

AGENDA # 3

City of Madison, Wisconsin

REPORT OF: LANDMARKS COMMISSION

PRESENTED: 10/28/19

TITLE: 1244 Rutledge St - Exterior Alteration in
the Third Lake Ridge Hist. Dist. -
Replacement of windows; 6th Ald.
Dist.

REFERRED:

REREFERRED:

REPORTED BACK:

AUTHOR: Heather Bailey, Preservation Planner

ADOPTED:

POF:

DATED: 11/1/19

ID NUMBER: 57815

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

SUMMARY:

David Laden, registering in support and wishing to speak
Kurt Hartjes, registering in support and wishing to speak

Bailey explained that this building was constructed in 1860, but has evolved over time and has had various additions over the years. She said that the proposed work involves the replacement of nine windows. She said that in looking at the submitted photos, most windows look to be relatively recent and outside of the period of significance. She explained that the mullions have a similar design as the more historic windows, but are slightly different and the layers of paint look to be of a more recent vintage—maybe the 1950s, but probably the 1970s. She mentioned that she modified the window key, and pointed out that window 202 is more of a Craftsman style and seems to be historic. She said that there appears to be failing glazing putty in some windows, which could be repaired rather than replacing the whole window. She said that in other recent windows, the main failing seems to be the sliding rails in the window jambs where the aluminum is bent, which could be fixed by replacing the rails rather than replacing the window. She referenced the memo from the City Attorney's Office, which states that the Landmarks Commission's charge is to preserve historic resources. She said that the Third Lake Ridge standards for alterations to the street façade indicate that one shall retain the original or existing historic materials. She said that windows 202, 205, and 206 seem to fall in the period of significance, and recommends that the item be referred so that the applicant can supply information regarding repair of those windows and how the cost of repair compares to the cost of replacement, as well as measurements of the windows and window components and how they compare to the proposed replacement windows.

Laden said that they considered repair, but were advised it would be costly to repair all the windows. He said that there are different problems with each window, and none work well; some don't adequately open and shut and half are unable to lock because they don't shut properly. He said that some have rotten wood between the storm windows, and to repair them would require a lot of wood replacement, and others have cracked glazing putty. He said that there is ice buildup inside of the windows, and a lack of insulation is a big reason why they want to replace them. He said that they have lived in the house for 35 years and have worked hard to improve upon it, and the windows are the last major upgrade they want to complete. He said that the proposed windows will be easy to open and shut as well as to clean; currently, he said that they cannot get to the outside of the windows to clean them. He said that in comparing repair and replacement, it might cost slightly more to replace, but he is willing to pay the price of replacement because of the convenience it offers. He pointed out

that the replacement windows are also in conformity with the state statute because they are exactly the same in design, color, scale, architectural appearance, and other visual qualities. He said that they respect the historic nature of their neighborhood and want to play their part to maintain it. He asked why one would repair when one could replace with new windows that look the same and are of high quality, energy efficient, and easy to clean.

Taylor asked if the seals are broken and they get fogginess on the windows when it is cold. Laden said that the majority of them get foggy, and because the glazing is cracked, there is cold air entering the windows. Taylor asked if Laden was willing to share the different costs of repair versus replacement. Laden said that they didn't have estimates to repair because they didn't take the idea of repairing the windows seriously. He explained that the new product they are considering is so attractive in terms of functionality that they did not have repair estimates done. He asked why they would repair windows they can't clean if they could replace them with something more functional.

Arnesen asked for confirmation that there were only three pre-war or original windows. Bailey confirmed there were. Arnesen asked why they were discussing postwar windows, and Bailey said there was precedence for the Commission to review window replacement projects that did not involve windows with old-growth wood. She said that she left it open for possible investigation into any of the windows, but specifically called out the historic windows in her recommendation. Andrzejewski asked if the historic windows were street-facing, and Bailey said that two are, 205 and 206. Laden said that they are two of the worst functioning windows because they don't close and cannot be secured. Bailey said that if the windows were repaired, they should be fully operational. Kaliszewski said that Laden has lived in the house 35 years, and asked what work has been done on the windows previously. Laden said none.

Hartjes said there are rotted stops on the outside of the windows where the storm windows screw into the wood. He said that front windows 205 and 206 probably have jamb liner issues as Bailey pointed out, and said that the jamb liners are aluminum and are not original. He said that currently the applicants get moisture and ice buildup on the windows because of the storm windows on the outside and because they are basically open 1.5" on top because the top sashes cannot be moved. McLean referenced the photos, and asked where the jamb liners were. Hartjes said they are aluminum and likely from the 1950s-60s, but he wasn't sure how they were put in. Arnesen asked if the sashes were original, so they would have taken the sashes out, put the aluminum jambs in, and reinstalled the sashes. Hartjes said that he initially did not think they were, but after reading the staff report, thought they might be original. He said that we also don't know if the windows are in their original locations; because of the additions on the home, he said that the sashes could have been pulled out and put in a different spot on the house. He said that he knows the sashes are older than the 1950s, but doesn't know the exact date. Bailey said that the earliest is probably the 1890s, but more likely the 1910s or 1920s. McLean said that it is pretty big glass for the 1800s. Andrzejewski pointed out that they are Arts and Crafts-style. Kaliszewski pointed out that the 1860s construction date is from the assessor, and Bailey said that there is no preservation file on the property, but if it were from the 1860s, one would expect vertical 2-over-2 windows, not Arts and Crafts. Hartjes said that those three windows are the oldest sashes in the home, and all of the others are probably from the 1950s and have extreme swelling in the summer so one can't move them, pointing out that replacing the jamb liners will not help with the sash component. He said that he doesn't know how they would go about fixing the three in question because they don't know if they are in the original location or if there are pocket pulleys, and won't know until they rip them out. He said that to fix the insulation problems, they plan to insulate the inside of the weight well if it exists, which will help with energy efficiency. He said that this is a nonstandard product request, so they can mimic the existing mullions. He said that he measured today and they were $\frac{3}{4}$ ", which is identical to the thickness on the proposed windows.

Laden referred back to Kaliszewski's question about window maintenance, and said that they haven't done any work on the windows, but they have gradually deteriorated over 35 years. He said that they were completing other big, expensive projects, and there wasn't as much priority to the windows as there is now. Kaliszewski said that smaller maintenance projects over time allow you to not spend a lot on new windows. Andrzejewski asked if Hartjes provides estimates for repair, and Hartjes said that he does not.

Andrzejewski explained that they have standards associated with the historic district that they need to adhere to, one of which is to make sure that the historic district, which includes all the built features within it that fall within the period of significance, adheres to the standards, and said that the Commission's charge is to evaluate that. She pointed out that the applicant referenced the state statute, which the Commission is also subject to. In addition, she said that they have to consider the standards for granting a Certificate of Appropriateness that discuss whether getting rid of historic fabric frustrates the public interest. She said that the standards are conflicting, and she would like to physically see the window the applicant is proposing for replacement to see how much it conforms to what they are requesting for the front of the house. She said that photos are great, but she would need to see the replacement windows to prove that the Commission is fulfilling their obligation to meet the standards.

Arnesen asked if Andrzejewski was specifically considering the replacements for the front windows that are more historic, and Andrzejewski confirmed she was. Arnesen asked if she thought the rest of the window replacements do not frustrate the public interest because they are not a historic resource, and Andrzejewski said that she wasn't there yet and was currently only considering the front windows. Kaliszewski asked what materials the replacement windows are made of, and Bailey said they are composite. Hartjes said they are Fibrex composite material, and any windows that currently have wood interior will remain wood interior. Kaliszewski asked if there was aluminum exterior. Hartjes said yes, and explained that the window frame and sashes will be Fibrex and the exterior aluminum trim will be replaced to match the existing.

Andrzejewski asked for Arnesen's opinion on the windows, and he said that if the windows were replaced in the 1950s-70s, he doesn't consider that a historic resource and doesn't think they should make a stand on that; however, he would like to see a repair estimate and documentation for the other historic windows.

Andrzejewski said that she asked to see the proposed replacement window for the front windows, 205 and 206, and asked if there was anything else the Commission would like to request from the applicant. McLean said that the photos of 205 and 206 look good; he mentioned that they can't see the top of the window that the applicant had mentioned was not functioning, but the jamb and sill look clean and are not caked with paint or cracked. Laden said that the top of the window won't go up and seems to be out of square. Hartjes said the windows are racked, but he doesn't know if it is the complete frame or the inserts. Arnesen said that he personally doesn't need to see photos of the non-historic windows, but suggested the applicant find someone to repair the windows and get an estimate. If the cost is too much or the applicant can't find someone to repair with a good faith effort, the applicant can come back with a window sample and make that case to the Commission.

McLean asked if having three Prairie-style windows in the house is frustrating in itself relative to the house's history, but said that he understands they are historic materials they don't want to lose. Andrzejewski said that it is telling the historic evolution of the house. Bailey said this style in comparison to the other variety of window styles on the building make them stand out as forensic evidence of the ongoing evolution of the property. Laden said the house is a mishmash of styles, as one can tell by the exterior photo. He said that he respects the Commission's mission, but asked that they be reasonable in seeing this house for what it is. He said that they are trying to duplicate what is there visually and architecturally, and are doing their best in terms of materials by not putting in the cheapest, bland windows.

Andrzejewski reminded commissioners to look closely at the relevant statute and ordinances, as well as Bailey's staff recommendation, which recommends referral to request the applicant supply information on if the windows can be repaired and measurements. Bailey said that there are no dimensions for the specific window components compared to the replacement windows, though they look similar in the photos and product sheets. She said that the product being proposed has been approved by the Landmarks Commission in the past as adequately fulfilling the state statute language, after determining that replacement was acceptable.

Arnesen asked if one could make the case that simple double-hung windows would be more appropriate for a late 1800s structure. Bailey said that we don't have historic documentation for what would have been there at any given time, and is suggesting to replace in-kind based on what is there. She said that a pane of glass that size is unlikely for the late 1800s, and it would be conjectural because they don't have evidence of what was in

place. Arnesen said that he wasn't suggesting it as an option, but was wondering if the applicant could save money by simplifying the windows that are non-historic if repair is too expensive. Andrzejewski said that the existing window patterns are all we know. McLean asked why we would want them to match if the windows are outside of the period of significance. Arnesen asked about the cost difference between the proposed window patterns and simple double-hungs. Hartjes said that it would be a savings.

McLean said that other windows aside from the three they have been discussing appear to be set in original frames and jambs. Bailey said that in looking at the style of window, mullions, and hardware, she doesn't think they are historic. She said they appear to be postwar, maybe the 1950s, but more likely the 1970s, and she doesn't think they date to the period of significance of the property.

A motion was made by Arnesen, seconded by McLean, to approve the request for the Certificate of Appropriateness to replace six non-historic windows in-kind and to refer review of windows 202, 205, and 206 to a future Landmarks Commission meeting so the applicant can determine the cost of repair and bring a sample of the proposed replacement window.

Andrzejewski said that this means the applicant will need to find someone to repair the windows and bring back a repair estimate, as well as a sample window proposed for replacement if they are going to make the case that the cost for repair is excessive or if they can't find someone to repair. Bailey said that someone affiliated with the Madison Trust for Historic Preservation is in the process of compiling a list of contractors willing to complete repair work, and offered to get the applicant in touch with that person. McLean said that when the applicant returns, he would like to see a picture that shows the size and thickness of existing window components so they know what they are comparing.

ACTION:

A motion was made by Arnesen, seconded by McLean, to approve the request for the Certificate of Appropriateness to replace six non-historic windows in-kind and to refer review of windows 202, 205, and 206 to a future Landmarks Commission meeting so the applicant can determine the cost of repair and bring a sample of the proposed replacement window. The motion passed by voice vote/other.