

**STAFF REPORT:** 8/9/2023 REGULAR MEETING

**PREPARED BY:** D. RIEDEN

**APPLICATION NUMBER:** #23-8485

**VIOLATION NUMBERS:** #690, 745, 762

**ADDRESS:** 2405 BURNS

**HISTORIC DISTRICT:** INDIAN VILLAGE

**APPLICANT/ PROPERTY OWNER:** PAUL SHUERT

**DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION:** 7/19/2023

**DATES OF STAFF SITE VISITS:** 1/3/23, 5/24/23, 6/5/23, 6/9/23, 7/20/23, 8/2/23

**SCOPE:** REPLACE WINDOWS AND DOORS, REMOVE PAINT, REPAIR STUCCO AND EAVES (WORK COMPLETED WITHOUT APPROVAL)

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

Built in 1914, the property at 2405 Burns is a 2 1/2-story residence that faces southeast on East Vernor Highway, on the corner of Burns and Vernor. The cross-gabled roof has asphalt shingles with eaves extending over a bracketed eave and brick cladding. The south and west sides of the house each have brick chimneys, where the house is clad with formerly white painted brick detailing. The current owner has since removed the white paint from the brick and painted the trim of the house without approval, which is one of the subjects of this proposal. Double-hung windows are grouped in ribbons of 3 or more with 6 or 4 over 1 divided light. Many of the original wood windows have been replaced over time, some as far back as 1971, the time of designation. The current owner has since replaced most of the vinyl windows with wood windows without approval and is also included in this application. The covered front porch is supported by a brick column with cast stone banding. Cast stone details over the front door reveal the front door that was wood paneled door with a single set of 6 divided lights, that has been replaced by wood door with 3 picture windows. A herring-bone pattern of bricks from the front porch limestone steps leads you to the wrought iron gate at the front entrance to the yard. This fence runs around the corner of the public-facing lot, enclosing an open lawn and garden beds. The back yard is enclosed by a wood-panel fence.



*Site Photo 1, by Staff July 20, 2023: (Southeast) front elevation, showing vinyl windows from a previous owner and some wood windows.*



*Site Photo 2, by Staff July 20, 2023: (Northeast) side elevation, showing two fixed picture windows that replaced vinyl windows. These windows received a Denial from the previous application in June 2023. Vinyl windows on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor were installed by a former owner.*

This property has the following former HDC approvals and violation on Detroit Property Information System (DPI):

- Sept., 1993, HDC COA (Certificate of Appropriateness): Replace windows with same style color.
- Oct., 2000, HDC COA: Demolish garage. Construct 3 car garage, erect new fence, add screened porch, new driveway, add-on to porch roof.
- June 2002, HDC COA: Replace slate roof with asphalt shingles.
- Feb 2023, Violation: Replaced windows, installation of fence.

- May 2023, Violation: Removed paint from brick walls, painted trim, replaced front door.
- June 2023, HDC Denial: Replacement of windows with newly constructed fixed windows, installation of vinyl windows, replacement of the front door, removal of paint from brick walls
- June 2023, HDC COA: Replacement of vinyl windows with the house's original wood windows, repaint trim, installation of basement window well, tuckpointing brick walls and chimneys, rebuilding porch wingwalls, replacement of fences, relay brick walkway.
- August 2023, Violation: Replacement of gutters/downspouts



*Aerial 1 of Parcel # 17006633, by Detroit Parcel Viewer, showing front elevation facing E. Vernor Hwy.*



*Site Photo 3, by Google Streetview, July 2009: (Southeast) front elevation, showing original and vinyl windows (by previous owner), painted brick, and original front door.*



*Site Photo 4, by Google Streetview, July 2009: (Northeast) side elevation, showing original and vinyl windows (by previous owner), and painted brick.*





*Designation Image, 1980: (South) front-side elevation. (Full front elevation not available.)*



*Designation Image, 1980: (Northeast) side elevation.*

## **PROPOSAL**

The applicant has previously submitted this application at the Regular HDC Meeting in June 14, 2023 for the replacement of vinyl windows with wood windows, replacement of the front door, installation of a basement window well, front porch wingwalls rebuilt, removal of white paint from brick, repainting of house trim, tuckpointing of brick walls and chimneys, reinstallation of front brick walkway, and replacement of existing rear, wood privacy fence and front yard metal fence with a new ones of similar design. All work was completed without approval except for the front brick walkway and proposed replacement of the front yard fence. (work completed without approval). The Commission issued a COA for replacement of vinyl windows with wood windows (with conditions to provide a window schedule, documentation of the window restoration process, and photos of the original windows to HDC Staff for review before installation), installation of the window well, front porch wingwall rebuild, repainting the house trim, tuckpointing brick walls and chimneys, reinstallation of the front brick walkway, and replacement of the fences. The Commission issued a Denial for the replacement of windows with newly constructed fixed windows, installation of vinyl windows, replacement of the front door, and removal of paint from the brick walls. This previous application was denied by the Commission for the following reasons:

- The newly constructed windows at the front and side elevations of the house are not compatible with historic architecture in the house in that they:
  - introduce a new operation, configuration, design, and scale,
  - and destroy the distinctive, character-defining features of the relationship to the original remaining windows, particularly the muntins and ribbon series of windows of the house.
- Vinyl is not an appropriate material for windows in the Indian Village Historic District.
- The application does not include photo documentation that the front door replaced without approval was deteriorated beyond repair to an extent that merited its replacement.
- The newly constructed front door replaced the wood paneling by introducing glazing that is not in scale with the house, thereby destroying the relationship between the door and windows which shared the same scale and configuration of divided light, which are historic character defining features of the building.
- Signs of abrasion and potential harm to the brick may be apparent and require further investigation.

The current proposal consists of the following work (see also window schedule and submitted materials online):

- Replace front elevation casement vinyl windows, which were previously denied, with wood, 2/1 divided light casement reconstructed windows.

- Replacement of all other vinyl windows, which do not have original wood windows previously in storage, with newly constructed wood, double-hung windows with divided lite upper sash.
- Replacement of two (2) steel doors, located at the front elevation screened-in porch and rear elevation door, with newly constructed, custom wood doors.
- Repair of stucco siding and wood fascia/soffits as needed with in-kind materials and matching existing detailing. Paint surface of stucco and wood with matching trim color, Sherwood Williams Emerald, upon completion of repair.
- Replacement of gutters and downspouts, work started without approval.
- Removal of paint without approval, which was previously denied, but there is new evidence provided by the applicant for the Commission's consideration.

#### REPLACEMENT OF WINDOWS AND DOORS (SOME WORK COMPLETED WITHOUT APPROVAL)

The applicant states that he found original windows in storage in the garage and attic that were once replaced with vinyl windows by a previous owner. Some of the windows have already been restored and replaced. This was previously approved by the Commission. The remaining vinyl windows were denied by the Commission to remain as requested in the previous application. This application includes the replacement of vinyl windows with newly constructed wood windows per the attached window schedule. This application excludes the picture windows on the east elevation, which were previously denied by the Commission. While most windows on the side and rear elevation will be double-hung windows with divided lights, some windows on the first floor consist of casement windows, with a proposed 2/1 configuration.

The applicant also proposes to replace the front elevation, enclosed porch door (not to be confused with the front entrance door), with a newly constructed wood door with glass, and a rear steel door with a wood door. The proposed newly constructed doors are described as custom built, white oak, mortise and tenon constructed doors with tempered glass. The applicant states that these newly constructed doors have the same thickness as the original but now have 3 window openings. The front entrance door, which was in the previous application and of similar design, was denied by the Commission, and is not included in this application.

#### REPAIR OF STUCCO SIDING, FASCIA AND SOFFITS AND REPLACEMENT OF GUTTERS AND DOWNSPOUTS (WORK STARTED WITHOUT APPROVAL)

The applicant has begun work on repair of the stucco siding, fascia and soffits around the house. The proposal is to continue this work as needed with replacement of materials where needed. Wood soffits and fascia would consist of replacement only where wood is rotted with wood, with care to recreate the detailing of the existing soffits and fascia. Paint would be applied to match existing paint on repaired surfaces. The applicant provided the following description of this repair process, delineating a special treatment for the west elevation fascia:

*“Stucco will be scraped of old paint. Cracking will be gently channeled and repaired with Amerimix AMX 700 SBF pre-blended stucco. Stucco wall will be primed with Sherwin Williams - Loxon Concrete and Masonry Primer and painted with Sherwin Williams -Resilience low luster.*

*Rotted fascia to be replaced with dimensionally milled white oak as it is rot resistant, as well as the smaller dimensional trim “transition trim” between fascia and soffit. That smaller trim sits both horizontally below and vertically on the edge and tucks under chimney flashing. As stated milled of solid white oak, back primed with linseed-based oil- primer, caulked and puttied where required and top coated 2x by brush with S.W. Emerald low-luster.*

***Rotted fascia at far west elevation:*** *This section of fascia was poorly repaired and failed. The replacement board was removed. NHR+D will cut back the low hanging flashing that will no longer be covered by K style gutters as 1/2 rounds are being installed to match the gutters on the Vernor/ Burns elevations. We will make a vertical cut horizontally (With track saw) straight above*

*the bottom edge of 1/2 round gutter, mill a solid spline of southern yellow pine dimensionally to match what's there and glue/ domino the two together. Again, all raw wood is oil back primed by hand/ brush, two top coats applied by hand after a light sanding to knock down grain. Gutter installers will install any additional flashing needed to cover horizontal seam and it will be in bronze tone to match gutter color."*

Replacement of gutters and downspouts has already started without approval. The applicant proposes to replace all gutters and downspouts. Staff has not yet received the requested materials to show the details for this work at the time of this report.

#### **REMOVAL OF PAINT FROM BRICK (WORK COMPLETED WITHOUT APPROVAL)**

The applicant removed all paint from the brick surface of the house and repainted all trim. The applicant has received a COA for painting trim but received a Denial from the Commission regarding removal of the paint based on the concern that the applicant had not provided sufficient evidence of the work's effect on the surface of the brick walls in the previous application. In this proposal, the applicant provided a letter from Mr. Mike Olsen of Grunwell-Cashero, dated July 26, 2023 regarding the conditions of the brick and mortar stating the following:

*"The existing paint was removed to expose the mortar joints so the house could be 100% tuckpointed to help stop water infiltration. Also, ideally brick masonry is left uncoated with its natural properties as originally constructed and designed. I have visited the site in question and do not believe that there has been any harm or damage to the existing brick caused from removing the paint as stated in the notice..."*

The applicant further clarified that the owner and a companion removed the paint themselves using power washing with only water; no abrasives, no chemicals, nor other particulates were used during the process. The mortar used for tuckpointing was a mix (color PL-05) to match existing mortar and this work was completed by Grunwell-Cashero.

The applicant intends to leave the brick unpainted in this proposal, spot-treating a few remaining areas with further removal of paint from the brick walls and stone sill details around the house.

#### **STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH**

- Indian Village Historic District was established in 1970. Its Elements of Design (Sec. 21-2-103) provide the following guidance:
  - *"Proportion of openings within the façade. Window openings are virtually always taller than wide; several windows are sometimes grouped into a combination wider than tall. Window openings are always subdivided, the most common window type being guillotine sash, whose area are generally further subdivided by muntins."*
  - *"Relationship of colors. Natural brick colors (red, yellow, brown, buff) predominate in wall surfaces. Natural stone colors also exist. Where stucco or concrete exists, it is usually left in its natural state, or painted in a shade of cream... Paint colors often relate to style."*
  - *"Scale of façade and façade elements... Window sashes are usually subdivided by muntins, which affect the apparent scale of the windows within the façades."*

## REPLACEMENT OF WINDOWS AND DOORS (SOME WORK COMPLETED WITHOUT APPROVAL)

- From the designation photos and from Google Streetview images, it is staff's observation that the original windows were wood, double-hung with a 6/1 or 4/1 configuration. It is staff's opinion that these original wood windows, their double-hung operation, and their 4/1 or 6/1 configurations are distinctive character-defining features. Some of them remain, others have been replaced with vinyl by a previous owner.
- The designation slides of both 1975 and 1980 show that the Southeast and Northeast elevations had some windows replaced, particularly on the first floor. It is not clear their material, but they have been since replaced with vinyl windows, which was done before 2009. (See site photos 3 & 4).
- Summarizing the window schedule, staff observed that there are 15 windows that are original wood windows, some are in place, some are original windows that were found in storage. All of these original windows have received a previous COA for repair and replacement of vinyl windows. The remaining windows 34 windows are all reconstructed new wood windows, two of which, as stated above, are not in this application. These two windows are the east elevation picture windows, which the applicant stated will be redesigned and returned to the Commission for review. Staff observed that these newly constructed windows, except for the previously denied picture windows, match the existing operation, design, and material of what would likely have been the original wood windows that were replaced by vinyl by a previous owner. It is staff's opinion that these newly constructed windows are appropriate.
- Staff observed that the applicant has matched the configuration of the historic windows with the exception of the front elevation casement windows: instead of a casement of 2x5 divided light, the applicant proposes to introduce 2/1 divided light per casement window on the first floor casement windows. These would be located on the first floor bay, and two windows have already been installed. (See figures 1-3, Site photo 5). These windows are currently vinyl, previously installed by a previous owner and were present at the time of historic designation. It is staff's opinion that the original configuration was more likely to resemble the 2x5 layout, but it is staff's opinion that the proposed 2/1 configuration is not demonstrably inappropriate.
- The existing doors for the front screened in porch and rear door were of steel or composite materials and are not historic doors. Staff observed that both doors are not publicly visible, as one is located inside a screen porch behind a privacy fence (front porch) and the other is at the rear elevation. It is staff's opinion that the proposed replacement doors are of a design and material that is appropriate. Although not publicly visible, it is staff's opinion that the exterior doors would be more appropriate as painted with a color selected from HDC Color System D, rather than natural stained wood. (See photo 6.)



Figure 1, by Applicant: (Northeast) side elevation, picture windows #3 and #6, and replaced vinyl window #7.



Figure 2, by Applicant: (Southeast) front elevation, showing existing vinyl windows #16.





Site Photo 5, by Staff June 5, 2023:  
(Northeast) side elevation, detail of window #7  
a newly constructed 2/1 wood window.

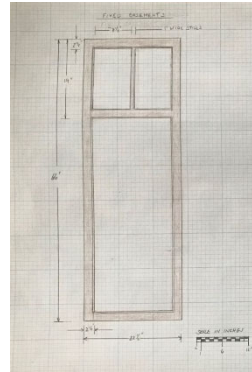


Figure 3, by Applicant:  
Proposed 2/1 casement  
window for front elevation  
bay.



Site Photo 6, by Applicant  
2023: (Southeast) front  
elevation, showing newly  
installed front door, which is  
not in this application but  
demonstrates the design of  
the other proposed doors.

### REPAIR OF STUCCO SIDING, FASCIA AND SOFFITS AND REPLACEMENT OF GUTTERS AND DOWNSPOUTS (WORK STARTED WITHOUT APPROVAL)

- Regarding the work for repair of the stucco, fascia and soffits, staff had the opportunity to see the work on site and described by the contractor as well as review of the proposal. The contractor verbally described that oak wood would replace wood rot locations, and the wood would be cut to size and design to match the detailing of the existing materials. This would then be painted to match existing trim. It is staff's opinion that this work is appropriate.
- From Google Streetview, staff observed that the downspouts and gutters have been previously replaced. The applicant notes that some downspout locations will be slightly changed by a few inches. Staff has not received the product sheets nor the requested a photos with locations of all work regarding the downspouts and gutters at the time of this report.
- It is staff's opinion that the architecture of the house would best use Color System D for fascia and soffit colors. The proposed color is appropriate, in staff's opinion.

### REMOVAL OF PAINT FROM BRICK (WORK COMPLETED WITHOUT APPROVAL)

- Staff observed that the brick still has a noticeable amount of paint remaining, giving the appearance of a washed rather than a natural brick color look.
- Upon receipt and review of the Grunwell-Cashero letter supplied by the applicant, several staff members visited the site to inspect the brick. Staff observed that the brick exhibits minor and sporadic areas of loss at the surface of the brick that was likely caused by the power washing. Staff observed that because the house was already painted at the time of designation, a repainting of the brick with an appropriate paint would likely have been the most historically appropriate approach. However, it is staff's opinion that the removal of paint did not cause significant



Site Photo 7, by Staff, August 2, 2023:  
(west) side elevation, showing paint  
removal work.

damage and any further removal of the remaining paint should be follow National Park Service Preservation Brief #1 “Assessing Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings” and use the gentlest means possible. Staff would not advise re-painting the brick, as it may lead to accelerated deterioration, particularly in the areas where the brick fire skin was lost. Therefore, staff would support the proposal to leave the house unpainted.

## ISSUES

- Some of the work in this application was completed or started without Historic District Commission (HDC) approval.
- Although the front elevation bay windows were most likely to have a 2x5 configuration of divided light per casement, it is staff’s opinion that the proposed 2/1 configuration is not demonstrably inappropriate and meets the Standards and Elements of Design for Indian Village.
- Although the two proposed replacement doors would not be publicly visible, it is staff’s opinion that the exterior of the doors should be painted rather than stained. An appropriate color could be selected from Color System D.
- Staff recommends that any further spot treatment for paint removal follow National Park Service Preservation Brief #1 “*Assessing Cleaning and Water-Repellent Treatments for Historic Masonry Buildings*” and use the gentlest means possible.
- Staff has not received detailed information regarding the work for the gutters and downspouts as requested at the time of this report.
- Staff have no issues with the remaining work of the proposal.

## RECOMMENDATION

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

#### Replace Windows And Doors, Remove Paint, Repair Stucco And Eaves (Work Completed Without Approval)

It is staff’s opinion that the proposed work is appropriate. Staff therefore recommends the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as proposed because it meets the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation and the Indian Village Historic District Elements of Design.

*Staff recommends the COA be issued with following conditions:*

- The applicant provides staff with a paint color for the exterior doors from HDC Color System D.
- The applicant provides staff with detailed information regarding the work for the gutters and downspouts.
- The applicant provides HDC staff with a review of the above items before installation.