

STAFF REPORT: 06/14/2023 MEETING

PREPARED BY: B. BUCKLEY

APPLICATION NUMBER: 23-8400

ADDRESS: 535 ARDEN PARK

HISTORIC DISTRICT: ARDEN PARK-EAST BOSTON HISTORIC DISTRICT

APPLICANT: DAVID MCCALL

PROPERTY OWNER: DAVID MCCALL

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 05/02/2023

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 05/31/2023

SCOPE: *INSTALL ALUMINUM CLAD WOOD WINDOWS*, APPLY WINDOW TRIM

*Indicates work completed without HDC approval.

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The building located at 535 Arden Park Boulevard is a 2 ½-story dwelling that was constructed ca. 1922. The building is clad in dark brown brick and limestone. The asymmetrical façade includes multiple bays and projections with the front entrance located centrally on the elevation and articulated with a stone surround. The front door is accessed via an elevated porch. The cross-gable roof is covered in brown asphalt shingles features an eyebrow dormer on the front slope and an exterior brick chimney at the west end of the roof. Until recently, the building retained the majority of its historic wood windows (including many leaded-panel windows), however, the original windows were replaced with aluminum-clad wood windows without approval.



Figure 1: Current view of 535 Arden Park



Figure 2: View of 535 Arden Park ca. 1981. HDAB



Figure 3: View of the façade windows prior to replacement.



Figure 3: View of the façade windows after replacement.

PROPOSAL

The applicant is seeking approval for the existing windows that were installed without HDC approval. The applicant also proposes to apply wood trim to the exterior of the windows to better match the appearance of the original window aesthetic. The proposal includes the painting of the applied trim, and the limestone sills to match their condition before the windows were replaced.

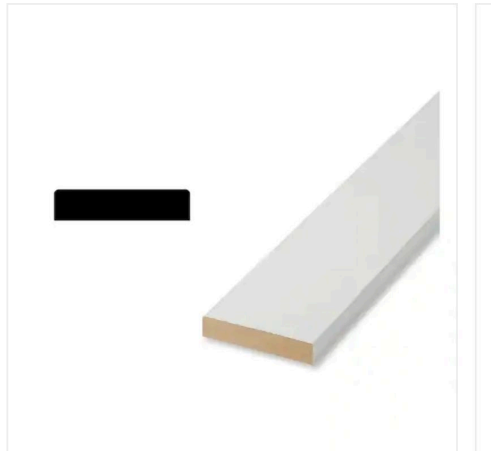


Figures 3,4: Photographs of the original windows (left), and extant replacement windows (right) on the side elevation of 535 Arden Park. The red arrow indicates the wood pieces the proposed project aims to replicate.

Woodgrain Millwork

Timeless Craftsman 25E2 1 1/16 in. x 2-1/2 in. x 96 in. Primed MDF Casing Moulding

★★★★★ (31) ✓



Figures 5: Example of the proposed trim material.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- HDC staff issued Certificates of Appropriateness for the removal of overgrown arborvitae bushes in the front yard and replacement front porch railings in October, 2022.
- Prior to the installation of the replacement windows, the windows on the building consisted of a mixture of original wood frame units with lead muntins (comes), as well as vinyl units installed without HDC review. The original windows were primarily double-hung units. The windows at the façade bay were surmounted by fixed transoms, which are not replicated by the replacement windows. The applicant estimated approximately half of the windows replaced were leaded glass units, while the remainder were vinyl.
- The current windows were produced by Pella and are in their Lifestyle series. They are double-hung, aluminum-clad wood units. The window grills consist of wood muntins applied to the exterior of the glass panes and are removable according to the information provided by the applicant. The extant grill pattern does not match the pattern of the original leaded comes.
- The applicant applied for approval of the existing (non-original) windows at the June, 2021 Historic District Commission meeting and received a denial for the following reasons;

“The replacement of windows as shown in the attached application, does not meet the defined elements of design for the historic district nor the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, especially 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 features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved; 6) Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence; 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.”

- The wood “trim” pieces visible in the pictures prior to the window replacement appear to be associated with a former storm window system and were not an integral part of the original windows.
- The gaps visible between the windows at the window banks are due not to a lack of window trim, but instead to the fact that the replacement windows are paired units, while the original configuration consisted of four individual units divided by mullions.

ISSUES

- It is staff’s opinion that the limestone windowsills were likely originally unpainted. Generally speaking, applying common house paint to stone is an inappropriate treatment that can lead to accelerated deterioration.
- The proposed applied trim does not remediate the window replacement previously deemed inappropriate by the Commission. The wood trim seen in the “before” photographs was part of a storm window installation, and not integral to the original windows.

RECOMMENDATION

Section 21-2-78, Determination of Historic District Commission

It is staff’s opinion the proposed project alters or obscures the features that characterize the property. Staff therefore recommends the Commission issue a denial for the work as proposed, because it does not meet the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation. Particularly standards 2, 5, 6, and 9.

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The proposed applied trim and painting of the window sills does not mitigate the inappropriate nature of the replacement windows.