

AGENDA # 4

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: 6/24/19

TITLE: 15 E Gilman St - Exterior Alteration in the
Mansion Hill Hist. Dist. -
Replacement of windows; 2nd Ald.
Dist.

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: 6/28/19

ID NUMBER: 53073

Members present were: Stuart Levitan, Richard Arnesen, Katie Kaliszewski, Arvina Martin, and David McLean. Excused was Anna Andrzejewski.

SUMMARY:

Kurt Hartjes, registering in support and available to answer questions

Bailey said that the proposed work involves replacing 14 windows in one apartment unit. She explained that there have been multiple submittals for this project, some of which included photos of 9 window sashes that later disappeared. Bailey said that initially the applicant thought the sashes were thrown away, but later found and reinstalled them. Building Inspection has verified that the 9 sashes are back in place, so it is no longer a concern of staff, as had been stated in the staff report. She said that in the current submittal, the proposed replacement products are paired up with the existing windows, and one can see that they are comparable, but there are some areas where they don't quite match. She showed examples of replacement windows lacking decorative window horns and also having different light configurations than existing windows.

Bailey said that staff's recommendation is that not all windows require replacement, and the Certificate of appropriateness should be denied. She noted that Alder Heck said that he supports staff's recommendation for the project.

Hartjes said that the property owner had a window restoration company prepare an estimate for repair of the windows. He said that the restoration company reported that the two French windows on the front of the house that swing inward and have no screens are not repairable. He said that he tried to find replacement windows that were the best fit for those. He also mentioned that the replacement bathroom window that Bailey pointed out as an example of a light configuration that did not match the existing window was drawn incorrectly in the submittal and should have been drawn as 4 over 1 to match the existing.

Hartjes said that they will remove the existing aluminum storm windows and install the replacement windows along with new white screens, so they will look completely different from the outside but the inside will look the same. He pointed out that the replacement windows will have a simulated fully divided light grid, but they are unable to replicate the decorative horns on the inside. He mentioned that the 9 formerly missing sashes were reinstalled, but are very loose and being held in place with putty knives. He said that restoration is clanky, and the windows will not seal correctly; they would need to rip out the sashes and rebuild them in order to fit tight.

Arnesen asked about the price for restoration. Hartjes said that excluding the front two windows that are beyond repair, the estimate was \$46,500. Arnesen asked how much the replacement cost is. Hartjes said that it is half that price.

Kaliszewski asked how long the current owners have owned the property. Max Miller said that they have owned it for 47 years. Kaliszewski said that the current property owners are then at fault for not maintaining the existing windows.

Arnesen asked if the property owners have looked at wood windows, and Hartjes said they are looking at wood composite windows. Arnesen asked if they are wood on the inside, and Bailey said that they are composite all the way through. Hartjes said there is an option for wood on the inside that is painted.

Levitan asked if Ms. Jayne Miller is present, but she was not. He said that he was struck by a comment in her May 24, 2019 correspondence with staff that there are large companies who are doing work on neighboring properties who have not come before the Landmarks Commission and have not been fined. Hartjes said that the property next door to Miller's property installed vinyl windows with rotted sills, and there is a house around the corner that also installed vinyl windows. He said that everyone is doing their own thing, while she is trying to do the right thing. Levitan asked staff about this allegation, and Bailey said that they have been seeing more enforcement cases coming before the Landmarks Commission.

Levitan asked if the photos justify replacement, and Bailey said that the windows are repairable. She said that the applicant also has an assessment from a company that does repair work that states all of the windows are repairable aside from the front two. Hartjes said that is what the repair company said, but he does not agree.

Kaliszewski said that she has an issue with the fact that the property owner has owned this property for a long time and they took out the weights and pulleys. She said that they have not been maintaining the windows and now they are neglected. Kaliszewski asked to read the report from the window repair company, and Hartjes gave it to her.

Arnesen asked if we have a list of contractors who repair windows. Bailey said that the State Historical Society can supply a list of contractors who have completed successful state tax credit projects. Arnesen said that Hellenbrand Glass is probably not the best contractor to ask about window repair advice, and if the Commission ends up requiring repair, he would like to see evidence as to why the two front windows cannot be salvaged. Kaliszewski agreed, noting that they are very prominent windows on the front of the house. She said that if they were to allow replacement, the double-hung windows in the proposal are not acceptable and they would need to use windows of the same style. Hartjes said that they are French windows with poor functionality; one is currently boarded up and they are both completely rotted on the outside. He suggested they replace them with an awning or casement window that hinges on the outside in order to get the same look.

McLean asked what would happen to the sills if they were to replace the windows, and Hartjes said they would repair the sills and cut out all rot. McLean asked if the attic is livable space. Hartjes said that it is livable space, and the property owners are completing a full remodel on the inside of the building.

Arnesen recommended the applicants find a different subcontractor who is not a window installer to provide an estimate for the window repair. He said that if the applicants want to make a case that the windows are not repairable, the assessment should come from someone who is not a remodeling contractor. He said that there is a strong inclination not to allow replacement, and the applicants will need to provide strong evidence that the windows are beyond repair. Arnesen commented on the high repair estimate, and McLean said they should find other contractors. Bailey said that she can check in with the preservation architect at the State Historic Preservation Office who may know the going rate for the rehab of wood windows, as well as resources they could pass along to the applicants.

ACTION:

A motion was made by Arnesen, seconded by Kaliszewski, to refer the item to a future Landmarks Commission meeting. The motion passed by voice vote/other.