

STAFF REPORT: MAY 10, 2024 MEETING
APPLICATION NUMBER: HDC2024-00170
ADDRESS: 4428 SECOND AVENUE

PREPARED BY: A. DYE

HISTORIC DISTRICT: WILLIS SELDEN LOCAL
APPLICANT: MARC GRASSI, PUSH DESIGN
PROPERTY OWNER: SCOTT LOWELL, LOWELL CONSTRUCTION MANAGEMENT
DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: APRIL 15, 2024
DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: APRIL 19, 2024

SCOPE: REPLACE WINDOWS, INSTALL FIBER CEMENT SIDING AT REAR

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The 2-1/2 story dwelling, at 4428 Second, sits high on the lot due to a raised basement. Orange-red brick with narrow, recessed mortar joints, face the four sides of the structure. Window sills are rough cut stone, and continuous sills connect the three windows in the façade’s second and first floor bays, and the stone extends at the first floor to the front porch. Brick laid in a sawtooth pattern below the stone bands adds a small but highly dimensional detail. The cornice, which wraps the front and side walls, is comprised of a decorative horizontal brick diamond pattern spanning the area between the second-floor windows and the roof and is topped with small brackets under the eaves. A raised, wood-framed two-story front porch is at the northwest corner of the house. The pilaster at the house wall is a fluted tapered design with a decorative base and minimally adorned capital, while the narrower outer corner supporting box columns are not tapered and have slightly different bases and capitals, suggesting compatible repairs have been made to the porches. A wide, low walled hipped roof dormer, with four mulled windows, breaks up the expanse of the steeply pitched reverse gable roof. Slate shingles cover the roof, dormer walls and upper porch half-walls.



Façade, west-facing wall. Staff photo, April 19, 2024.

The front door is a historic age full glass wood door.

The south-side wall has window openings and masonry details similar to the façade. The steep roof line of the back side of the gable intersects a steeply pitched mansard roof which extends the depth of the building. An oriel window is centrally located at the first floor. The window is covered by a rounded metal standing seam roof, and two small decorative brackets are below the window.



South-side elevation, staff photos



South-side elevation at rear.



East-rear elevation. A single-story masonry extension is visible. The rear wall of the main house is partially visible above the masonry extension.

The extension at the rear is recessed slightly from the rear corner of the brick wall and extends about half-way across the width of the rear wall. Aluminum siding wraps the walls and each of the large window openings held four windows (two windows at the second floor have been covered over).

The north-side wall and windows sills are minimally visible, and the windows are not visible.



North-side elevation, staff photo.

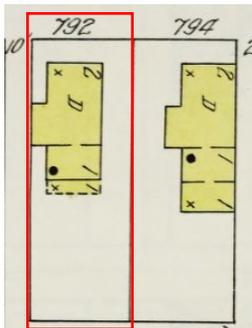
The dominant window sash material is wood, and most openings have one-over-one double-hung units. However, full glass casements and fixed windows, as well two-over-two narrow double-hung windows and larger decorative patterned windows appear on the side and rear walls. At the third floor of the south-side wall and all the floors of the rear extension, replacement one-over-one double-hung units are in place.

PROPOSAL

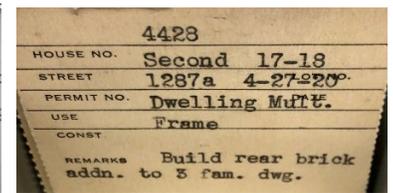
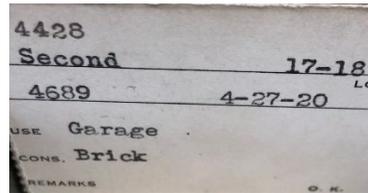
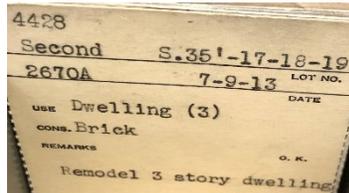
- Replace most of the windows, per the applicant's work schedule. Proposed replacement windows are [Marvin Ultimate G2 series](#), aluminum-clad wood insert windows. Existing wood brickmould to be retained.
- Replace aluminum siding at rear of house with Hardie Artisan Series 5/8" thick cementitious lap siding with 7" exposure and smooth finish. Existing wood trim at windows to remain.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

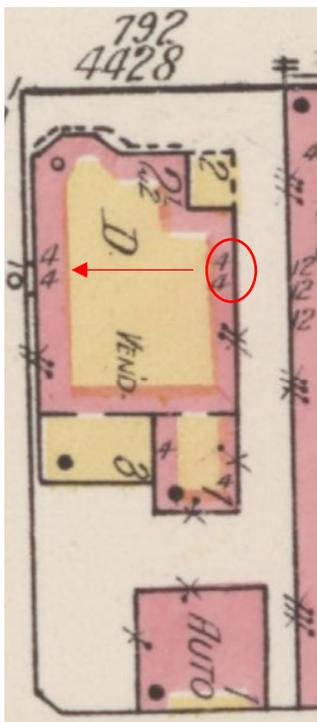
- The Willis Selden Local Historic District was enacted on October 11, 2011.
- According to the Sanborn maps, a wood-framed, two-story dwelling was in place by 1897.
- The permit cards on file show the dwelling was remodeled in 1913. In 1920, a masonry garage was erected, as was a one-story rear brick addition.



1897 Sanborn map

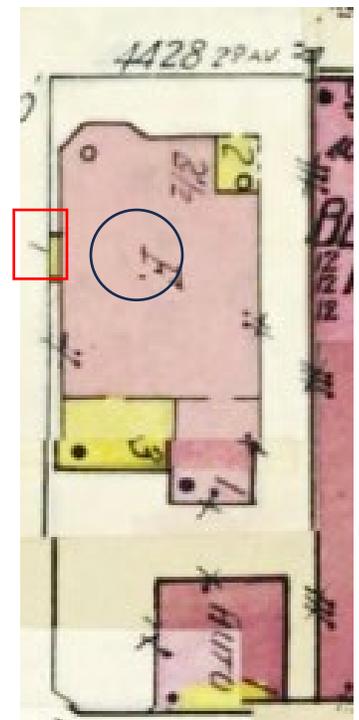


BSEED building permit cards



1921 Sanborn map

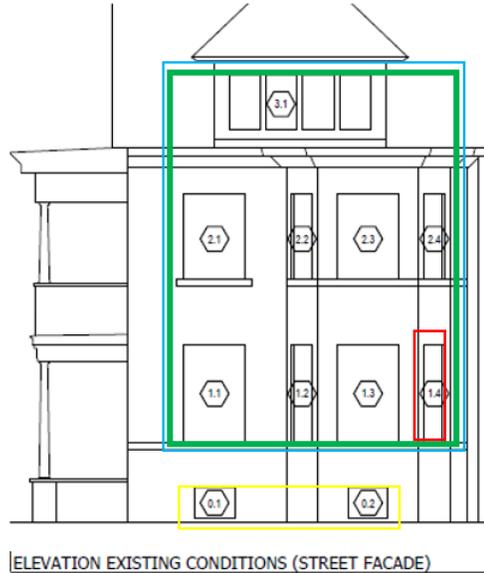
- Comparison of the 1897 and 1921 Sanborn maps illustrates what the 1913 permit card briefly explains, the structure was remodeled for use as a 3-unit dwelling. The roofing material changed (open circle means metal/slate/tile, closed circle means composite), the footprint of the structure was enlarged, the structure was veneered in brick (the “4” indicates the thickness of the first and second floor walls), at the front elevation a bay window and a wood-framed two-story open porch were added, at the side elevation an oriel window was added, and at the rear elevation a covered (with composite roof) wood-framed three-story porch was added. Staff also located two permits issued in 1920 - one for the one-story brick extension at the back of the building, and one for the one-story brick garage; both of which were covered with composite roofs and remain in situ.
- The 1950 Sanborn map identifies the structure as a flat “F”, rather than dwelling “D”. The oriel window at the south wall is more visibly identified – the number “1” states the window is at the first floor. The previously front porch is now covered with a metal roof.



1950 Sanborn map

- A repair estimate, provided by a company experienced in wood window repair, was not submitted as part of the application. The applicant stated *“The only third-party opinion we trust is Blackberry but it has been difficult, understandably, to get a report from them. Many of the original, historic double-hung windows would need a new bottom rail at the lower sash and a new meeting rail at upper sash or side rail. It would be helpful to understand the threshold between repair and replacement to better document the existing conditions. The reason for replacing entire rails is because many of these windows have been repaired previously at the meeting rails and bottom rail of lower sashes. They were repaired with wood dutchman patches or mortised pieces. Over time these patches have deteriorated as well as the original rails. The previous repairs did not leave much solid wood left at many joints to repair them. We do not think splicing the sash rails further would provide the most stable condition for these windows. With the need to add new material or entire sashes, the owner would prefer a historic-looking replacement.”*

- In order to understand the existing window conditions and proposed changes, staff marked up the applicant's elevations to identify which windows the applicant proposes for retention and replacement, as well as staff recommendation on the retention/repair and replacement, of the existing windows. Following the staff report is the window-by-window breakdown created for the window assessment.



ELEVATION EXISTING CONDITIONS (STREET FACADE) ...

Applicant will retain the wood basement windows.

Applicant proposes to replace remaining wood windows on facade.

Staff determines the windows on the facade to be character-defining features and appear to be repairable. Notable exception is window 1.4 – staff recommends a new wood window be built for this opening.

KEY

Windows to Remain - Applicant
 □ Windows applicant proposes to retain

Replacement - Applicant
 □ Windows to be replaced

Windows to Repair – Staff
 □ Windows that appear to be intact and repairable (exceptions are 1.4 (severely deteriorated) and middle opening of 1.7 (missing) – new wood windows should be fabricated for openings)



SOUTH ELEVATION EXISTING CONDITIONS

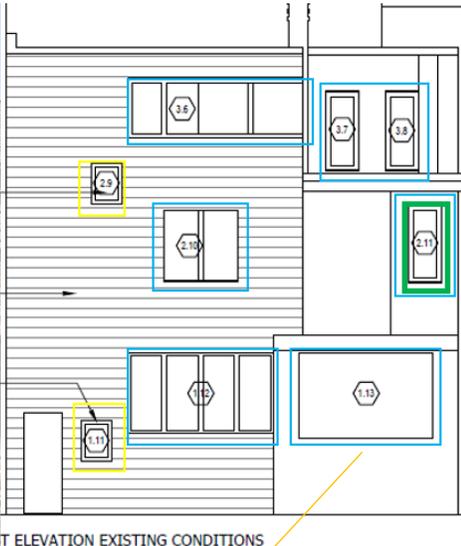
Applicant will retain the wood basement windows, as well as the single windows in the rear enclosure.

Applicant proposes to replace remaining windows on side wall.

Staff determines the wood windows on the first and second floor are character-defining features. Based on applicant photos, the windows are intact and most appear to have solid, repairable frames. Notable exception is the middle window of opening 1.7 – staff recommends a new wood window be built for this opening.

Staff confirmed the windows at the third floor are contemporary replacement units and can be replaced, per the applicant's proposal.





REAR ELEVATION EXISTING CONDITIONS

Applicant will retain the single wood windows at the three-story extension.

Applicant proposes to replace remaining windows on both rear walls.

The window units within the grouped window openings at the rear extension are not historic age, some are vinyl replacement units and opening 1.13 doesn't have any windows. Staff agrees replacement units can be installed at these locations.

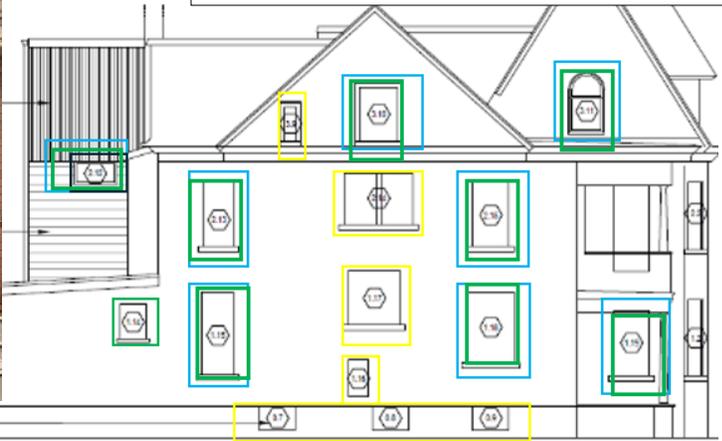
The remaining three wood windows on the masonry wall of the house are historic age. Window 2.11 is intact and repairable. Window 3.7 has additional deterioration due to exposure from an a/c unit. Due to the rear and recessed location of these openings, and their location in the roof (meaning the windows aren't deeply recessed within their openings) and minimal dimensional change of the proposed replacement units, staff feels that the proposed replacement units in this location, meets the criteria of the National Park Service document [Replacement Windows that meet the Standards](#).

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ISSUES

- Without a repair estimate, staff and the Commission must use the submitted photographs to assess the condition and reparability of the existing windows. The applicant supplied interior and exterior photographs of the majority of the windows, as well as measured drawings of each opening to compare the dimensional changes of the existing and proposed windows. It is staff's opinion that with the exception of four windows, the historic windows appear to be in repairable condition and therefore the replacement proposal doesn't meet *Standard Six*. The Commission, however, may take additional circumstances into consideration when making its decision.
- The placement of windows within the openings is an equally important visual component to consider. This house has thick brick walls and the windows are recessed within the windows openings; and a few windows are exceptionally deeply recessed. Should the Commission consider replacement products for window openings with recessed windows, dimension of the setbacks must be documented and a drawing confirming the setback dimension for the new windows must be submitted for staff review.



The recessed windows are an additional detail to the architectural composition of the house.

- It is staff's opinion that the wood windows, due to their deep setting within the openings, and exceptionally detailed brickmold, are distinctive character-defining features of this property.
- Standard Six states, *“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.”*
- The windows on the dwelling are distinctive character-defining features.
- Written estimate or testimonials from window repair companies confirming the existing windows are deteriorated beyond repair were not submitted.



RECOMMENDATION

Denial – Window replacement of historic wood windows (with exception of windows 3.7 and 3.8)

Staff finds that the proposal for the replacement of the historic windows will alter the features of the property and does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the following reasons:

- The wood windows, due to their thin sash profiles and deep setting within the openings, are distinctive character-defining features of this property.
- Standard Six states, "*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.*"
- Written estimate or testimonials from window repair companies confirming the existing windows are deteriorated beyond repair were not submitted.

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 2, 5, and 6:

- 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.*

Recommendation Two: Certificate of Appropriateness

Staff finds that the remaining work items will not alter the features and spaces that characterize the property, and therefore recommends the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness as the work meets the Secretary of the Interior's Standards.

Staff recommends the Certificate of Appropriateness be issued with the following conditions:

- A window order confirming the details of the replacement windows and the locations that are approved will be submitted to staff for review.
- The exterior color scheme for the house will be submitted for staff review.