

**AGENDA # 10**

City of Madison, Wisconsin

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REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION  
TITLE: 2122 Chadbourne Ave - Exterior  
Alteration in the University Heights  
Hist. Dist. - Replacement of 11  
windows; 5th Ald. Dist.

**PRESENTED:** 1/11/21  
**REFERRED:**  
**REREFERRED:**  
**REPORTED BACK:**

AUTHOR: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner

**ADOPTED:** **POF:**

DATED: 1/25/21

**ID NUMBER:** 63582

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Members present were: Anna Andrzejewski, Richard Arnesen, Katie Kaliszewski, Arvina Martin, David McLean, and Maurice Taylor. Excused was Betty Banks.

**SUMMARY:**

*Patrick Whitty, registering in support and wishing to speak*  
*Joel Plant, registering in support and wishing to speak*

Bailey said that the applicants are proposing to replace 11 historic windows. In the application materials, they provided a third party assessment with information on the feasibility of window repair and cost. Bailey discussed the applicable standards regarding retaining historic windows that are repairable; if the applicants want to replace them, that frustrates the public interest. Bailey also discussed the University Heights standards regarding alterations visible from the street and not visible from the street, which are relevant if the commission were to decide the windows can be replaced. She also referenced the City Attorney’s memo, which explains the importance of retaining historic windows in order to be in compliance with the historic preservation ordinance. She said that the existing windows are in need of maintenance, and the third party assessment recommends repair of the windows. She said that the price of repair is twice as much as the cost of replacement; however, the property is in a National Register Historic District, so the work is eligible for preservation tax credits. She said that old growth wood windows last longer than new windows, so once they are replaced, one gets into a replacement cycle where the windows will need to regularly be replaced. She said that if the commission decides to approve replacement, the proposed replacement windows are acceptable. She said that staff’s recommendation is that the standards could be met. The proposal does not meet the standards and the windows should be repaired, but the commission must evaluate if the cost of repair, which could be offset by preservation tax credits, outweighs the value of preservation of the historic windows.

Joel Plant, property owner, said they love their house and neighborhood and agree on the value of historic preservation. He said they are committed to historic preservation and have proven their willingness to spend extra money to pursue it, discussing previous remodeling projects in their home. He explained that the house has 28 windows, and they are proposing to replace 11 of those. Of the other 17 windows, he said that five were already replaced by the previous owner, 10 are being replaced as part of a different remodel, and two are in perfect condition. He said that the context that the majority of their windows are not original is relevant to the commission’s evaluation of whether this frustrates the public interest. He said that the third party assessment by Patrick Kelly recommended that all windows be repaired, and while none of the windows are rotting, he can’t imagine that is the standard for replacement. He said that when they first bought the house in 2017, he talked to Kelly about the windows and he wasn’t interested in the job, so it has been difficult to find contractors

who were willing to take on the work. He pointed out that the third party assessment says that it is not a quote, so he doesn't know how valid it is in making financial decisions. He said that it doesn't include interior trim, exterior trim, or paint work necessary for removing, rebuilding, and reinstalling the windows. He said that Kelly told him it could take a year to finish the work on 11 windows because they would be removed and worked on one at a time, which is a prolonged burden on a homeowner. He said that Kelly still isn't interested in the window repair job, so he's been trying to find other options. A carpenter quoted him \$3000 per window to reconstruct, plus \$950 per window for trim, paint, and custom screens, but he also wasn't interested in the job. He said that even with the 25% tax credit, it is still expensive to repair the windows. He said they'd like to use the exact Pella windows that were used for the other remodel project, which are \$17,600 total. He said they are looking at energy efficiency, economic feasibility, and the feasibility to get someone to do the work in a timely manner.

Andrzejewski asked if the proposed Pella windows match the others that were already replaced. Plant said that they are exactly the same, with the exception of five windows the previous owners replaced because they don't know what type those are. He said those windows are about 12 years old and are beginning to fail and will need to be replaced in the future.

Bailey said that it sounded like they were working with the state on tax credits and asked if the state approved the replacement of these windows. Plant said they haven't asked the state because he thought tax credits only applied to repair, not replacement. Bailey said that if there is tax credit work ongoing, they should work with the state about additional modifications they are making so as to not endanger the tax credit project.

McLean asked if the 11 windows being replaced include the entire street façade. Plant said that with the exception of the sidelights on the front door, it does include all the windows on the street façade. McLean said that in the cost estimates for repair, there is an added cost for the window trim because there is lead paint. He asked if that cost would be incurred for repair or replacement because they will still need to remove the trim and lead paint. Plant said that his contractor quoted them \$1600 per window, which includes the window installation, trim, and painting. He said they were getting a value for having a lot of work done at once. Patrick Whitty, contractor for the project, said the price provided includes removing the old windows and installing new interior and exterior trim.

Andrzejewski said that she appreciated the third party window assessment the applicants provided. She said that the commission is hearing more often that it is difficult to find someone to do this type of work. She reminded everyone that the commission is looking at the project and other considerations, including monetary, relative to a set of standards they need to uphold, both related to the historic district and the broad standard regarding the public interest. She said that because it is a street façade, they would like to see the windows repaired. She suggested a hybrid solution to repair the windows on the front as a middle ground. Plant said that he was concerned about having inconsistency in window types within a room, which is not preferable, but he understood the notion of preserving the front façade. He said that if he were to repair the windows, he cannot commit to having them repaired within the next couple of years if he can't find anyone to take on a small job like that. He said that he understands the notion and is willing to be reasonable.

Arnesen said he appreciated the applicants' willingness to potentially restore the windows. He said there is the public interest of not replacing historic windows that can be repaired, but there is also the public interest in that the applicants clearly understand the historic nature of their property and are putting money into it. He said that he doesn't want high repair costs to reduce the pool of buyers for historic homes, which are not inexpensive. He explained that there is public interest on both sides of the issue, and if the applicant is willing to consider repairing the windows on the front façade, he would be in favor of that and allowing replacement of the others.

McLean asked about the addition and where it was located on the house. Plant said that the rear addition was approved, construction started in October, and it included seven new Pella windows. Bailey said the commission reviewed the project in May 2020. McLean asked for specs on the new windows. Plant said they are the Pella Architect Series with the same divided light pattern. McLean asked if they are simulated divided light, and Plant confirmed they are. Andrzejewski said they won't be matching in the front rooms. McLean said

that new windows will never have as thin of a profile as historic windows because the wood isn't as strong as it used to be, but the number of lights and pattern will match.

Kaliszewski asked for clarification on whether the exterior frames of windows will be removed and replaced and pointed out details on the bottom two windows. She said that typically window replacements don't mess with the frames and trim, so she wanted to clarify how that will be done. Whitty said there is brick moulding on the outside where the sill at the bottom is thicker. They will remove the old windows, install the new windows, and match the same details. He said the new windows don't have the same sill or angles, but when they are done they will look the same. He said they will install exterior brick mould that is really close to the existing, and on the interior they will have casing and stools to match existing. He said they will also have new screens; there are currently storm windows but most are caulked shut. Kaliszewski said that if they are replacing exterior trim, the dimensions should go to staff for approval. Bailey agreed that would be fine.

A motion was made by Taylor to approve the request for the Certificate of Appropriateness for the replacement of 11 windows. The motion was not seconded.

A motion was made by Arnesen, seconded by McLean, to approve the request for the Certificate of Appropriateness for the repair of five windows on the front façade and the replacement of six windows on the side with new exterior trim specifications to be approved by staff.

Arnesen said that allowing the applicants to replace windows not on the front façade strikes a balance between the economic realities and the commission's mission to adhere to the standards. McLean said that in looking at the third party assessment, the front windows are not in that bad of condition, so they should be repairable with minimal effort. He said that new sash locks will help with draftiness and block out wind infiltration, and five windows are on the southern elevation, which will help with heat in winter as well. He agreed that it was a nice balance to retain the front façade historic elements and proportions.

Taylor said that wood rots over time, and if they don't want to deter people from buying these homes and restoring them, they need to make them livable. He said that as a real estate agent, he knows that old windows affect property value, so if someone wants to update a house to be more energy efficient, he doesn't think the commission should make it as difficult to do so.

### **ACTION:**

**A motion was made by Arnesen, seconded by McLean, to approve the request for the Certificate of Appropriateness for the repair of five windows on the front façade and the replacement of six windows on the side with new exterior trim specifications to be approved by staff. The motion passed by the following vote:**

**Ayes:** 5 - Richard Arnesen, Katie Kaliszewski, Arvina Martin, David McLean, and Maurice Taylor

**Noes:** 0

**Excused:** 1 - Betty Banks

**Non-Voting:** 1 - Anna Andrzejewski