

STAFF REPORT: JULY 12, 2023 MEETING

PREPARED BY: A. DYE

APPLICATION NUMBER: 23-8397

ADDRESS: 14860 PIEDMONT

HISTORIC DISTRICT: ROSEDALE PARK

APPLICANT: HECTOR IVAN ARRIAGA MEDINA

PROPERTY OWNER: GIGI INVESTMENTS LLC

DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: JUNE 22, 2023

DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: MAY 31, 2023

SCOPE: DEMOLISH GARAGE, REPLACE RAILING, REPLACE ORIGINAL WINDOWS WITH VINYL WINDOWS* (WORK DONE WITHOUT APPROVAL), REPLACE WOOD WINDOWS WITH VINYL WINDOWS

EXISTING CONDITIONS

The house at 14860 Piedmont is a 1-1/2 story English cottage-style dwelling. It features a reverse gable roof with an intersecting front gabled wall; small dormers fill the roof valleys. The extended front entrance has a catslide roof and arched door that is accessed by a raised porch. Roughhewn brown brick, contrasting the dominant reddish-orange brick, is used for decorative effect on every wall surface. The upper walls within the side gables and front dormers are covered with vinyl siding. The raised open porch is enclosed with a non-historic railing.



Staff photo, May 31, 2023.

The dominant window opening on the house are tall, narrow one-over-one double-hung units. The front elevation has vinyl replacement units; small leaded glass windows remain in the dormer and front entry openings.

The south side elevation has a combination of wood framed double-hung and small square fixed units. Diamond paned leaded glass fill the fixed openings adjacent the chimney, and the fixed mullied openings near the rear have clear glass. The north-side elevation consists of one small diamond paned leaded glass opening, three wood double-hung units and one wide vinyl replacement (single or double-hung) window. The basement windows on the side elevations have vented glass block. The rear elevation retains wood double-hung units and a multi-paned double casement.



South-side elevation



Staff photos

North-side elevation



Rear Elevation, Applicant photo

*Window circled in red indicates vinyl window.
Windows within yellow squares indicate leaded glass windows.*

The property currently doesn't have a garage, but a concrete pad remains in the rear corner of the lot.

PROPOSAL

- Demolition of garage – work done without approval.
- Replacement of historic front porch railing – work done without approval.
- Replacement of wood double-hung windows (some with diamond pane leaded glass in upper sash) windows – work done without approval.
- Replace four wood double-hung windows with vinyl double-hung windows.

STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- The Rosedale Park Historic District was established in 2007.

Timeline for work completed without approval

2007

- The designation photograph shows wood framed leaded glass (upper sash) double-hung windows at the front elevation second story and the central window at the first story, which is flanked by one-over-one wood double-hung units. Other visible site components include a low metal porch and stair railing, chain link fence at the driveway, and a detached garage.



2007 Designation photo, HDAB

2019 - 2022

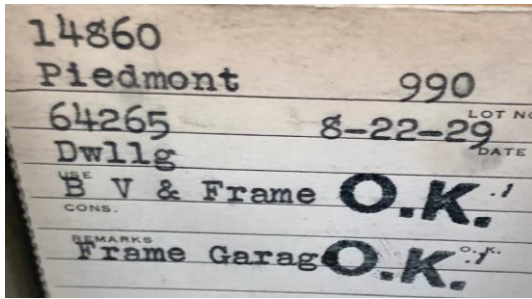
- The garage was demolished.
- An unfinished tall wood railing replaced the low metal front porch railing. (The wood windows at the front elevation remained intact.)

2023

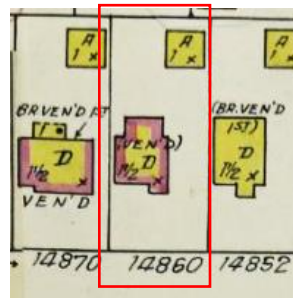
- The real estate listing image shows vinyl one-over-one windows in place at the front elevation.
- A tall, straight spindle/post metal railing replaced the non-approved wood railing.



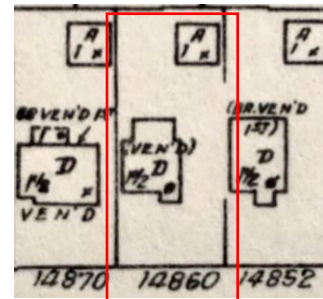
*Above: Google street view, 2022, unfinished wood railing is highly visible.
Left: Real estate listing photo, 2023.*



Permit card



v. 26, 1938-1950



Sanborn Maps

v.26, 1983

- The Sanborn maps and permit card show that the garage that was in place at time of designation was likely the original garage.



Google street view, 2019

- As seen in the photo to the right, the wood framed structure had a pyramidal hip roof and two individual car openings. The structure had a generalized historic massing, roof height and shape of garages built in the early 20th century. Staff considers the structure a contributing feature of the property, however, the garage didn't offer distinctive character-defining features such as masonry walls or a steeply sloped roof pitch and profile.
- The 2019 photo showed visible leaning of the entire building, along with a deteriorated roofing structure. It is staff's opinion the visual documentation is sufficient to confirm its severely deteriorated condition.



June 2019



Google street view

August 2022

- The 2019 photo confirms the metal porch and stair railing was at a historic and appropriate height. By late 2022 a taller metal railing had been installed.

- The four windows the applicant is requesting to replace are located on the north-side elevation and the rear elevation.



Rear elevation



South-side elevation

Applicant photos

- The gable and dormer walls were covered with vinyl siding at the time of district designation. However, in June 2019, Google street view photographers captured a view of the north-side gable when some of the vinyl siding was not in place, exposing the original wood siding and window casing.

Note: As the other elevations remained covered with vinyl siding (confirmed through additional 2019 Google street view images), staff believes this section of vinyl was being replaced, which is allowed as this qualifies as a repair. (Current photos of this gable wall give evidence to a partial siding replacement.) Staff included this image to say that, while existing conditions (i.e., vinyl siding and aluminum window casing wrap) offer a flat appearance similar to the proposed vinyl windows, as long as historic material stays in place, the opportunity remains to uncover and repair character-defining features.



Google street view, 2019.

ISSUES

Windows

- Window replacement applications always have two equal parts: First, the condition of the existing windows must be understood. Only after confirmation that the windows are deteriorated beyond repair (whether by staff/Commission’s visual assessment, or the submission of a repair estimate created by a company experienced in window repair), will the Commission consider whether the selected replacement windows are appropriate for the structure and window locations.
- It is staff’s opinion the wood framed windows that appeared in the front elevation designation photo (most of

which had leaded glass upper sash) and those that remain in place on the side and rear elevations are distinctive character-defining features. The wood framed units' materiality and finish offer a subtle and uniform contrast to the patterned masonry walls (as opposed to the harsh contrast of the bright white vinyl windows).

- The removal of leaded glass windows significantly altered the architectural features of the dwelling and its identifiable time of construction. Authentic leaded glass windows are an example of early 20th century craftsmanship that is difficult and extremely expensive to fabricate today. It is imperative the remaining leaded glass windows remain in place and be repaired as needed.
- Based on street view photographs, the front elevation windows were intact and didn't appear to be severely deteriorated. As the former owner didn't submit (or leave behind) evidence as to advanced deterioration, in order to meet the Standards, new wood windows with dimensional diamond pattern leaded glass in the upper sash should be installed based on historic photo documentation.
- The applicant's description of existing conditions for the wood windows proposed for replacement confirms that repairs to the windows are needed. However, the interior and exterior photographs show intact window frames and solid window openings; the frames do not appear to be significantly deteriorated. Therefore, adding weatherstripping, caulk, wood filler and, at times, new glass would offer tremendous improvement in the efficiency of the existing windows; adding storm windows would help further reduce the infiltration of cold air and allow the air-conditioned air to stay inside during the summer months. Operation of the windows can likely be regained by removing layers of paint and repairing interior hardware.



Applicant photos – Lower sash of window #1





Applicant photo - Window #2



Applicant photo – Window #4

- It is also staff's opinion the selected vinyl replacement window, through limits of its fabrication and materiality, cannot match the operation and dimensionality of the existing windows. Additionally, the bright white color doesn't fit within the color palette of English revival style houses, as demonstrated on the house's existing front elevation.

Front Porch Railing

- As noted earlier, the historic metal porch railing was removed between 2019 and 2022. The height of the low railing was below the windows and enclosed the raised porch without conflicting with the architectural detailing of the first floor window opening. The height of the current railing is out of scale with the historic structure. It is a bold, dominant form against the front elevation. The straight spindles are similar to the previous design; however, the lack of defined center and corner posts, and increased height, causes this component to appear less like a railing and more like a barrier against the front elevation.



Above: Google street view, 2019.



Right: Staff photo, 2023.

Garage

Staff assesses that the garage has lost its historic integrity as a contributing structure.

RECOMMENDATION

SECTION 21-2-78, DETERMINATION OF HISTORIC DISTRICT COMMISSION

Recommendation One – Denial – Replacement of wood windows, replacement of front porch railing

Staff finds that the proposal for the replacement of the historic wood windows and front porch railing do not meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for the following reasons:

- The windows are distinctive character-defining features; the materiality and inclusion of leaded glass windows are an important architectural component of the structure.
- The current application did not provide sufficient documentation outlining the deterioration of the windows, and the proposed replacement window is not an adequate match to the historic sash.
- The replacement of the historic metal porch railing is not compatible with the architectural style and age of this house.
- The completed and proposed work removes distinctive features, finishes, and examples of craftsmanship that characterize the property and altered the appearance and features of the structure.

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the work as proposed, as it does not meet the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards for Rehabilitation, specifically Standards 2, 5, and 6:

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 Two – COA – Demolition of garage

Staff finds that the proposal for the demolition of the garage will not alter the features and spaces that characterize the property and district and therefore recommends the Commission issue a Certificate of Appropriateness for the work as proposed as it meets the Secretary of the Interior’s Standards and the Elements of Design for the district.