

STAFF REPORT: 12/14/2022 REGULAR MEETING

PREPARED BY: D. RIEDEN

APPLICATION NUMBER: #22-8159

VIOLATION NUMBER: #679

ADDRESS: 4762 CORTLAND

HISTORIC DISTRICT: RUSSELL WOODS - SULLIVAN

APPLICANT/ PROPERTY OWNER: KAGAN GURSOY

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 10/24/2022

DATES OF STAFF SITE VISITS: 11/23/22

SCOPE: ALTER ROOF, REPLACE ROOFING (WORK DONE WITHOUT APPROVAL), INSTALL VINYL WINDOWS AND FRONT DOOR

Erected in the late 1930s, the two-story dwelling at 4763 Cortland is three bays wide, with vertically aligned openings at the first and second floors. The side gable roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The walls are clad with red brick laid in a running bond pattern. The unadorned fascia acts as a continuous header for the second-floor windows, and a vertical course of bricks below the fascia offers a subtle contrasting detail. Window sash are not present on the front elevation, but the limestone sills and shutters flanking each window opening remain in place. The transparent and solid boarding of the first-floor window openings suggest the original sash sat upon wood panels (which is confirmed by the designation photo). The front entry, that previously included a central door and sidelights, is accentuated by a wood door surround comprised of an entablature with a simple frieze and pilasters. The walkway to the main entrance traverses the front yard at the far-right side of the lot and ends at a raised open landing. A remnant of an awning remains attached to a course of bricks over the front entrance.



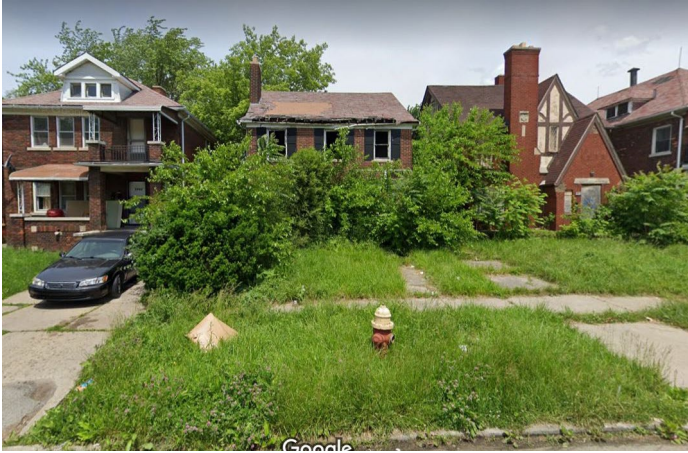
Site Photo 1, by Staff November.23, 2022: (South) front elevation.



Designation Slide, 1999: (South) front/side elevation showing original windows, porch, entrance, and roof. Note greater eave depth.

This property has no HDC approvals on Detroit Property Information System (DPI), and has the following outstanding violations for work done without approval:

- Asphalt shingle roof replaced with asphalt shingles, wood fascia and soffits replaced with wood, all windows removed, front door removed, front porch roof removed.



Site Photo3, Google Streetview June 2019: (South) front/side elevation showing conditions before work and current owner purchase.



Aerial of Parcel # 14004592.



Site Photo 4, by Staff November 23, 2022: (South) front elevation, showing secure view and boarding on windows and front fascia/soffit work along the roof.



Site Photo 6, by Applicant 2022: (North) rear elevation showing proposed locations for new windows.

PROPOSAL

The current owner has purchased this property from the Detroit Land Bank Authority (DLBA). The proposed work consists of the following work: install vinyl windows, install fiberglass front door, install new asphalt roof, and repair front porch.

WINDOW DETAILS

The applicant proposed initially to install wood windows, but due to cost, has changed this proposal to install vinyl windows. See attached window schedule and photos for locations. The proposed window product is sourced by Troya Windows & Doors, single-hung, vinyl windows, each sized to match each opening. All 19 windows are white in color, no grids or muntins.

The applicant proposes to place white vinyl siding at the location where the wood panels existed below the front, first floor windows. The applicant has not provided the product detail at the time of this report.

FRONT DOOR DETAILS

The applicant states the front door was missing and only plywood was used to secure the front. The applicant proposes to install a Craftsman fiberglass front door with 2-panel design and 6 glass windows. The proposed product is a 36"x80" 6 lite clear Craftsman smooth fiberglass, pre-hung front door with a wood frame.

The applicant confirmed that the original sidelights are still in place on either side of the front door (currently under plywood). The applicant states that they will restore the sidelights to their original condition.

ROOF/SOFFITS/FASCIA DETAILS

The applicant has completed work replacing the asphalt roof with asphalt roof. The roof had damaged woodwork and rafters that were fixed using the same materials found in the roof (wood) and the same design. The applicant has completed work by adding wood soffits and fascia in areas that has not been complete to provide a uniform look. No paint has been applied yet to these areas, but the applicant proposes to paint these elements white. The asphalt shingle product is Heritage Architectural Shingles, rustic black.

FRONT PORCH DETAILS

The applicant proposes to fix the brick work under the porch (see applicant photo) by replacing missing brick and tuck-pointing. The applicant proposes to install an awning over the front porch to imitate the original cover of the porch. To date of this report, staff has not received any drawings, details or product information for this proposed cover or its supporting posts, if any.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Russell Woods- Sullivan Historic District was established in 1999. Its Elements of Design (Sec. 21-2-168) provide the following guidance:
 - “Windows are commonly either metal casements or wooden sash.”
 - “Subdivided windows” create textural interest.
 - “Buildings of vernacular English Revival styles generally have painted woodwork and window frames of a dark brown or cream color.
- Staff received confirmation from the current owner that they purchased the property from the DLBA on October 6, 2022.
- Staff received this application noticed the violation of work during the application process. Some work, such as the removal of the windows, wood paneling below the front first floor windows, front door and porch roof, were done by a previous owner.
- Staff received confirmation that the wood panels below the front, first floor windows are no longer present and the sidelights on either side of the front door are still present. Both are currently covered in plywood and not visible. (*See photos 1 & 4*)

WINDOWS

- It is staff's opinion that the proposed vinyl siding at the location of the former wood paneling below the front elevation first floor windows is inappropriate.
- The applicant states that there were no wooden windows upon purchase of the home. However, staff sees in the applicant photos that some wood windows remain in the rear.
- From the designation slide, it is staff's observation that the original windows were wood, double-hung with a 6/6 or 4/4 configuration. Some remains of these wood frame windows are partially or fully present on the rear side of the house. It is staff's opinion that the remaining two windows on the rear, first floor could be potentially repaired and not replaced. (Staff has not received a detailed report on the condition of these windows.)
- It is staff's opinion that these original wood windows, their double-hung operation, and formation are distinctive character-defining features that have been either removed or neglected. The proposal to install these vinyl windows would substantially detract from and destroy the historic appearance of the building.

- Regarding the fact that many openings are missing windows altogether, the National Park Service (NPS) Guidelines recommends that any new window at that location must be *compatible* by reflecting materiality that is harmonious with the house, dimensions and scale that align with the building's openings and respect the architectural expression of this historic colonial style.
 - *"The appearance of the replacement windows must be consistent with the general characteristics of a historic window of the type and period but need not replicate the missing historic window. In many cases, this may be accomplished using substitute materials...Replacing existing incompatible, non-historic windows with similarly incompatible new windows does not meet the Standards"* <https://www.nps.gov/tps/standards/applying-rehabilitation/successful-rehab/windows-replacement.htm>

Staff recommends that a compatible material does not necessarily have to be wood, aluminum clad wood, for example, may be appropriate too, but cannot be vinyl.

FRONT DOOR

- Staff requested a product sheet for the front door. The product sheet for the front door is attached and shows that the proposed front door is made of fiberglass. True wood doors are readily available and would be appropriate choice for this property. Other than this material, staff has no issue with the proposed design of the front door.
- The designation slide, staff observed, shows the front entrance has side lights with a wood panel base and 4 divided lights on each side that match the scale and design of the windows. Staff has not received details on the work for the proposed restoration of the sidelights at the date of this report, but did receive verbal confirmation that they are present and will be restored.
- The applicant states that a portion of the front entrance trim is missing. They stated that they were not planning to replace this trim and prefer to leave this detail off. Staff asked for a detail photo and description for this area and has not received it at the time of this report.

ROOF/EAVES/SOFFITS/FASCIA

- As best as staff could see from the ground on the sidewalk the asphalt roof work appears to be appropriate.
- The wood soffits and fascia have not yet been painted, and the eaves appear to have been reduced in depth from their historic extension beyond the edge of the roof at either side of the house (*see designation photo above*). It is staff's opinion that the eaves are distinctive character-defining features that have been reduced in dimension at both the front and rear elevations, which alters the building's historic expression.

FRONT PORCH

- While staff has no issue with the proposed masonry, staff is not able to comment on the proposed porch roof without more information.

ISSUES

- No documentation establishing that the original windows at the rear of the house were beyond repair was submitted or available.
- It is staff's opinion that the removal of the original windows and proposed replacement with single-hung, vinyl windows with no divided lite and the proposed vinyl siding below the front elevation windows will greatly alter the original *scale, design, and materiality* and introduces new materials that are incompatible and inappropriate for this historic property, and therefore does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation.
- As noted above, vinyl is not an appropriate material for windows and fiberglass is not an appropriate material for front door in the Russell Woods- Sullivan Historic District.
- Staff has not yet received a photograph of the trim detail at the front entrance door that is missing. Staff is concerned that this material may be a necessary detail to the historic composition of the entrance.

- Staff has the opinion that the proposed asphalt roof and wood fascia (already installed) are appropriate design, material, and color. However, the soffits should match in dimension to their historic lengths on the front and rear elevations.
- Staff has no issue with the repair of the brickwork for the front porch. However, staff has no information to comment on the proposed awning at the time of this report.

RECOMMENDATION

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

Recommendation 1: Replace wood windows/ installation of the vinyl windows and vinyl siding, roof alteration

Staff finds that the replacement of original windows with these proposed vinyl windows and the vinyl siding below the front elevation windows, and the reduction in depth of the roof eaves destroys the historic character of this property and removes distinctive, character-defining features.

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the above work items, as it does not meet the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, specifically 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.

Recommendation 2: Install asphalt roofing (Work Complete Without Approval), Install front door, Repair sidelights, and repair front porch

It is staff's opinion the installation of the proposed front door, repair of front entrance side lights and front porch, asphalt roofing are appropriate. Staff therefore recommends the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as proposed because it meets the Secretary of the Interior Standards for Rehabilitation.

Staff recommends the Certificate of Appropriateness be issued with the following conditions:

- Applicant supply HDC staff a wood door of similar design and style as the proposed door for approval.
- Applicant supply HDC staff with a detail of the missing front entrance trim and should this be found by HDC staff as a necessary element to the front entrance composition, that this element be included in the entrance for review and approval by HDC staff.
- Applicant supply HDC staff a drawing or detail product sheet that shows the proposed front porch roof's dimensions, materiality, color, and design before installaton.