

**STAFF REPORT:** 07/10/2024 REGULAR MEETING

**PREPARED BY:** D. RIEDEN

**APPLICATION NUMBER:** HDC2024-00289

**VIOLATION NUMBER:** 916

**ADDRESS:** 627 W. CANFIELD

**HISTORIC DISTRICT:** WEST CANFIELD

**APPLICANTS/ PROPERTY OWNER:** PAUL AND MEREDITH STEIH HADDAD

**DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION:** 06/17/2024

**DATES OF STAFF SITE VISITS:** 06/26/2024

**SCOPE:** REPLACE WINDOWS, TUCKPOINT BRICK CLADDING (WORK COMPLETED WITHOUT APPROVAL)

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

Built in 1874, the property at 627 W. Canfield has a cross-gabled roof which features two large chimneys protruding from the top center and bracketed details under each gable. The house is clad in red brick with wood and stone detailing at the front elevation and arching brick and cast stone detailing over side elevation windows. While the front elevation windows are 1/1 double hung wood windows, the side elevation, especially the east facing elevation, features 2/2 and 1/1 double hung windows. The front entrance is recessed under a wrap-around porch roof, supported by wood columns and railing with panel detailing at the base of each post. The kitchen window location of this application, which is at the rear, east elevation, is not readily visible from the public front view of the house.



*Site Photo 1, by Staff June 26, 2024: (North) front elevation showing current conditions.*



*Image HDC hard files, 1973: (North) front elevation showing original windows.*

This property has the following Certificates of Appropriateness and prior violations on file for this property.

- Oct. 1980 COA: Remove tree.
- Oct. 1981 COA: Reduce height of brick chimney at rear addition by 3', reset capstone and decorative brick to existing. Reduce height of brick chimney on carriage house by 2', permanently cap at top and bottom.
- Aug. 1997 COA: Repair wood front porch and steps of carriage house. Paint green trim to match.
- April 2004 COA #2653: Replace asphalt shingle roof with "weathered slate" asphalt roof. Paint trim.
- Nov. 2017 COA #5387: Separate old servants' space into an accessory dwelling unit. Add a stairwell and new entry.
- Apr. 2021 COA #7267: Replace wood fence with new wood fence, matching height to existing.
- June 2024 Violation #916: Removal of wood windows at kitchen location.

## PROPOSAL

The applicant is remodeling their kitchen and bathroom. Three windows were removed and discarded by their contractor, which the applicant states were inoperable and damaged beyond repair. These windows are at the rear, east elevation of the building. The remainder of the proposal is the repair of brick masonry at or near this area of the house with tuckpointing and brick replacement with like brick where necessary.

## WINDOWS

- Replace three (3) original wood kitchen windows at rear east elevation of the building with aluminum clad wood Marvin series.
- The Marvin series windows are 2/2 simulated divided light, aluminum-clad wood double-hung windows, color black sash/trim.

## REPAIR: TUCKPOINTING

- Tuck-point brick around exterior of kitchen area.
- Replace brick with matching (like) brick as necessary.



*Aerial 1 of Parcel # 04000894. by Detroit Parcel Viewer, showing the proposed kitchen windows location (arrow).*



*Site Photo 2, by Applicant, date unknown: (Interior Kitchen) showing former original windows prior to removal and disposal.*



*Site Photo3, by Applicant: (Looking at rear east elevation) showing location where kitchen window was removed and replaced with plywood (without approval) and showing original wood trim still in place.*

## STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The West Canfield Historic District was established in 1970.
- It is staff's opinion that the original wood windows with the divided light, double-hung operation and original wood trim are distinctive, historic character-defining features. *(See site photo 2)*
- When staff initially received the application, the photos presented showed the original windows in place. Staff requested detailed photos of these windows and a professional assessment of their condition. Staff then learned from the applicant that the windows were removed by the applicant's contractor. The applicant stated that their contractor had assessed that the windows were damaged beyond repair, but no documentation was presented or made available to staff. From the previous photos presented, it is staff's assessment that the windows were not shown to be irreparable.
- Staff also received confirmation that these original 19<sup>th</sup> Century windows were discarded and not saved.
- Staff received confirmation that the description in the application of ongoing kitchen and bathroom remodeling has no other exterior impacts on the building other than those in this application.
- Staff has not yet received a response to the following questions as of the date of this report:
  - While the applicant states that he will be using the same wood trim as the other windows, he has not clarified if he is using the existing wood trim and brick mould or if these will be replaced with new wood trim and brick mould.
  - A detail and narrative that show how the windows are proposed to be installed: a drawing and description that shows the window opening, dimensions of the window insert in the window opening, and whether the existing brick mould remains and/or if coil stock is introduced.
- While on site, staff observed on-going work at the rear location of the kitchen area, some work was on the exterior where scaffolding is currently present. Staff received confirmation from the owner that some brick repair may be happening. Staff requested further information regarding this work that has not yet been received at the time of this report.
- While aluminum-clad wood windows may be an appropriate material for missing windows where no windows are found, replacing original 150-year-old historic windows that may have been reparable is not appropriate and does not follow the Standards. Further, there is no clarity on how the windows would be installed, whether the existing brick mould or trim would remain and how the window will be placed in the window opening. (Past cases have seen replacement windows flush with the outer surface of the brick wall, creating a flat, featureless appearance that is not historically appropriate.)
- It is staff's opinion that the proposed tuckpointing and repair of the brick face of the house with in-kind materials and matching color mortar is appropriate.



*Site Photo 4, by Applicant: interior kitchen window location, showing interior wood trim.*

## ISSUES

- Work in this application was completed without the Commission's approval.
- To meet the Standards, where historic windows exist, they must be repaired. When they are too deteriorated to repair, documentation should be produced to show that the windows were irreparable.
- Selection of replacement windows must be guided by Standards 5 & 6, meaning that the new window shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities, and if possible, materials. Any distinctive finishes such as the window trim and its historic setting within the window opening should be preserved. However, this proposal does not illustrate how these features are being preserved.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

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

#### Recommendation 1: Replace Original Wood Windows with Aluminum Clad Windows

Staff finds that the replacement of the three (3) original wood windows with aluminum clad windows does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for the following reasons:

- The subject windows were apparently original to the house, 150 years old, and distinctive, character-defining features important to the property's historic character.
- No documentation establishing that the original condition of the windows is beyond repair was submitted or available.
- The details of preserving brick mould and original wood trim of each of the windows is unknown.
- The method of installation of the windows, how it sits in the window opening, and whether other materials, such as the use of coil stock will be introduced is unknown.
- Therefore, the replacement of the original wood windows with aluminum-clad wood windows is not compatible with historic architecture in the house in that they destroy the distinctive, character-defining features of the original windows, particularly the true-divided lights surrounding wood trim detailing.

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the above work items, as it do not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, specifically Standards:

*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 2: Tuckpointing (Work Completed without Approval)

It is staff's opinion that the repair of brick façade and tuckpointing 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 Historic District's Elements of Design.