

CASE # 2010-COA-139 (WP) Part B	INDIANAPOLIS HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION STAFF REPORT	Hearing Date SEPT. 7, 2011
1831 Woodruff Place Cross Drive WOODRUFF PLACE		<i>Continued case: Aug. 3, 2011 July 6, 2011 May 4, 2011</i>
Applicant: KEVIN BETTS	mailing address: 645 East 54th Street Indianapolis, IN 46220	
Owner: Same as above		Center Township Council District: 16 Brian Mahern
CASE		
IHPC COA: 2010-COA-139 (WP) Part B	Construct a rear porte-cochere structure.	
STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Approval with Stipulations		

STAFF COMMENTS

Background of the Property

This two-story house was built c.1897 on a large corner lot. It has a cross gable roof configuration with a masonry exterior on the first floor and wood clapboard siding on the second floor and gables ends. The house originally had a full-width front porch with a second story balustrade, a small hipped roof side porch, and a hipped roof rear porch. At some point in its past, the front porch was replaced with a flat roofed porch that only covers half the width of the façade and the rear porch was removed. The side porch still remains. The once-large lot was subdivided in 1924 to build the house next door, leaving this house on a small lot that is 60 ft. wide by 95 ft. deep.

Background of the Case

- 1985 Indiana Landmarks acquired the property in 1985 and subsequently sold it with covenants.
- 2004 After several owners since 1985, the property was bought by Mr. Kevin Betts, the present owner.
- 2005 Mr. Betts received repair orders from Health & Hospital Corporation. He was granted COAs for work needed to comply with the orders. He also purchased the scissor-lift.
- 2007 He applied for additional repair work.
- 2008 Mr. Betts told staff the work was not complete and asked about extending the COAs. The Department of Code Enforcement received the first complaint about the scissor-lift stored in the front yard.
- 2010 Mr. Betts was cited by the Department of Code Enforcement for storing commercial vehicles (a flatbed trailer and a scissor-lift) on the property in a dwelling district, both parked in the front yard. At the time, all previous COAs had expired. Mr. Betts subsequently applied for and was granted five COAs for exterior restoration work.
- 2011 At the February 2011 IHPC hearing, Mr. Betts applied for several variances and for construction of a porte-cochere and concrete parking pad, modify rear steps, install fencing and landscaping. All were approved except the porte-cochere, which was continued.

Applicant's Requests

The primary purpose of Mr. Betts' original request in February was to resolve the zoning violation by being permitted to temporarily store the scissor-lift on the property during the restoration/ reconstruction of the exterior of the building. Variances were granted for the proposed porte-cochere, but the design was unresolved. There have been no changes made to the design.

Rear Porte-Cochere Structure

A rear porte-cochere structure is designed to serve several purposes:

1. to provide a temporary storage location for the scissor lift,
2. to provide a covered area during inclement weather for the rear entrance.
3. to provide covered parking after the scissor-lift is gone, and
4. to create some outdoor space on the second level, given the constraints of this small lot.

The porte-cochere is designed with a low brick wall base along the south side of the structure and two separate piers all with concrete caps. A total of five wood columns sit on top of the masonry structure and hold up the flat roof structure with a second floor wood balustrade and wood floor surfacing material. The existing second floor rear window configuration is expected to remain.

Reasons to Approve the Porte-Cochere

1. The massing of the proposed structure is consistent with the Woodruff Place Preservation Plan's recommendation that "...*the scale, height, size, and mass [of a new addition] should relate to the existing building and not overpower it. The mass and form of the original building should be discernible, even after an addition has been constructed.*"
2. The porte-cochere will be at the back of the house and would be minimally visible from Cross Drive or Middle Drive. This is consistent with the Woodruff Place Preservation Plan's recommendation that the new additions "...*should be located at the rear, away from the front façade.*"
3. The design, detailing and materials are all reflective of the house's architecture.
4. The location is similar to the original rear porch.
5. This property is too small to comfortably accommodate a detached garage.
6. This solution will provide much needed off-street parking while retaining some amount of outdoor open space on the small lot.

Remonstrance

Indiana Landmarks, which has a covenant on the property, and the Woodruff Place Civic League (WPCL) both object to this porte-cochere, as designed. They have met with Mr. Betts, but no compromise has been reached. There appear to be two major objections:

1. Opposition to the balustrade around the roof of the porte-cochere
 - a) Indiana Landmarks objects to adding a detail that was not found on the original porch (now long-gone) because it will confuse people regarding what is original and what is new. Indiana Landmarks believes that removing the balustrade will make the porte-cochere more contemporary and read as a new addition.
 - b) The WPCL does not want Mr. Betts to use the roof of the porte-cochere as an outdoor porch-like space, so they oppose the balustrade around the edge of the porte-cochere's roof, in order to discourage use of the roof for an outdoor porch/deck.

Staff Thoughts: The Woodruff Place Plan neither prohibits nor encourages second floor porches and/or balustrades on porch roofs. Staff sees this as a case-by-case design issue. The IHPC has approved many second floor porches over the years. The IHPC has approved many porches with balustrades. Staff finds the balustrade, as depicted in the drawings, to be simple and not overly "historicized." Staff finds this balustrade very similar to others approved in the past. Regarding the potential access to the roof of the porte-cochere, staff has not been able to articulate a preservation reason for denying a balustrade simply because the owner might walk onto the roof.

2. Concern over work done to-date. Both organizations have expressed concern over the slow pace of restoration to the house and have expressed the belief that Mr. Betts should not build anything new until he has completed the restoration of the house.

Staff Thoughts: Staff also has concerns about how long the restoration of the house is taking. However, we recognize that the statute does not expressly grant IHPC the authority to decide the phasing or speed of projects. We also know that many of the finest restorations in IHPC districts were undertaken by urban pioneers who spent many years to complete the job. Because of Indiana Landmarks' covenant, that organization has a different legal relationship with the owner and may have more discretion in basing its approval decisions on past performance.

Because there is a private covenant between the owner and Indiana Landmarks, Mr. Betts must also get Indiana Landmarks approval. Although it rarely happens, there is nothing wrong with a situation where the IHPC finds that a specific request complies with IHPC's design guidelines and warrants a COA, but Indiana Landmarks chooses, for its own reasons, to not let the owner undertake the work.

STAFF RECOMMENDED MOTIONS

CASE #2010-COA-139 Part B (WP):

To approve a Certificate of Appropriateness to build a rear porte-cochere; all per submitted documentation and subject to the following stipulations:

- 1. Porte-cochere must be field-staked, with no offsets, and reviewed by IHPC staff prior to commencement of work. Approved: _____ Date: _____**
- 2. Final construction drawings must be submitted to IHPC staff for final approval. Approved _____ Date _____**
- 3. No changes to the proposed design, location, configuration, or method of installation are permitted without prior consultation with IHPC staff.**

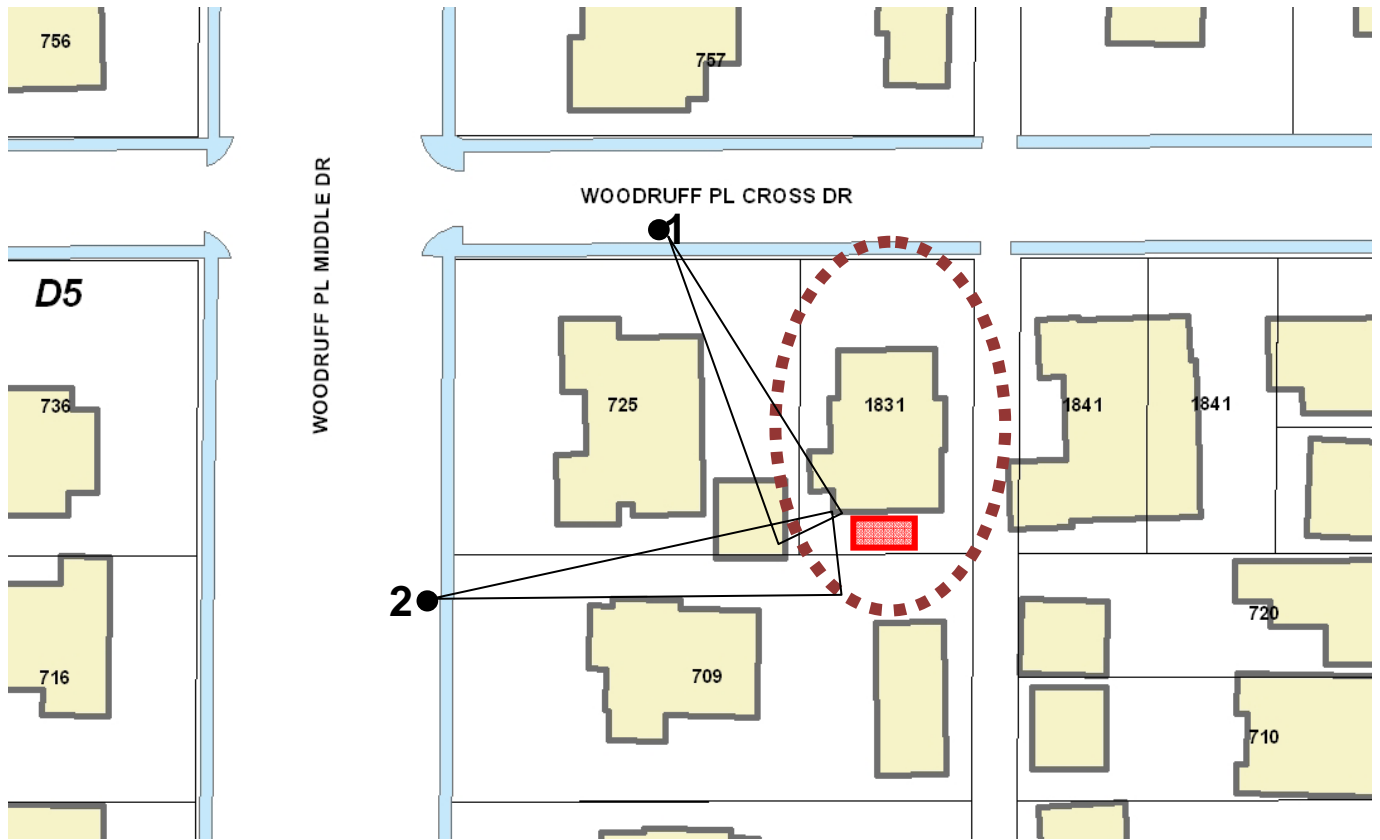
Note 3: Approval of this COA has no effect on the private covenant between the property owner and Indiana Landmarks, which should be contacted before beginning work .

Note 2: Stipulation #1 and #2 must be satisfied prior to issuance of any building permits.

Staff Reviewer: Meg Purnsley



Photo taken c.1900 showing east side of house before a house was built next door. Note the edge of the rear porch (now gone).



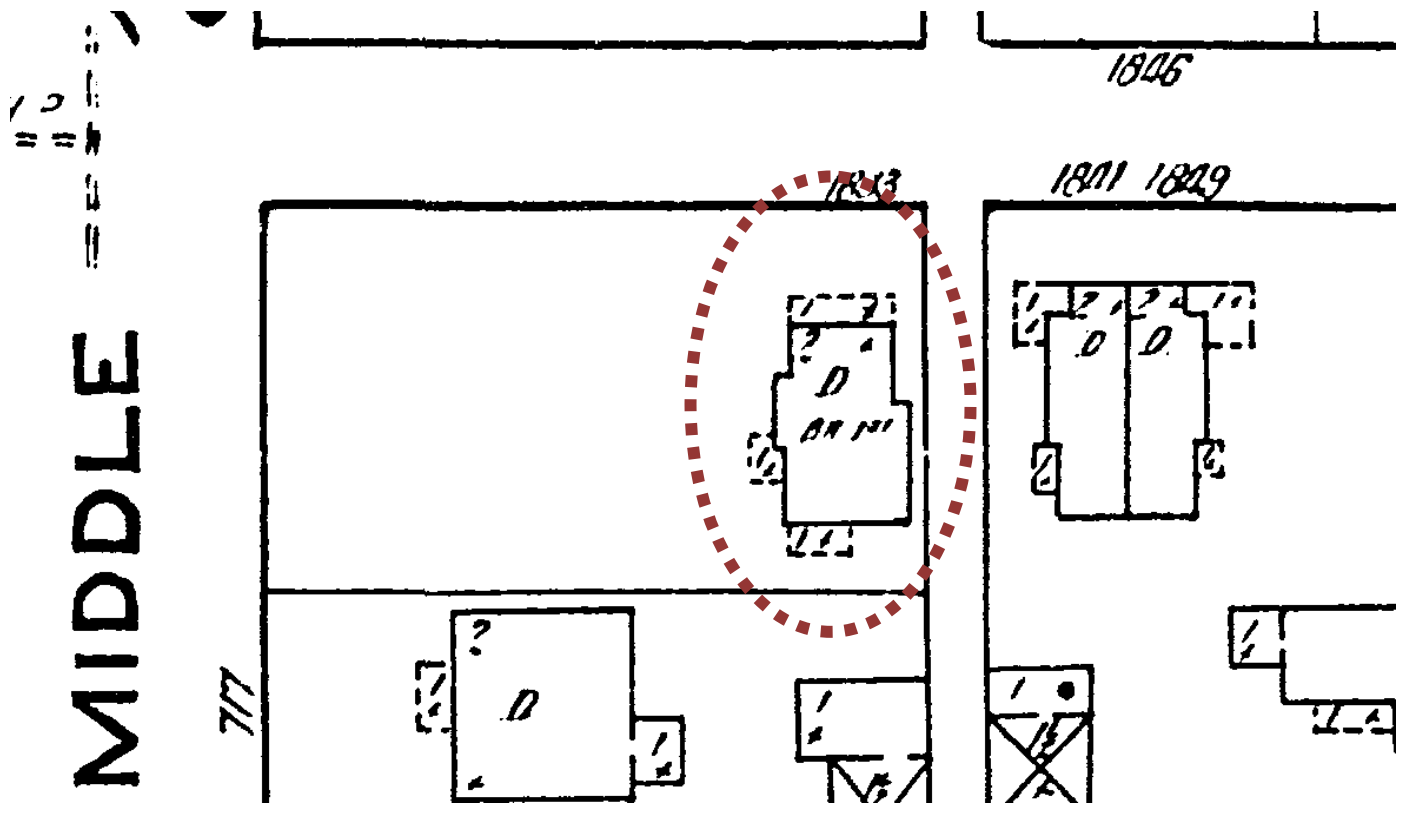
Map of subject property showing the extremely limited view of the proposed Porte-Cochere



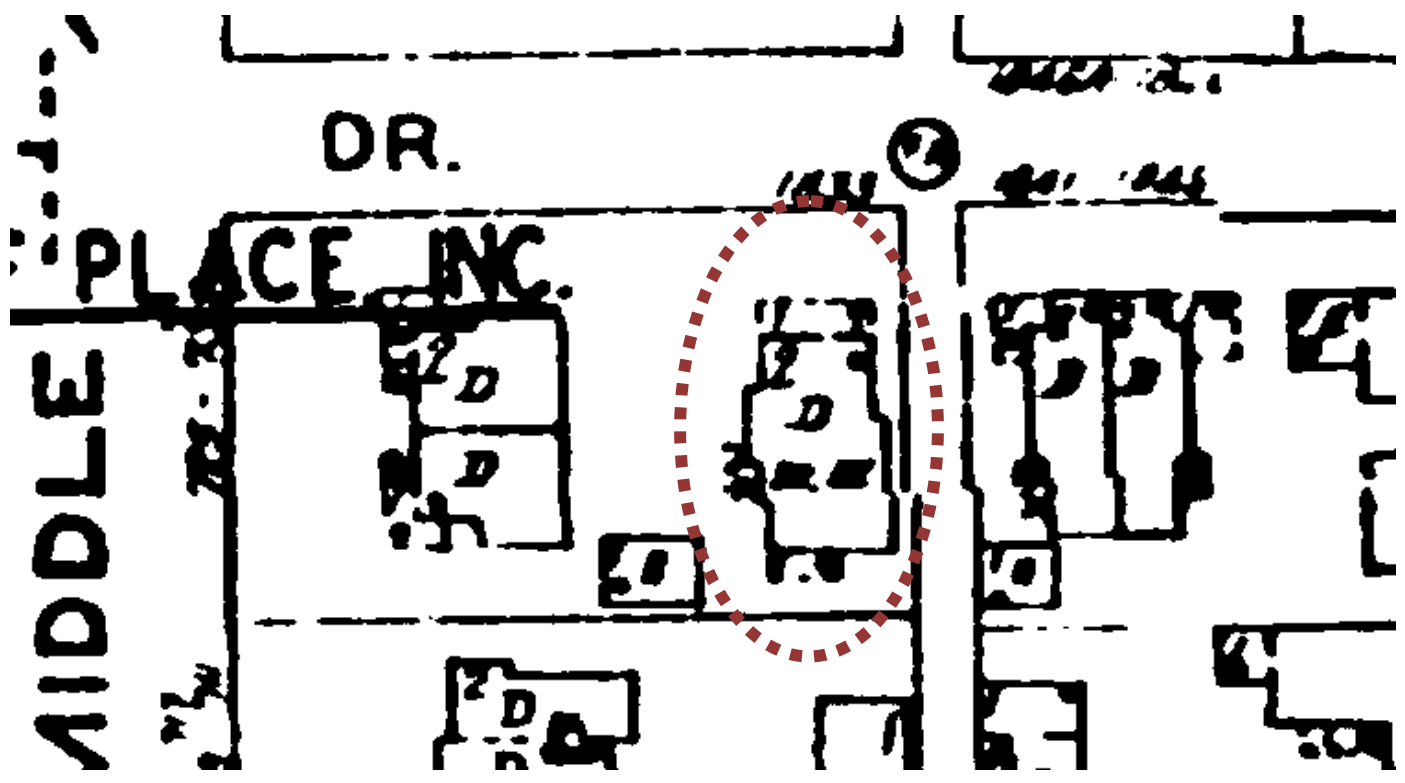
Photo #1



Photo #2



1915 Sanborn Map



1956 Sanborn Map



View of the property seen from the east



View of the property seen from the south



Front view of house

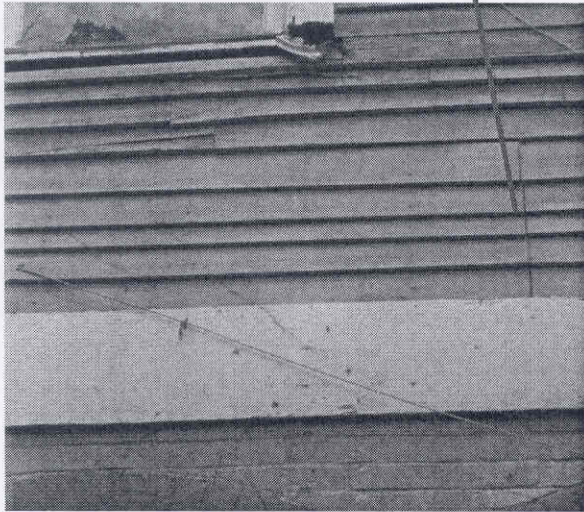
Photo of scissor-lift





Rear of house and rear yard where porte-cochere is to be located

View From South showing Location of Proposed Porte Cochere Attachment to House



2nd Floor, South Side (Modern ~20 yr old, Improperly Spaced Lapboards - bottom 5 laps)

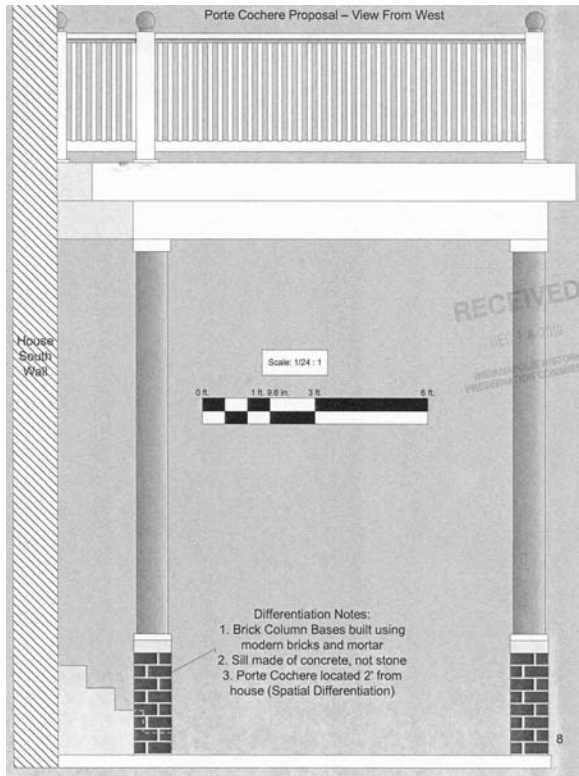
Porte Cochere Attachment Dimensions,
Location

Porte Cochere Attachment Width: 14'0"
Porte Cochere Attachment Height: 12"
Attachment Distance from W End: 6'0"
Attachment Distance from E End: 12'9"

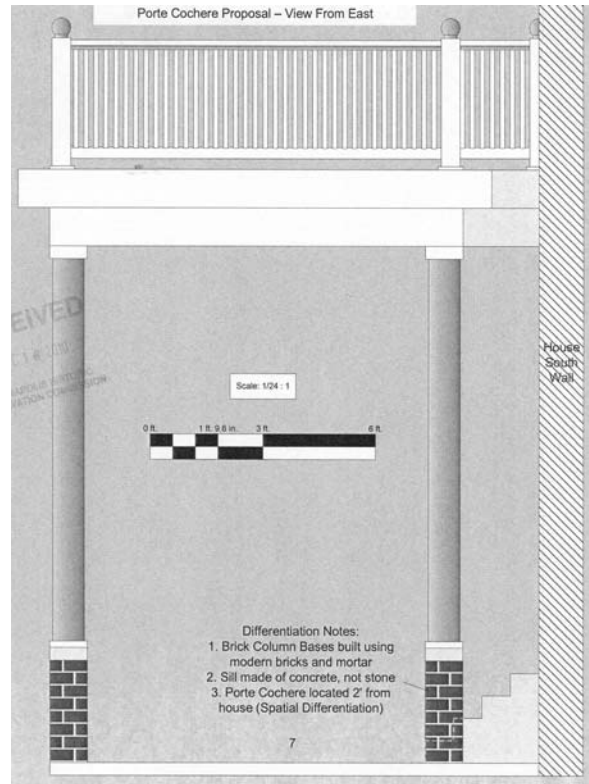
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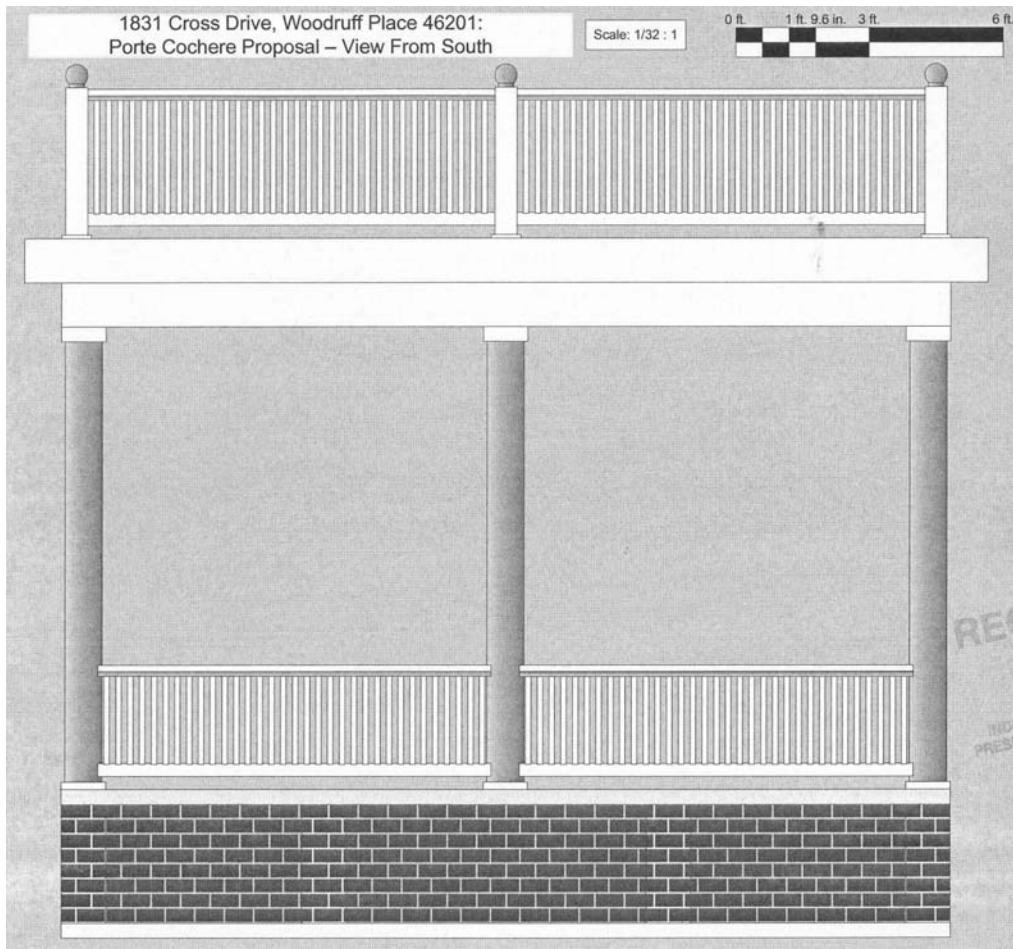
INDIANAPOLIS HISTORIC
PRESERVATION COMMISSION



West Side Elevation



East Side Elevation



South Elevation