

**STAFF REPORT:** 11/16/2022 REGULAR MEETING

**PREPARED BY:** T. BOSCARINO

**APPLICATION NUMBER:** 22-8100

**VIOLATION NUMBER:** 22-616

**ADDRESS:** 1517 ATKINSON

**HISTORIC DISTRICT:** ATKINSON AVENUE

**APPLICANT:** JAKUB GIBCYNSKI

**PROPERTY OWNER:** JAKUB GIBCYNSKI

**DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION:** OCTOBER 12, 2022

**DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT:** OCTOBER 26, 2022

**SCOPE:** INSTALL VINYL AND GLASS BLOCK WINDOWS (WORK COMPLETED WITHOUT APPROVAL)

## **EXISTING CONDITIONS**

1517 Atkinson Avenue is a two-and-a-half story Craftsman-style house built in 1914. It faces south onto Atkinson Avenue. Siding is stucco on the ground floor, aluminum on the second floor, and wood on the attic story. Other prominent features include a projecting front porch and decorative roof brackets. Original windows, likely also an important feature, have been removed.



*July 2022 photo by staff.*

## **PROPOSAL**

### **Background**

Staff observed new vinyl windows on the ground floor and attic story, and a new glass block window on the second floor, in 2022 and mailed a Notice of Work Observed letter dated August 19, 2022. The applicant states that the

windows were replaced in 2018.

During an October 2022 site visit, staff observed additional vinyl windows installed, including most or all windows on the rear (north) elevation, and some windows on the second floor. These windows are also visible in July 2022 site visit photos; it is unclear when they were installed. Staff has no record of an application or Certificate of Appropriateness for these windows; staff has asked the owner for more information and is awaiting a response. Some historic wood windows also remain on the sides (east and west elevations) of the house.

### Scope of Work

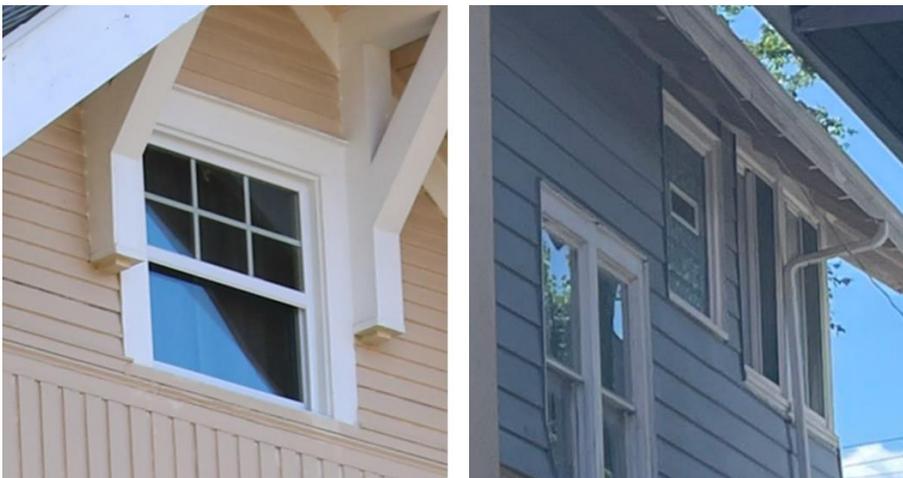
The proposal is for the scope of work described in the Notice of Work Observed. The applicant proposes:

- Four (4) vinyl sash windows on the first floor, front of the building
- One (1) vinyl sash window on the attic story, front (south) elevation
- One (1) glass block window on the second floor, west elevation

The sash windows include between-the-glass grilles (simulated muntins) on the upper sashes. The application does not provide additional information on the dimensions or the brand name of the product used. The work has already been completed.



*Four windows (three facing south and one within the recessed porch area) replaced in 2018. October 2022 photo by staff.*



*Left: Attic window added in 2018. Right: Glass block window added in 2018. October 2022 and July 2022 photos by staff.*

## STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

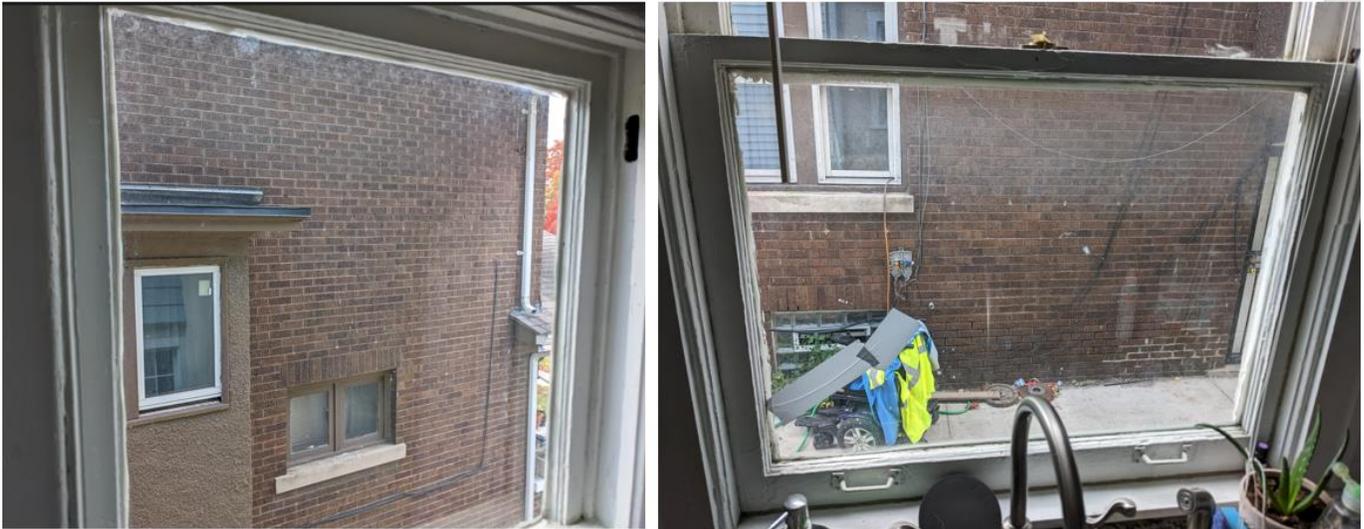
- The Atkinson Avenue Historic District was established by Ordinance 582-H in 1984. Its Elements of Design (Sec. 21-2-139[d]) reference windows as being most commonly “double-hung sash ... sometimes further divided by muntins,” typically made of wood, and again note “window sashes are usually subdivided 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.



*Circa 1984 photo by the Historic Designation Advisory Board. Note the six-over-one sash windows on the first and second floors and the mullioned window on the attic story.*



*Examples of windows that appear to be newer vinyl windows but are not included in this application. Left: rear elevation. Right: West elevation. October 2022 photos by staff.*



*Examples of historic sashes that remain on the building. Photos from application.*

## **ISSUES**

It is not known if the windows replaced in 2018 were original or historic. Nonetheless, the new windows are not appropriate. Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, namely Standard #6, directs that "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."

Appropriate new windows would match or closely approximate the dimensional qualities of historic windows found elsewhere on the house. Particularly inappropriate are the attic window, where a prominent vertical mullion has been eliminated, and the second floor west elevation window, where glass blocks have been added.

## **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.*