

STAFF REPORT: 8/10/2022 REGULAR MEETING

PREPARED BY: T. BOSCARINO

APPLICATION NUMBER: 22-7956

ADDRESS: 1427 ATKINSON

HISTORIC DISTRICT: ATKINSON AVENUE

APPLICANT: JOHN MCCARTER

PROPERTY OWNER: TANNER, DANIEL J & BOWMAN, JACINDA

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: MAY 16, 2022

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: JULY 22, 2022

SCOPE: REPLACE EIGHT WOOD WINDOWS WITH ALUMINUM-CLAD WOOD WINDOWS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

1427 Atkinson Ave. is a two-and-a-half story, red brick, foursquare house built in 1914. It faces north onto Atkinson Avenue in the Atkinson Avenue Historic District. The house is comparable to the other houses in the district in age and scale. It bears minimal architectural ornamentation; nine-over-one sash windows and nine-light casement windows are prominent features. Some of the windows are covered by storm windows.



July 2022 photo by staff.

PROPOSAL

The applicant proposes to replace a total of eight (8) windows (see submitted application and scope of work), as follows:

- Four (4) larger nine-over-one sash windows on the front façade, second story, grouped into pairs separated by mullions
- One (1) smaller nine-light casement window centered on the front façade, second story
- One (1) smaller nine-light casement window in the first-floor entrance bay
- One (1) larger nine-over-one sash window on the west elevation
- One (1) smaller nine-light casement window on the east elevation

The proposed new windows are Pella Lifestyle brand, aluminum-clad wood windows, with simulated divided lights in a nine-over-nine pattern approximating the appearance of the historic windows. The applicant proposes operable windows (double hung or casement), except for the centered second-story window, which is to be fixed.



Eight windows proposed for replacement.

Specifications are provided by the applicant for the Commission's reference.

Both the existing windows and proposed new windows are bright white in color and trimmed with aluminum.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Atkinson Avenue Historic District was established by Ordinance 582-H in 1984. Its Elements of Design (Sec. 21-2-139[d]) reference windows as being most commonly “double-hung sash ... sometimes further divided by muntins,” typically made of wood, and again note “window sashes are usually subdivided by the muntins” (subsections [3], [7], and [15], respectively), suggesting these elements and materials as distinctive character-defining features of the district. The Final Report does not reference a Period of Significance or a list of contributing (historic) resources.
- The applicant does not provide dimensions for the existing windows; however, one photo provided with tape measure for scale shows wood elements that appear to be slightly wider on an existing window than on the proposed windows. According to the provided specifications, the simulated divided lights comprise 7/16” wide grilles, the casement and fixed windows have 1 7/16” wide rails, and the sash windows have 1

1/4" wide top and bottom rails and 1" wide side rails.

- The existing windows appear, based on architectural style, to be original to the building, and are stated to be original by the applicant. The applicant further asserts that the existing windows have been “painted numerous times,” that “most do not open and close properly” and that they are “extremely energy inefficient.”
- Regarding the degree of deterioration of the windows, staff observes, through photos provided by the applicant as well as an exterior site visit conducted July 22, 2022, that windows show clear signs of having been painted over numerous times, a condition which will impair their ability to operate and seal properly, thus decreasing their functionality, aesthetics, and energy efficiency. These conditions are typical maintenance needs of old windows and are repairable.¹

ISSUES

- The building’s windows are both historic (original to the house) and distinctive (as suggested by the Elements of Design) and have not deteriorated beyond repair. The Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, cited below, direct that they be retained and preserved or repaired.

RECOMMENDATION

Section 21-2-78: Determination of Historic District Commission

Staff recommends that the Commission issue a Denial of the proposed work as it does not meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, in particular:

2. *The historic character of a property shall be retained and preserved. The removal of historic materials or alteration of features and spaces that characterize a property shall be avoided.*
5. *Distinctive features, finishes, and construction techniques or examples of craftsmanship that characterize a property shall be preserved.*
6. *Deteriorated historic features shall be repaired rather than replaced. Where the severity of deterioration requires replacement of a distinctive feature, the new feature shall match the old in design, color, texture, and other visual qualities and, where possible, materials. Replacement of missing features shall be substantiated by documentary, physical, or pictorial evidence.*

¹ John H. Myers, “The Repair of Historic Wooden Windows,” Preservation Brief 9, (National Park Service Technical Preservation Services), <https://www.nps.gov/tps/how-to-preserve/briefs/9-wooden-windows.htm>.