

ADDRESS: 1760 VAN DYKE

APPLICATION NO: HDC2024-00517

HISTORIC DISTRICT: WEST VILLAGE

APPLICANT: IRMA LOUISE AND QUINTEN HUNTER

OWNER: IRMA LOUISE HUNTER

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 9/30/2024 & 10/03/2024

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 9/23/2024

SCOPE: REPLACE SEVEN (7) WOOD WINDOWS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The building located at 1760 Van Dyke is a 2-story home that was erected ca. 1905. The dwelling features a hipped roof central/main mass with a projecting front-gabled wing at the primary elevation. Hipped-roof dormers with 1/1, double-hung wood windows top the roof. Windows are 1/1 wood and 1/1 vinyl, double-hung units (cream/light yellow finish color). Although the dwelling is clad with faux brick/asphalt siding (insulbrick), it does display a number of distinctive decorative details which are associated with the Queen Anne style to include the cutaway bay window with pendant brackets at the primary elevation's first story, the pedimented gable end at the front elevation second story, deep wood eaves with carved wood brackets at the main roof, and eve returns with carved wood brackets at the front porch roof. Also, it appears a portion of the asphalt siding has been removed front the front façade, revealing the presence of the original lapped wood siding. The foundation wall and front porch are brick.



1760 Van Dyke, current appearance (staff photo taken 11/30/2023)

PROPOSAL

With the current application, the property owner is seeking approval to replace seven (7) existing, wood, 1/1, double-hung window sash with new windows. The applicant has indicated that he intends on replacing the sash only while retaining the existing trim/casing. The application includes four different replacement window options for the Commission's consideration:

- Vinyl, 1/1, double-hung sash (Simonton by Plygem "Vantagepointe 6500" Series) [SIM24_HDIS_6500-Collection_4pg-Brochure_WEB.pdf](#)
- Composite (Fibrex), 1/1, single-hung sash (Andersen 100 Series) [Andersen Windows & Patio Doors 100 Series Product Guide for Professionals \(sitecorecloud.io\)](#)
- Vinyl-clad wood, 1/1, double-hung sash (Anderson 200 Series) [Andersen Windows & Doors 400 Series & 200 Series Product Guide for Professionals \(sitecorecloud.io\)](#)
- Vinyl-clad wood, 1/1, double-hung sash (Andersen 400 Series) [Andersen Windows & Doors 400 Series Product Guide for Professionals \(sitecorecloud.io\)](#)

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- It is staff's opinion that the seven wood windows proposed for replacement are distinctive character-defining features of the property as they are original to the building's date of construction.
- Please note that the applicant contracted with Hansons Windows to replace "approximately 10 wood windows with new vinyl windows at the home in 2017. A review of Detroit building department records indicates that a permit was issued for the work. However, the building department did not forward the application to the HDC for review and therefore the work did not receive a Certificate of Appropriateness prior to the issuance of the permit. HDC staff therefore reached out to Detroit building department staff to inquire why a permit was issued for this work without HDC review and/or approval. Detroit building department staff noted that the 2017 vinyl window permit application "...was a Mail-In application that wasn't flagged as Historic, and it appears that the Permit was issued, however no inspections were performed so we can't verify whether the work was performed or completed. There wouldn't have been a referral to HDC through the Mail-In process at that time because we hadn't set it up for that, and I believe that's a strong contributing factor for why we abandoned the Mail-In without review process." Note that these 10 vinyl windows **are not** included in the current scope of work which is under review.
- The applicant submitted a proposal to the Commission for review at the 12/14/2022 meeting to replace the above five wood windows with new vinyl windows. Staff did note that the application did not provide the level of documentation necessary to determine if the windows were deteriorated to an extent that merited their replacement. Staff also noted that the home does retain a number of distinctive details despite its non-compatible asphalt cladding and vinyl windows and that any future window treatment should not contribute to a further diminution of the home's historic character. The Commission issued a denial of the application to replace the five wood windows with new vinyl units.
- A review of the recording of the 12/14/2022 regular meeting indicated the following regarding the Commission deliberation/discussion of the window replacement proposal:
 - The Commission opined that the proposed vinyl windows were not appropriate to the building's historic appearance and that their installation would contribute to the diminution of the home's historic character as the existing vinyl windows detract from the home's character

- The Commission noted that repair of the existing windows or, if replacement is necessary, that new wood or aluminum-clad wood units would be a more appropriate to the home's historic character
- The property owner submitted a second application to the Commission for review at their 12/13/2023 meeting in which they sought an approval to replace five historic wood windows and associated trim with new composite (Renewal by Andersen, Fibrex windows). The application included only exterior photos of the existing wood windows proposed for replacement and minimal information on the proposed replacement windows. The Commission therefore denied the application because the application did not provide the level of documentation necessary to determine if the five windows proposed for replacement are deteriorated beyond repair. Also, detailed specifications for the proposed new window product (Renewal by Andersen) had not been provided.
- The current application material does provide ample photographic documentation to depict the condition of the windows which the applicant is seeking to replace. Also, please see the above links and the documents submitted with the application for the necessary technical information for the proposed four replacement window alternatives. Finally, the owner has revised the previous scope in regard to the existing trim/casing, which he now intends to retain.
- The application includes a note from staff from Home Depot which states that the wood windows proposed for replacement are "beyond repair". However, it is unclear to HDC staff if the Home Depot representative has experience with repairing historic wood windows.
- Note that two HDC staff members visited the property on 10/3/2024 and were afforded the opportunity to assess and photograph the windows from the interior. Please see the below photos which illustrate the current conditions of the windows proposed for replacement:



Staff photo taken on 10/3/2024. Front and side wall



Rear wall, photo taken by HDC staff on 10/3/2024



Deterioration at corner of WINDOW A-01. 10/30/2024 HDC staff



WINDOW A-01 –Gaps at top and sides glass pane in both bottom and top sash; large hole at the corner of the glass pane at the bottom sash. Wood components appear to be in repairable condition 10/3/2024 HDC staff



WINDOW A-02 – Gaps at sides of glass pane in both bottom and top sash; large hole at the corner of the glass pane at the bottom sash. Wood components appear to be in repairable condition. 10/3/2024 HDC staff



WINDOW A-01 – Large hole at the corner of the glass pane at the bottom sash. 10/3/2024 HDC staff



WINDOW A-01 – Showing extant sash cords. 10/3/2024 HDC staff



**WINDOW A-01 – Showing extant sash cords. Top rail of bottom sash displays some “sponginess”. 10/3/2024
HDC staff**



WINDOW D – Covered with plastic due to extreme air infiltration/gaps in glass panes at top and bottom sash; bottom rail at top sash is failing/about to fall off. Other wood components appear in fair/repairable condition. Photo by applicant



WINDOW D – Covered with plastic Photo by applicant



WINDOW D – Note poor/deteriorated condition of the bottom rail of the upper sash. 10/3/2024 photo by HDC staff



Window E- Photo by HDC staff, 10/3/2024



WINDOW E- Photo by HDC staff, 10/3/2024. Wood components in repairable condition with the exception of some rot at bottom rail



WINDOW E- Photo by HDC staff, 10/3/2024. Area of rot at bottom rail, showing previous repair



**WINDOW B – Wood components in repairable condition with the exception of “spongy” bottom rail
HDC staff, 10/3/2024**



**WINDOW B – Wood components in repairable condition with the exception of “spongy” bottom rail
HDC staff, 10/3/2024**



WINDOW C – No interior photos taken due to plastic covering, Staff noted that the wood components at these windows are in good condition.

- As noted above, staff did visit the site and viewed the windows from the interior. Generally speaking, the windows did appear to be inoperable/in poor condition, with many areas showing gaps between the glass panes and the wood framing components. However, the windows did appear to be repairable and generally in need of reconditioning with some windows requiring the replacement of wood components, glass, and sash cords. Note that staff's assessment was based upon a cursory review of the windows and did not include the use of tools, etc. for an in depth condition assessment. Also, some of the windows were covered in plastic, prevented staff's ability to assess the units in detail. However, it is staff's opinion that the proposed window replacement does not meet the Standards as the windows did appear to be repairable.
- Staff did assess the proposed replacement windows and notes the following should the Commission determine that the subject seven original wood windows proposed for replacement can be removed/are deteriorated beyond repair:
 - The vinyl. 1/1, double-hung sash (Simonton by Plygem "Vantagepointe 6500" Series) would be an inappropriate replacement product for the following reasons;

- Vinyl windows offer a plasticity and flat/thick appearance that does not adequately match the profile/dimensionality and appearance of historic windows, such as wood.
- Consumer grade vinyl windows weather poorly, deteriorate rapidly, and exhibit poor detailing and detracting color/sheen.
- The framing material, glazing, and seals (which keeps the argon gas intact between the insulated glass) of vinyl windows break down more quickly in ultraviolet light than wood or steel-framed windows.
- Vinyl also lacks rigidity and can expand and contract more greatly than wood and steel. This can result in discoloration and warping of the vinyl frames, as well as condensation between the glass layers.
- The installation of the proposed vinyl windows does not follow NPS guidelines for new replacement windows, as the proposed windows are not “consistent with the general characteristics of a historic window of the type and period” which would have been originally present at the house
 - The composite (Fibrex), 1/1, single-hung sash (Andersen 100 Series) would be an inappropriate replacement window sash because it does not replicate the material or the operation of the original character-defining windows, which are double hung.
 - The vinyl-clad wood, 1/1, double-hung sash (Anderson 200 or 400 Series) would provide an adequate replication of the wood windows proposed for replacement. While the subject wood windows are character-defining and original to the building’s date of construction, the sash is fairly utilitarian in appearance and lacks decorative detailing, etc. As the applicant is seeking to retain the existing trim/casing and only proposes to install new sash inserts, it is staff’s opinion that either option would sit quietly in the subject openings and present an appearance that is compatible to the building’s historic character.

ISSUES

- As noted above, it is staff’s opinion that the windows proposed for replacement appear to be in repairable condition. Therefore, the proposed window replacement does not meet the Standards.

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation - Section 21-2-78. Determination of the Historic District Commission – Denial

It is HDC staff’s opinion that the proposed work does is inappropriate because the seven wood windows proposed for replacement do not appear to be deteriorated beyond repair. Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the project as proposed because it does not meet the West Village Historic District’s Elements of Design or 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 historic 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.*