

**STAFF REPORT: SEPTEMBER 13, 2023 MEETING**

**PREPARED BY: A. DYE**

**APPLICATION NUMBER: 21-7584**

**ADDRESS: 1315 BROADWAY**

**HISTORIC DISTRICT: BROADWAY AVENUE**

**APPLICANT: CORISSA LEVEILLE, AMY BAKER ARCHITECT**

**PROPERTY OWNER: ROCKY LALA, MAP BROADWAY, LLC**

**DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: AUGUST 21, 2023**

**DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: SEPTEMBER 7, 2023**

**SCOPE: REVISION TO PREVIOUSLY APPROVED DESIGN**

### **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The architectural description is taken from the November 14, 2018 staff report:

Erected in 1912, the building at 1315 Broadway is a 4-story, masonry commercial building which is located within the Broadway Avenue Historic District. Smith, Hinchman & Grylls served as the building's architect, 1912 (Detroit building permit #69, Jan. 15, 1912). This terra cotta clad building began its life as a two-story building in 1912 and grew to four stories in 1915 (alteration permit 2002-A, March 5, 1915). The storefronts were remodeled in 1927 (Alt. permit #13562-A, 10/1/1927). The first story, front elevation displays a metal storefront which is topped with a decorative metal transom. Each floor at stories 2-4 displays a broad horizontal ribbon of wood windows, each of which consists of a large single pane pivoting unit which is topped with a fixed transom. Windows at the rear elevation are wood 1/1 units, as per the applicant. A metal fire escape is also located at the rear elevation. The flat roof includes a number of skylights and displays a low gabled parapet with central raised pedestal crown/1 wood units.



*Staff photo, September 7, 2023.*

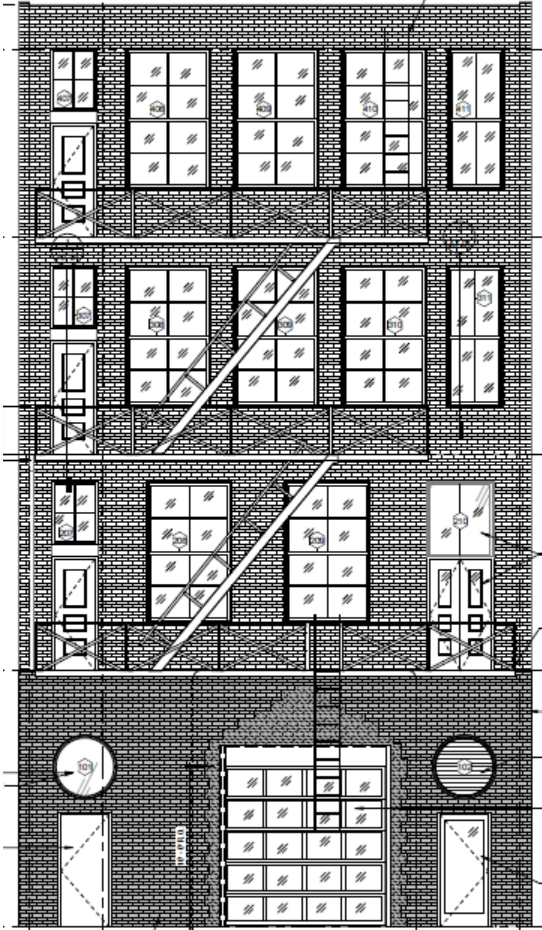
### **PROPOSAL**

Replace all rear, alley-facing steel windows with new aluminum replacement windows.

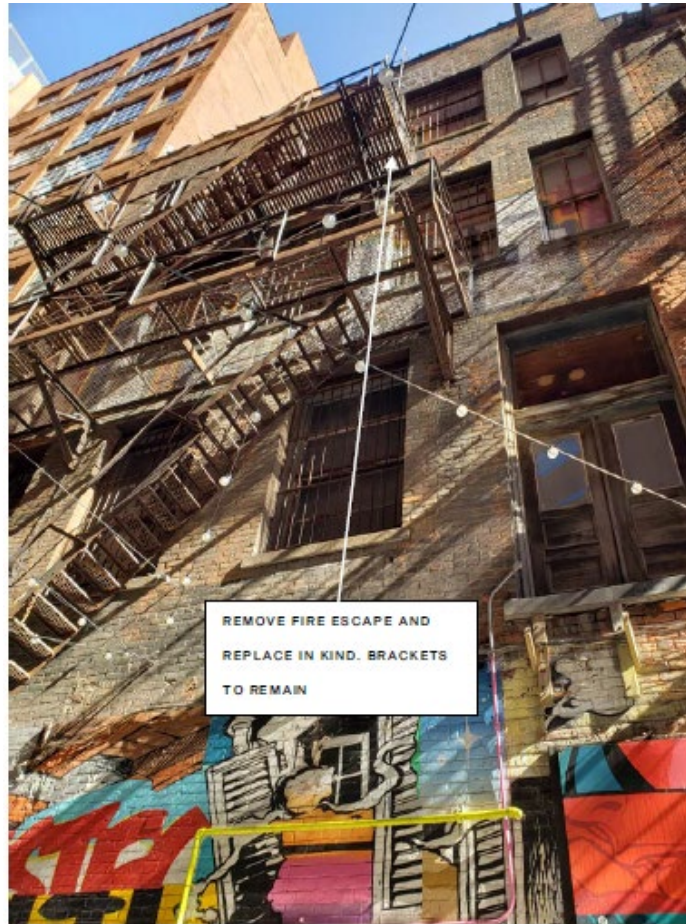
### **STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH**

- The Broadway Avenue Historic District was established on August 28, 2005.
- The Commission reviewed the full rehabilitation of this building at its November 2021 meeting. The 2021 scope of work included the restoration of the alley window frames and the replacement of the translucent wire glass with new fire rated and safety/impact rated clear glass.

- The current application is for the replacement of the alley windows; no additional revised scopes of work from the 2021 rehabilitation project are included in this review.



*Applicant drawing.*



*Applicant photo from 2021 application.*

- It is staff's opinion the existing steel windows are character-defining features due to the operation, materiality, dimensionality, and pattern of window openings.

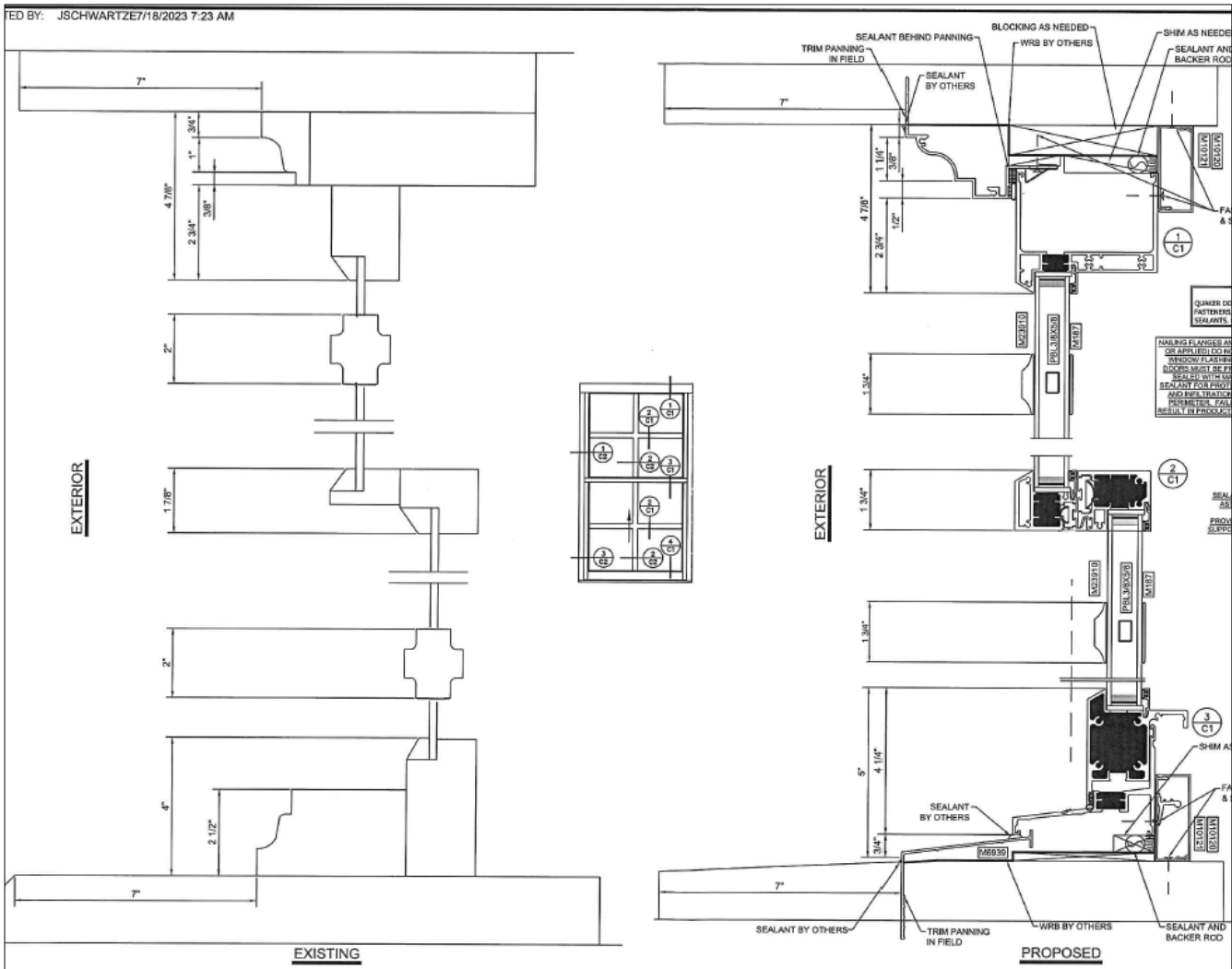


*Applicant photos from 2021 application.*

**ISSUES**

- In the 2021 application, Artisan Renovations concluded the steel frames and sash were in good condition and should be restored. In August 2023, Blackberry determined that the overall condition of the windows is poor. Only two exterior photos were submitted in Blackberry's report, so it is staff's opinion there is insufficient physical and visual documentation to substantiate the claim that the windows can't be adequately repaired.

- As replacement window product information and sections of the existing and proposed units were submitted, staff conducted an analysis of the selected Quaker single-hung aluminum unit. *Please note: The condition and repairability of the existing windows remains in question. This window should only be considered once the Commission determines the existing windows are beyond repair.*
  - TOP RAIL - The combined height of the top rail and trim of the new window is identical to the existing windows, and the profile for the new trim is very similar to the existing trim.
  - MUNTIN BAR – Depth: The new muntin bars are about 1/2” shallower than the existing muntin bars (existing: 3/4” deep – new: 1/4” deep). Height: The new muntin bars are 1/4” shorter than the existing (existing: 2” high – new: 1-3/4” high).
  - MEETING RAIL – The meeting rail height of the existing and proposed windows are similar with only 1/8” difference (existing: 1-7/8” high – new: 1-3/4” high).
  - BOTTOM RAIL - The bottom rail of the new window is 1” taller than existing (existing: 4” high – new: 5” high), and the profile is drastically different.
  - FEATURES THAT SHOULD BE MATCHED - An important consideration is the visibility of the windows to determine which components are most important to be matched. These windows are for a commercial building and will be installed in floors 2, 3 and 4; therefore, the top rails/trim and meeting rails will be fairly visible at the second floor, and less visible at floors 3 and 4. The muntin bars will be minimally visible at each floor and the bottom rails will not be visible at all.
  - STAFF DETERMINATION – Based on the above analysis, it is staff’s opinion the proposed window is a close match to the existing windows.



## RECOMMENDATION

Staff finds that the proposal for the replacement of the historic steel windows at the alley elevation does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the following reasons:

- The steel windows are a distinctive character-defining feature.
  - They identify the building as an early 20<sup>th</sup> century commercial structure,
  - The steel's materiality, dimensionality, and finish, as well as the windows' double-hung operation, are important architectural components of the window openings.
  - The manufacturing limitations of replacement windows in materials other than steel will not match all of the components of the existing historic windows.
  - The steel frames offer contrast of color to the doors and brick, as well as strong visibility due to the dimensions, depth, and profile of the historic window components.
- The 2023 window analysis did not include sufficient physical and visual documentation to substantiate the claim that the windows can't be adequately repaired, while a 2021 analysis stated the windows were in good, repairable condition.

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the work as proposed, as it does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, specifically Standards 1, 2, 5, and 6:

*1. A property shall be used for its historic purpose or be placed in a new use that requires minimal change to the defining characteristics of the building and its site and environment.*

*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.*