



**Project Name/Address:** 103 Langdon Street  
**Application Type:** Certificate of Appropriateness for exterior alteration  
**Legistar File ID #** [46635](#)  
**Prepared By:** Amy L. Scanlon, Preservation Planner, Planning Division  
**Date Prepared:** March 27, 2017; revised March 30, 2017

## Summary

**Project Applicant/Contact:** Nate Yahn, J H Findorff & Son, Inc.  
**Requested Action:** The Applicant is requesting that the Landmarks Commission approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for proposed exterior alterations which include the replacement of original third floor windows.

## Background Information

**Parcel Location:** The subject site is located on Langdon Street in the Mansion Hill historic district.

### Relevant Landmarks Ordinance Section:

- 41.18 STANDARDS FOR GRANTING A CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS.** A certificate of appropriateness shall be granted only if the proposed project complies with this chapter, including all of the following standards that apply.
- (1) New construction or exterior alteration. The Landmarks Commission shall approve a certificate of appropriateness for exterior alteration or construction only if:
    - (a) In the case of exterior alteration to a designated landmark, the proposed work would meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.
    - (b) In the case of exterior alteration or construction of a structure on a landmark site, the proposed work would meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation.
    - (c) In the case of exterior alteration or construction on any property located in a historic district, the proposed exterior alteration or construction meets the adopted standards and guidelines for that district.
    - (d) In the case of any exterior alteration or construction for which a certificate of appropriateness is required, the proposed work will not frustrate the public interest expressed in this ordinance for protecting, promoting, conserving, and using the City’s historic resources.

**41.01 POLICY AND PURPOSE.** The Common Council recognizes that the City of Madison contains buildings, structures, signs, features, improvements, sites, and areas that have significant architectural, archaeological, anthropological, historical, and cultural value. The Common Council further recognizes that these historic resources represent the City’s unique heritage, contribute to the health, prosperity, safety and welfare of the City’s residents, and serve as a source of great interest to the City’s residents and visitors. Therefore, the Common Council hereby finds that it is in the public interest to identify, protect, preserve, promote, conserve and use historic resources within the City. The purpose of this chapter is therefore to:

- (1) Accomplish the identification, protection, promotion, preservation, conservation and use of the City's historic resources, as embodied and reflected in the city's historic districts and landmarks.
- (2) Ensure that the City's growth sensitively incorporates the City's historic resources.
- (3) Enhance the visual and aesthetic character of the City by ensuring that new design and construction, when it happens, complements the City's historic resources.
- (4) Provide a framework for appropriate reinvestment in the City's landmarks and historic districts that ensures new design and construction, when it happens, complements the City's historic resources and conforms to the standards of the historic district.
- (5) Safeguard the City's historic resources and investment in them by establishing an obligation to maintain them, and encouraging the vigorous enforcement of this ordinance.
- (6) Recognize that the city's historic resources are economic assets that can attract residents and visitors, create jobs, stabilize and improve property values, and stimulate business and industry.
- (7) Foster civic pride in the beauty and noble accomplishments of the past.
- (8) Promote the use of and investment in historic districts and landmarks for the education, pleasure and welfare of the people of the City.
- (9) Provide a clear regulatory framework for implementing, balancing, and accomplishing the public policy announced in this chapter.

#### **41.14 MAINTENANCE OBLIGATION; ENFORCEMENT; PENALTIES**

- (1) Maintenance obligation. Every owner of a landmark, improvement on a landmark site, or improvement in a historic district shall do all of the following:
  - (a) Protect the improvement against exterior decay and deterioration.
  - (b) Keep the improvement free from structural defects.
  - (c) Maintain interior portions of the improvement, the deterioration of which may cause the exterior portions of such improvement to fall into a state of disrepair.

## **Analysis and Conclusion**

The building at 103 Langdon was constructed as the Delta Gamma Sorority House in 1926 as designed by Frank Riley in the Colonial Revival style.

As described in the submission materials, the applicant is requesting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of the original windows on the third floor. The Mansion Hill standards for review in the Historic Preservation Ordinance (Section 41.22(4)) do not address the replacement of historic materials. The Commission shall use the standards in 41.18 to determine if a Certificate of Appropriateness should be granted for this work. Standards (a), (b), and (c) are not applicable. Standard (d) states,

“In the case of any exterior alteration or construction for which a certificate of appropriateness is required, the proposed work will not frustrate the public interest expressed in this ordinance for protecting, promoting, conserving, and using the City's historic resources.”

The building at 103 Langdon is a historic resource as it is located in a local historic district and was constructed during the period of significance. The definition of historic resource is,

“any building, structure, sign, feature, improvement, site, or area having significant architectural, archaeological, anthropological, historical, or cultural value. Historic Resources include properties designated as landmarks or historic resources in a historic district ordinance.”

The Delta Gamma Sorority Association has owned the property since it was constructed and was the owner when the Mansion Hill historic district was created. Section 41.14 describes that every owner of an improvement in a historic district shall protect the improvement against exterior decay and deterioration.

Hellenbrand Glass conducted a window condition assessment and prepared a restoration method plan in 2014. The assessment findings are attached to this report. Generally, the assessment findings show that the majority of the third floor windows have original glass, poor exterior paint condition, and require routine maintenance or stabilization. None of the windows are shown in the findings as needing to be replaced. A few window sash are noted as needing to have members (stiles, rails, muntins) replaced/reproduced.

The photos included in the submission materials show that the paint is in poor condition and that there are a few areas of deterioration on certain members that may need to be reproduced or have a Dutchman repair or epoxy. All of the window sash need to have the paint removed, and to be repaired, primed, reglazed and repainted. The window frames need similar work, and weights, pulleys and chains will likely require work.

The double hung windows have exterior storm windows. The casements do not have exterior storms. With the noted repair work, the addition of weather-stripping, the proper installation of an exterior storm window (casements may need an interior storm), and routine maintenance, the existing windows should last another 90 years.

Staff understands that the Delta Gamma Corporation investigated the use of the historic tax credit a few years ago and found that the ownership structure and the tax credit program were not compatible. Therefore, staff understands that the Delta Gamma Corporation cannot use the historic tax credit for window restoration work.

Staff administratively approved the replacement of seven windows located in bathrooms in April of 2016. In the correspondence related to the replacement of the seven bathroom windows, it was reiterated that the windows of the upper two floors of the house were repairable and did not require replacement.

The proposed replacement window is manufactured by Marvin.

The Commission shall determine if the replacement of windows (the removal of historic materials) that appear to be in repairable condition will frustrate the public interest in protecting, promoting, conserving, and using the City's historic resources.

## **Recommendation**

Staff does not believe that the standard for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of third floor windows is met and recommends that the Landmarks Commission deny the request.

If the Landmarks Commission finds that replacement of the third floor windows does not frustrate the public interest, then staff recommends that the Commission discuss the following items and consider approving the request using these items as conditions where appropriate:

1. The Applicant shall describe how the condition of the windows has changed so that the conditions now require replacement instead of repair.
2. The Applicant shall describe the general plan for the original windows so the Commission can understand the overall scope of the project and loss of historic fabric.
3. The replacement window shall have simulated divided lights with spacer bars and muntin configuration to match the existing original windows and the original exterior trim and sills shall be repaired, remain in place, and be visible (not wrapped).