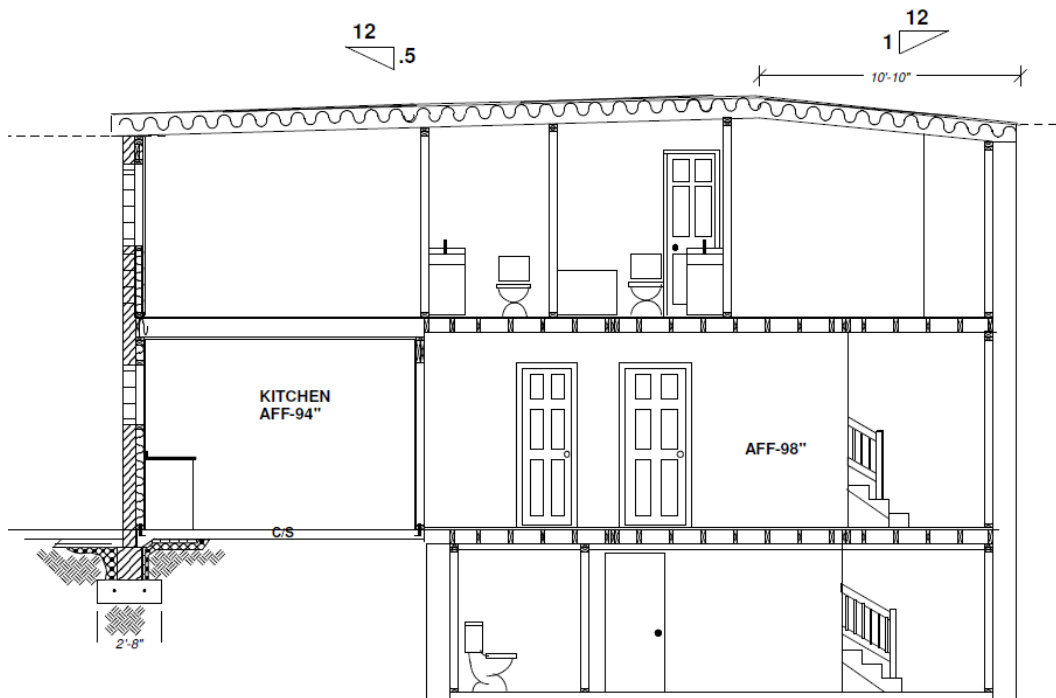


NEW REAR ELEVATION





EXISTING CROSS SECTION
SCALE 1/4" = 1'



Proposed Cross Section