

AGENDA # 4

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: 6/18/18

TITLE: 1219-1221 Jenifer St - Exterior Alteration
in the Third Lake Ridge Hist. Dist.;
6th Ald. Dist.

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Amy Scanlon, Secretary

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: 6/26/18

ID NUMBER: 52019

Members present were: Stuart Levitan, Chair; Anna V. Andrzejewski, Vice Chair; David WJ McLean, Richard Arnesen, Marsha A. Rummel, and Katie Kaliszewski. Excused was Lon Hill.

SUMMARY:

Edward Kuharski, registering in support and available to answer questions.

Staff described the additional materials recently submitted by the applicant, including floor plans that indicate window conditions and two photos of existing windows. She explained the two recommendations from the staff report, indicating that the Commission should assess whether the front Palladian window is original and then determine whether the proposed replacement windows are appropriate.

Kuharski explained that in response to the staff report, he is now proposing to use different grades of Pella windows for replacement. He proposes that the Palladian group be replaced with the traditional Pella Architect Series, and the leaded glass fan light at the top will be restored and put back in place. The leaded glass panel in the front parlor windows will be retained after refinishing is complete, and Kuharski proposes that the bay windows be replaced with the Pella 450 Series. He stated that they also propose to use the 450 Series on the side dining room windows because they are more visible from the front of the house, as well as on the side and rear attic windows that are currently in very poor condition. He also noted that the 2nd floor bathroom window will be replaced with a Pella fiberglass window because it is located in a shower. Kuharski ended by asking for the Commission's advice on whether the Pella 250 Series vinyl windows would be approvable as replacements, as originally proposed, because the owner and contractor would like to use them for budgetary reasons.

Rummel stated that there are no photos of the existing windows that make a case for replacement, and asked why the windows need to be changed. Kuharski noted that the floor plans indicate the condition of existing windows and some have rotted. He also pointed out that some of the windows they are proposing to replace are not original.

Arnesen stated that the Commission typically likes to see photos of the existing windows. He acknowledged that the applicant has made note of the window conditions, but stated it is better to see a photo showing those conditions. Kuharski stated that he can supply photos of the windows.

Staff noted that there is a window photo on page A9 in the original submission, which the new floor plans call out as "very poor condition," so she used that photo to indicate the general explanation of what the applicant means by "very poor condition." She went on to state that the applicant proposes to replace the 2nd and 3rd

floor windows, no 1st floor windows and no leaded glass. Kuharski confirmed this is true, and stated that they will not replace the leaded glass in the bay window, the special high sill window with diamond pattern, nor the window at the stair landing with a single diamond upper sash. He noted that he does not think the 3rd floor front windows are original because the unit was assembled with staples and came factory painted, which does not match the original windows that were stained and varnished.

Kuharski stated that the owners plan to add bedrooms to the 3rd floor, so it is important for the thermal envelope that they replace the old windows. He stated that he was hoping for some reference standards for architects who are working with both the homeowners and the Commission; he wants to do the right thing, but the Commission needs to be clear about what the right thing is.

Rummel indicated that the Commission's charge is to maintain the existing fabric of the historic districts if they can, or to decide the best way forward if it cannot be maintained. She noted that they have high expectations of applicants, but also appreciate owners who want to fix historic properties and find qualified people to assist them.

Arnesen stated that the Commission typically will not require applicants to do something so expensive that it prohibits them from moving forward. He stated that the Commission may decide that the applicant needs to come back with better documentation of the existing windows, but they also need to provide direction as to whether or not he should propose vinyl windows when he returns so they don't waste the applicant's time.

Staff referenced ordinance 41.23(9)(c), which states that alterations of the street façade shall retain the original or existing historical materials, and Levitan asked about the proposed replacement windows on the street façade. Staff stated that no vinyl windows are proposed on the street façade, so then the Commission needs to determine if it frustrates the public interest, according to ordinance 41.18(1)(d).

Levitan asked if Kuharski's comments address concerns in the staff report related to 41.23(9)(c) and whether the sash components of the Palladian window are original wood sash. Staff stated that she has not been on-site to investigate as closely as the applicant has, but can see how a case can be made for it to be a non-original window. Kuharski stated there is no question that they are not original.

Levitan asked where the applicant is proposing the Pella 250 Series windows. Kuharski responded that they would be installed on the side and rear. Arnesen noted that fiberglass composite windows are an upgrade in quality from vinyl, and asked if the group would be more receptive to that option. Andrzejewski stated that she would be, and Rummel agreed that if they used vinyl, they would likely have to replace them again in 20 years. Levitan asked if the question to consider is whether using the Pella 250 vinyl windows on the rear and side frustrates the public interest. Rummel stated that it may frustrate, but they have approved vinyl windows in the past. Arnesen asked if Kuharski has looked at fiberglass composite windows, and Kuharski stated that the price point is higher than vinyl. Arnesen pointed out that they cost less than wood windows.

Andrzejewski asked if they were to request that the applicant provide evidence of the condition of the existing windows, even if they were in the worst condition, would the Commission approve vinyl. Arnesen agreed, noting that he does not want the applicant to go through all the work of documentation if they aren't going to approve vinyl, and then for the applicant to say that they can't afford a different type. Staff stated that given the poor condition of the existing windows and the front historic windows being retained, she wasn't going to ask for an assessment of every window; the Commission is being asked to approve vinyl, which they have approved in the past. Arnesen agreed, but pointed out the examples of original windows listed as fair condition on the floor plans that are being proposed for replacement.

Arnesen pointed out that the applicant is proposing to put a fiberglass window in the bathroom and asked why only one window would be fiberglass. Kuharski stated that fiberglass would be a better choice over a tub in a shower.

Kaliszewski stated that her largest concern is that the proposed windows do not match; they have no similar appearance to the original wood windows and look very different from the existing windows. She indicated that she would be okay with vinyl windows if they more closely matched what is currently there, particularly on the sides. Kuharski noted there is a Pella 350 Series that tries to be more traditional, but he finds them clunky with an overscale sash that wouldn't look right. He stated that within the vendor whom the owners are committed to, the next option was the 450 Series with wood and aluminum cladding. Levitan asked if there was consensus to agree with Kaliszewski, and the group agreed. Levitan noted that it is not the vinyl itself, but the design of the window that is the issue.

Staff noted that repair is an option as well, so if some of the original windows in fair condition can be repaired rather than replaced, that can be administratively approved. Arnesen stated that if an applicant is proposing to replace original windows in fair condition, it is a red flag that would prompt him to ask for photo documentation of the windows to see if they could be repaired.

Staff stated that the applicant needs to speak with the owner about what they want to bring back before the Commission, whether it is photos showing the window conditions or a new project scope saying they will restore certain windows. Kuharski indicated that the owner's preference is to have new windows.

Levitan indicated that Commissioners like the option of window repair the most, followed by the 450 Series, then the other options are much further down the list.

Andrzejewski asked about the Palladian window, and noted that the proposed windows look nothing like it. Staff pointed out that the applicant is not suggesting vinyl. Kuharski stated that the Architect Series is offered in contemporary or traditional detail treatment, and they can make any decorative rail pattern. Kaliszewski asked if the replacement windows would replicate the existing window, and Kuharski stated that they will replicate with much higher quality. Kaliszewski asked for confirmation that the existing middle window with the grill in it would be replicated so that all three upper sashes have the diamond pattern, and Kuharski confirmed.

Rummel stated that the Commission has asked other applicants to provide additional photo documentation, and they should hold this project to the same standards and refer it to a future meeting.

Arnesen summarized by stating that if the Commission agrees the existing windows are in poor condition, the 450 Series would be a good replacement, and they would also likely approve the Palladian windows as proposed. If the applicant would like to use vinyl for the side and rear windows, a better option or different manufacturer might be approvable.

ACTION:

A motion was made by Rummel, seconded by Arnesen, to refer the item to a future meeting. The motion passed by voice vote.