

STAFF REPORT: 11/16/2022 MEETING

PREPARED BY: J. ROSS

ADDRESS: 1915 LONGFELLOW

APPLICATION NO: #22-8107

HISTORIC DISTRICT: BOSTON-EDISON

APPLICANT: JAMES JENKINS JR/JENKINS CONSTRUCTION INC.

OWNER: NICHOLAS AND MAYA SMITH

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 10/31/2022 & 11/2/2022

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 10/17/2022

SCOPE

REPLACE WINDOWS*, INSTALL EGRESS WINDOW, & INSTALL DOOR

EXISTING CONDITIONS

Erected ca. 1920, 1915 Longfellow is a two-story, single-family dwelling that is located in the Boston Edison Historic District. The building features a broad hipped roof that is topped with shed-roofed dormers. A front-gabled wing with a lower, front-gabled porch is located at the building's front elevation. Windows are new wood casement and double-hung units, original wood units with leaded glass, and original 1/1 and 3/1 wood units. Exterior walls are clad with brick while synthetic siding is located at the dormer front and side walls. A hipped-roof, historic age garage sits to the rear of the home.



1915 Longfellow, existing conditions (staff photo)

PROPOSAL

Per the submitted materials, the applicant is seeking approval of the following work items:

- Replace all existing leaded glass and wood windows with new wood windows. See the submitted documents entitled “Window Map” and “Window Roster” to note the operation and light configuration of the new windows. Please note that work has already been initiated as all windows at the dormers and second story have been replaced with new wood units without Historic District Commission approval.
- At the rear elevation, remove three mullied windows, enlarge the opening, and install a new doorway which includes a set of two sliding doors flanked by fixed sidelites
- At the rear elevation, install a new egress window unit and well

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- As noted above, subsequent to the receipt of the current application materials, staff noted that the project had been initiated as all of the original second story and dormer windows had been recently replaced with new wood windows without approval. See the following photos and text which outline the conditions at the building prior to and after the unapproved window replacement. These photos will be appended to the end of this report in a larger format to allow for a more in-depth scrutiny/assessment:



Side/east elevation, prior to unapproved work



Side/east elevation, current appearance

- Side/east elevation (original windows)
 - Single wood casement window at first story
 - Set of four, wood casement windows with leaded glass at first story
 - Set of three, wood casement windows with leaded glass at second story
 - Set of two, double-hung wood windows (3/1) at second story **(REMOVED/REPLACED)**
 - One double-hung wood window (1/1) at second story **(REMOVED/REPLACED)**
 - One 6-light wood casement at dormer. Second window opening at dormer was missing sash **(REMOVED/REPLACED)**



Rear/south elevation prior to unapproved work



Rear/south elevation following unapproved work

- Rear/south elevation (original windows)
 - Set of three double-hung wood windows at first story
 - Four wood casement windows with leaded glass at first story projecting bay
 - Set of two, double-hung wood windows (3/1) at second story **(REMOVED/REPLACED)**
 - Set of two, double-hung wood windows (1/1) at second story **(REMOVED/REPLACED)**
 - Three, 1/1 double-hung windows at dormer. Either vinyl or wood. **(REMOVED/REPLACED)**



Front/north elevation prior to unapproved work



Side/west elevation, photo taken in 2016 by HDC staff

- Front/north elevation
 - Set of three, wood casement windows with leaded glass at first story
 - Two sets of paired, double-hung wood windows with leaded glass in top sash at first story
 - Set of paired wood casement windows with leaded glass at second story **(REMOVED/REPLACED)**
 - Single wood window (casement or fixed) with leaded glass at second story **(REMOVED/REPLACED)**
 - Set of three, double-hung wood windows (3/1) at second story **(REMOVED/)**
 - Three, four-light wood casement windows at dormer **(REMOVED/REPLACED)**



Side/west elevation prior to unapproved work



Side/west elevation following unapproved work

- Side/west elevation
 - Two wood casement windows with leaded glass at first story
 - Two double-hung wood windows (1/1 each) at second story
(REMOVED/REPLACED)



Designation slide, photo taken in 1980

- In 2016, an application was submitted to the Commission for review which proposed the replacement of the set of three, 1/1 double-hung wood windows at the rear elevation's first story with a set of paired sliding glass doors. The width of the window would have remained consistent, but the sill would have dropped to accommodate the new door. The Commission approved the scope item. The current application proposes to remove this window, but also seeks to widen the current rough opening from 6'-4" to 9'-9". Staff has no issue with the current door proposal as it is at the rear and the Commission has previously approved the existing three windows at this location
- Staff has no issue with proposed addition of a new egress window as it shall be installed at the rear elevation
- The application does not speak to the siding which would be installed at the dormer side and front walls upon the replacement of the windows. It is staff's opinion that any new siding which is installed in these locations should be lapped wood, lapped cement fiberboard, or stucco

ISSUES

- The original wood and wood/leaded glass windows and their associated trim/brickmould/mullions are distinctive character-defining features of the home
- The current application does not clearly indicate that the original windows which have been replaced and/or are proposed for removal are deteriorated beyond repair
- See the photos of the remaining historic windows at the end of this report. It is staff's opinion that these windows are in fair condition and can be repaired
- Although the proposed new windows are wood, staff has observed a number of issues which render the proposed new units incompatible to the building's historic appearance to include the following:
 - The dimension/profile of the trim (to include brickmould and mullions) associated with the new windows is generally thinner than the historic/existing. This has resulted in the each new window displaying a larger area of glazing vs the original (see the photos appended to the end of the report)
 - The new window proposal does not seek to replicate the leaded glass sash which are currently present
 - The new window proposal does not exactly match the light configuration and operation of the historic/original windows

RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation #1 - Section 21-2-78. Determination of the Historic District Commission – Certificate of Appropriateness

HDC staff recommends that the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the following work items as they conform to the district's Elements of Design and meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards:

- At the rear elevation, remove three mullied windows, enlarge the opening, and install a new doorway which includes a set of sliding doors with fixed sidelites
- At the rear elevation, install a new egress window unit and well

Recommendation #2 - Section 21-2-78. Determination of the Historic District Commission – Certificate of Appropriateness

HDC staff recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the remaining work items outlined in the current application, to include the installation of new wood windows as proposed, because the work does not conform to the district's Elements of Design and does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards, in particular Standards #:

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.*

9. *New additions, exterior alterations, or related new construction shall not destroy historic materials that characterize the property. The new work shall be differentiated from the old and shall be compatible with the massing, size, scale, and architectural features to protect the historic integrity of the property and its environment.*

The following are staff photos taken on 10/31/2022 and 11/3/2022 showing current conditions:







Front elevation dormer



Front elevation dormer



Front elevation, second story window opening



Front elevation, second story window



Garage to rear

The following interior photos of the remaining historic windows that are proposed for removal:













The following are photos of the home, taken prior to the unapproved window removal:





