

AGENDA # 5

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: 8/12/19

TITLE: 2115 Kendall Ave - Exterior Alteration in
the University Heights Hist. Dist. -
Replacement of windows; 5th Ald.
Dist.

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: 8/19/19

ID NUMBER: 56714

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

SUMMARY:

Victoria Frank, registering in support and available to answer questions
Raj Shukla, registering in support and available to answer questions

Bailey explained that the proposed work includes the replacement of 16 windows and replacement of gutters. She described the applicable standards, and said that Alder Bidar voiced support for the project as proposed by the applicant. Bailey showed images of the windows, and said that window #9 in the kitchen is not historic, though the applicants are proposing replacement with a slider instead of casement, which would change the profile. She said that because it is not historic, the proposed replacement is an acceptable compromise. She said that the applicants provided evidence of significant rotting in the sills of windows #11 and 15, and she recommends that the sills be replaced. She said that for the windows themselves, the question is whether the stiles and rails of the proposed replacement adequately replicates the dimensions of the historic windows, but she does not have that information. She said that in the documentation provided for the other windows showing broken locks, chipping, and wear, she recommends repair. She noted that the property is in a National Register Historic District, so the applicants are eligible for tax credits for the repair. As for the gutters, she recommends replacement with materials in-kind, as the applicants proposed.

Frank said that there are a number of windows that they can repaint, and they are able to get a contractor to do that, but the issue is the windows that are non-functional, won't lift, or have broken panes. She said that several windows also have lead paint. She said that they have contacted the contractors suggested by staff, and none were willing to bid on this job. She said that they would love to meet the standards in the interest of the safety of their children and the neighborhood, but it is currently not a sustainable situation and they cannot find a contractor who will agree to restore the windows. Kaliszewski asked which windows are non-functional, and Frank said windows 7, 8, 12, 13, 14, 16, and likely 10, which are mainly upstairs windows. Bailey said that this is a busy time of year when it can be difficult to get contractors. Frank said that there is lead paint in two bedrooms where her kids sleep. Shukla said that they started this process months ago and have yet to come across someone who will call them back and bid on the project. Frank said that she has spoken to one contractor who has done historic preservation work, and he said that full replacement to historic standards can run \$3000 per window, and restoration can run in the \$2000 per window range. She said that their budget is \$13,000, so it is frustrating to feel as if they cannot maintain their home.

Kaliszewski asked if there is an example of the type of window for the proposed replacements. Bailey said that she has the name of the product and manufacturer website, but no dimensions of what is proposed. Frank said that the contractor told her that because the windows are custom made, they cannot tell her the measurements of the sash. McLean asked Bailey which dimensions she was most concerned about. Bailey said that the rough window openings are the same so she assumes the sash sizes are the same, so the question is whether the stiles and rails are the same size as the existing windows because it will have a visual impact if they do not match. Kaliszewski pointed out that the windows have very thick frames and seem wider than normal. McLean said that he thinks it is the facing of the storm window returns. Kaliszewski asked if the frames are going to be maintained, and Shukla said that is the idea. He said that there are instances of rot in the frames that they propose to replace in the same style as existing. Frank said that they have told the contractor to keep the appearance as consistent as they can with the existing because they love how their house looks.

Arnesen asked if staff is okay with vinyl windows where replacement windows have been approved. Bailey said yes, though she is not a fan of vinyl because of the environmental impacts and their appearance; however, there is a precedent for approving vinyl in other locations. She mentioned other previous approvals of aluminum-clad or wood windows on the front of a building and vinyl or fiberglass on the back. Shukla asked about the environmental impacts of vinyl windows. Bailey said that while the environmental impacts are not part of the Landmarks Commission's review, just as lead paint is not, vinyl is very toxic to produce.

Kaliszewski said that without seeing the windows they are proposing to install, she would argue that commissioners cannot adequately make a decision based upon the new state statute regarding the similarity of replacement materials. Bailey said that unlike more decorative windows, these are very simple one-over-one double-hung windows with no muntins or sash horns. She said that her concern is the exterior dimensions approximating what is there to ensure that the dimensions of stiles and rails are roughly equivalent. Arnesen asked if the aluminum combination storm windows would be removed. Frank said they would because the new windows do not require storm windows. McLean said that will change the look too because the thick line at the bottom of the existing windows is the storms over top. He asked if the applicants have addressed how they will repair the sills and exterior trim. Bailey said that initially the applicants proposed replacing with cedar and wrapping, but have since decided to replace with cedar and not wrap with aluminum. McLean asked if it would be painted cedar so that it was basically in-kind. Bailey confirmed it would be painted cedar.

McLean asked if the existing gutters are half-rounds. Bailey said that she does not think so, and they appear to be K-style. Shukla and Frank said that the gutters are a more boxy shape. Bailey said that as long as they are replaced in-kind, she does not have concerns about the gutters. She pointed out that the applicants are going to match the trim, so the gutters will not be visually apparent.

Kaliszewski asked for thoughts on window #9 being replaced with a slider because it is already non-historic. McLean asked why the applicants have chosen a slider. Shukla said that it was the cost and what seemed like it would bring the most light into the room. McLean asked if they had considered two casements. Frank said that they chose a slider because of cost, and they are trying to get functioning windows on a budget. Kaliszewski asked where the window is located on the house, and Frank said that it is on the back of the house.

Bailey pointed out that in the application, it said that the square window on the stair landing will be 38x38, but the applicants have since clarified that was a typo and the window will be 28x28. Frank said that they were told by their contractor that it will need to be replaced with tempered glass because it is on a landing. She said that because it doesn't open, she is fine if that window is not replaced and is painted instead, saying that she can find a painter to do the work. She said that it is more important to her to get the other windows functioning again. McLean asked which of the upstairs windows will not open, and Frank said all of them. McLean asked if they are painted shut or too heavy to lift. Frank said that it is a combination of the two because they used to be able to open them, but she can't find anyone to come and tell her why they won't open. McLean said that sticky paint and bad sash cords are both repairable, and if the applicants are already hiring a painter, perhaps the painter could try and free them up. He said that if the sash cords are broken, they could potentially repair them and the windows would still work, but not having seen the windows in person, it is hard to say. Frank said that

their application may not have captured the places where the wood is rotting away, as there are places where one can see through the sash. McLean asked if she was talking about where the sashes meet on top, and Frank confirmed that she was. Martin asked if these are upstairs windows, and Kaliszewski asked if they are windows #10-16. Frank confirmed they are upstairs and downstairs, saying that windows #7 and 8 also have exterior frames that are rotted through and interior sashes with rot. McLean said that he was considering if they could separate the upstairs windows not facing the street, but for that to work, they would need to get rid of the storms. Arnesen said that it doesn't do any good to spend \$3000 per window if they are keeping the 1970s storms. He said that the applicants have done their homework for the most part, but it would be nice to have the dimensions and drawings for the new windows. He said that the standard is to repair, but the applicants can't find anyone to repair, and pointed out that it is becoming more of an issue to find people who do this skilled labor. Kaliszewski asked what happens when the applicants can't find anyone to complete the repairs. Bailey said that she has heard of cases where no window specialists would take a job, but a general contractor was able to find someone for the job. Kaliszewski said that Jen Davel at the Wisconsin Historical Society knows people who are out doing this type of work. Frank said that she got the list of contractors from Davel. Arnesen said that he agreed with Kaliszewski's earlier comment that they cannot approve window replacements without getting a drawing that shows what the replacements will look like. He said that the applicants will get further if they keep certain windows, get a painter in to work on them, and provide dimensions from the manufacturer for the proposed replacements. Frank said that they will not have the dimensions until they order the windows. McLean said that the manufacturer will have the dimensions of the stiles and rails, and they are looking for the profile dimensions. Arnesen said that the applicants should tell the contractor that they need the new windows to match the dimensions of the existing sashes.

ACTION:

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