

STAFF REPORT: FEBRUARY 8, 2023 REGULAR MEETING

PREPARED BY: T. BOSCARINO

APPLICATION NUMBER: 23-8202

ADDRESS: 15015 ASHTON

HISTORIC DISTRICT: ROSEDALE PARK

APPLICANT: BEVERLY J. WILLIAMS

PROPERTY OWNER: WILLIAMS, LESTER M

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: DECEMBER 5, 2022

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: JANUARY 24, 2022

SCOPE: INSTALL VINYL WINDOWS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

15015 Ashton is a two-story, hip-roof, red-brick building in the Rosedale Park Historic District, built in 1917, and facing east onto the street. It faces east onto the street. Notable details include historic wood windows on the primary (east) façade: multilight casement windows topped by multilight, arched fan windows on the first floor, and four-over-one sash windows on the second floor. Also noteworthy are an arched door opening with wood panel door and prominent, battered, porch columns and piers; these features combine to give the building a subtle Craftsman or Prairie influence. Most of the original windows on the house have been replaced with vinyl windows; the rear porch has also been enclosed with vinyl siding and vinyl windows.



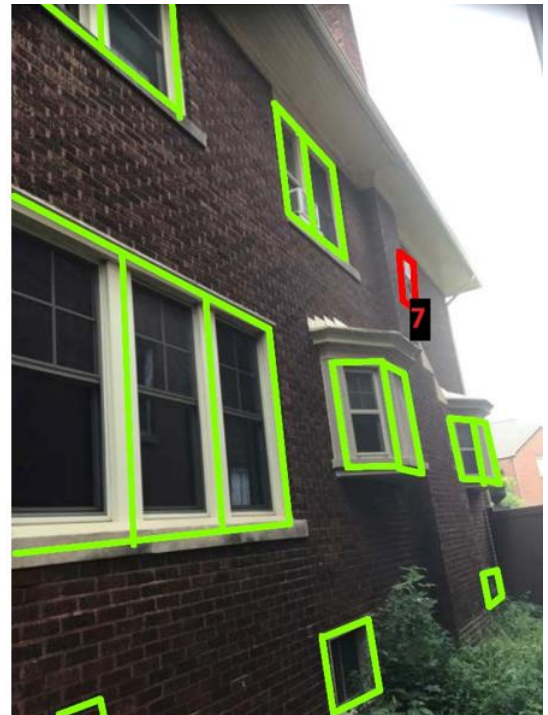
View from east. January 2023 photo by staff.

PROPOSAL

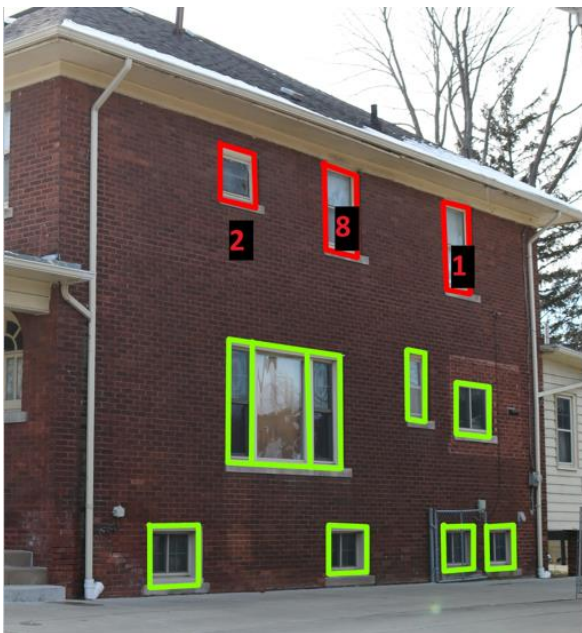
The applicant proposes to replace nine of the twelve remaining historic wood windows with vinyl windows. As most of the windows on the house have already been replaced, the result would be that the three arched wood

windows on the front (east) façade would remain; all the other windows on the house would be vinyl.

Shown below are photos marked by staff to indicate the proposed scope. Windows marked in red and numbered are proposed for replacement, windows marked in green and not numbered have already been replaced; windows not marked are not proposed for replacement.



Left: East elevation; 1 vinyl window, 5 wood windows proposed for replacement, 3 wood windows proposed to remain (photo by staff). Right: South elevation; 16 vinyl windows, 1 wood window proposed for replacement (photo from application, note that not all windows are visible.)



Left: North elevation; 9 vinyl windows, 3 wood windows proposed for replacement. West elevation: 12 vinyl windows. (Note that windows on the enclosed porch are not original or historic; photos from application.)

The proposed windows are 1-800-Hansons fiberglass-reinforced vinyl windows with a beige sash color and khaki exterior trim color, numbered in the application. The applicant proposes to replace sash windows with sash windows of the same muntin pattern, and to replace casement windows with sliding windows.* Dimensions, color samples, or other detailed specifications are not provided in the application or on the product website.

The applicant states that they wish to replace the windows to achieve a “uniform” appearance, due to the difficulty of exchanging storm windows and screens, and due to damage described in the application.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Rosedale Park Historic District was established by Ordinance 03-07 in 2007. The Period of Significance described in the Final Report and ordinance is from 1917 through 1955; the house at 15015 Ashton is among the oldest in the subdivision.
- The Elements of Design (Sec. 21-2-199) for the district provide guidance on windows as a distinctive feature:
 - Windows are “often subdivided”
 - Textural interest is created by “subdivided windows”
- The windows proposed for replacement on the front (east) façade are unambiguously character-defining as they are subdivided, as described in the Elements of Design; further, their vertical muntin pattern imparts a Craftsman style to the house and provides a visual cue to the era of the building’s construction.
- The original windows on the north and south facades, though less clearly distinctive, are important to the character of their house due to their materials and operation.
- The applicant proposes to match the color and muntin pattern of the existing windows; this is appropriate.
- 38 of the 47 windows (81%) of the historic windows on the house have already been replaced (lighter-colored infill brickwork on the north elevation also suggests that a mullioned window was replaced with a single slider window; if so, this would further increase the percentage). The applicant states that this replacement occurred prior to the establishment of the historic district in 2007. Resolution 18-01 of the Historic District Commission potentially allows staff to issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for side and rear windows in this situation; however, staff declined to do so due to the aforementioned character-defining nature of the original windows.
- The application provides clear photos and description of deterioration of the windows proposed for replacement (due to the number and size of the photos, they are not all reproduced in this report; please reference the application). In summary, the applicant describes missing hardware, “soft and rotting” wood, windows unable to open or unable to close fully, broken glass and sash rope: “my repairman was not able to find parts to replace the damaged parts.”
- Staff observes, through application photos, that windows show clear signs of having been painted over numerous times, a condition which will impair their ability to open and close properly; there are also missing and broken sash cords. These conditions are typical maintenance needs of old windows and are repairable (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->

* This is inferred from the scope of work described in the application, and largely confirmed by the enclosed quote from 1-800-Hansons. However, the quote appears to transpose windows #1 and #7 and does not mention windows #8 and #9.

windows.htm). This is also the case with broken glass panes. The areas of damaged wood appear, to staff, to be localized and repairable.



Selected examples of deterioration. Left: damaged parting bead showing overpaint. Right: Sash showing multiple layers of paint and a broken sash cord. Photos from application; cropped by staff. Please see application for additional photos and description.

ISSUES

- The building's windows are historic (original to the house or dating from the Period of Significance) and have not deteriorated beyond repair. Standard #6 of the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Rehabilitation, cited below, directs that they be retained. Further, were a replacement window to be warranted (for instance, if the existing windows had deteriorated beyond repair), staff notes that an appropriate replacement window would be a wood sash window (never a sliding window).
- As the windows are historic and characteristic of the property, the proposed window replacement does not adhere to Standard #2.
- As the windows on the front (east) façade are distinctive features, their proposed replacement also fails to adhere to Standard #5.

RECOMMENDATION

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

Staff recommends that the Commission issue a Denial of the proposed window replacement as it would remove historic features of the property and replace them with features of non-historic materials, dimensions, and appearance; consequently, the proposed work 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*

