

**STAFF REPORT:** 12/13/2023 REGULAR MEETING  
**APPLICATION NUMBER:** HDC2023-00146

**PREPARED BY:** D. RIEDEN

**ADDRESS:** 1515 SEYBURN

**HISTORIC DISTRICT:** WEST VILLAGE

**APPLICANT/ PROPERTY OWNER:** SINA ALMASSI

**DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION:** 11/20/23

**DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT:** 11/28/2023

**SCOPE:** REPLACE 2 REAR WINDOWS, REPAIR EXISTING WINDOWS

### EXISTING CONDITIONS

Built in 1911, the property at 1515 Seyburn is a 2 ½ story, residence facing east and sits near the corner of Seyburn and St. Paul streets. The pyramid roof with protracted gables and slightly flared eaves shelters the half-timbering and stucco siding, which is now covered with vinyl siding. A two-story bay clad in brick on the south side of the façade is balanced by an adjacent second story bay over a roofed porch on the north side of the façade. The entrance is near center and recesses under the porch roof, which is supported by broad brick columns and surrounded by a brick wall with cast stone coping. The concrete steps descend between evergreen foundation plantings and slight decline of the front lawn to the public sidewalk. A modest concrete walk runs along the north property line to the rear of the house.

Property records show that there is a 2012 Certificate of Appropriateness (COA) for rebuilding the rear porch. No COA was found for the installation of the vinyl siding over the half-timbered gable and stucco siding, which has negatively impacted the property's historic character.



*Site Photo 1, by Staff November 28, 2023: (East) front side*



*Site Photo 2, Designation Photo March 1983: (east) front elevation.*



*Site Photo 3, by Staff November 28, 2023: rear yard, looking south from public sidewalk towards rear porch.*



*Aerial#1 of Parcel #17011003.*

## PROPOSAL

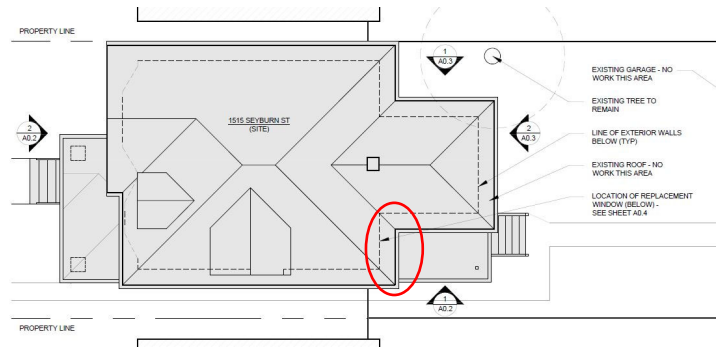
The applicant proposes to repair 24 original wood windows to restore operability, phasing the work over time. Nearly all have been painted shut on the interior and their cords severed. Storm windows shall remain as-is for now, exterior paint would be to only touch up with the existing trim color if needed.

All non-original windows (2 non-original sliders, and 9 glass block basement windows) will remain as-is and are not part of this application.

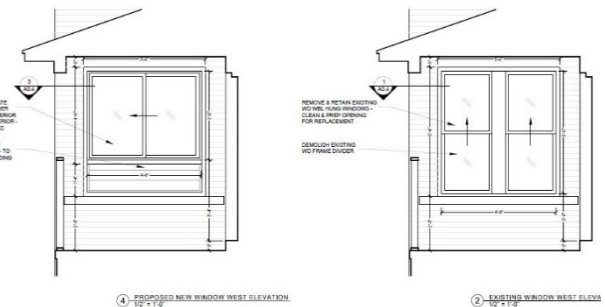
The work also proposes the replacement of a pair of double hung windows, located at the rear elevation near the rear deck entrance. This proposed replacement is to accommodate an interior kitchen layout with a countertop that would be located inside the window. The original windowsill would be left in place, while the pair of double hung windows and the wood mullion would be replaced with a pair of aluminum-clad wood Marvin Ultimate French casements, with no divided lights, and have their own, thinner vertical mullion, and new infill wall with wood paneling below the window to the existing sill to close the remainder of the window opening. The brick work would remain untouched, and the original sash held on site in storage for potential future re-installation.

## STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH

- West Village Historic District was established in 1983.
- The proposed work to repair existing wood windows is fully compliant with historic standards.
- Staff has the opinion that the original wood windows at the rear porch are character-defining features of the house, including the stone still and the wood mullion that divides the pair of double-hung wood windows. (See photo 5) Staff observed that this secondary elevation location is obscured from public view and that this proposal retains the brick opening and stone sill. Per the applicant's drawings, it also appears the wood framing the historic sash, including the brick molds, will be preserved *in situ*. However, the center mullion is proposed for removal. Staff suggests that the goal of the interior elective work can still be achieved by retaining the center mullion as well as replacing only the historic sash, on either side with a shorter new window over a wood infill, all within the historic sash opening.



Figures 1 by Applicant: showing location of proposed modified window (see red circle above).



Figures 2&3, by Applicant: showing existing conditions (right) and proposed condition (left). Note that the applicant has now modified the application so that previously proposed slider window would be replaced with a pair of casements and the proposed vinyl siding, would instead be wood panel below the new set of casements. The center mullion is still proposed for removal.



Site Photo 4, by applicant showing location of rear window proposed to be replaced by casements.



- During discussions with the applicant, the original proposal called for the installation of vinyl siding to match existing vinyl siding of the house for the portion that is located below the proposed casement window installation. Staff worked with the applicant to modify the proposed material with wood paneling, which is what is now being proposed for the Commission’s review. During this discussion, the issue of the vinyl siding of the house was raised. The applicant stated that they hope to remove all vinyl siding in a future application to restore the original materials. Siding work is not included in this application.



*Site Photo 5, by applicant showing original pair of double-hung windows and mullion proposed to be replaced by casements.*

## ISSUES

- Staff has the opinion that some alteration of the rear sash may be appropriate at this secondary elevation. However, the proposed removal of the center mullion does not appear to be necessary to reasonably achieve the desired interior conditions and thus should be preserved. It should be noted that interior reconfigurations of historically protected buildings cannot compel the alteration of distinctive exterior features under the Standards. Staff believes the robust vertical mullion is distinctive and important to the overall historic character.

## RECOMMENDATION

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

#### Recommendation: Replace 2 Rear Windows, Repair Existing Windows

It is staff’s opinion that the proposed replacement of the two (2) rear windows and repair of the existing wood windows 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 and the West Village Historic District Elements of Design.

*Staff recommends the COA be issued with following conditions:*

- The alteration to the rear windows shall be redesigned to retain all exterior woodwork, (excepting the sashes), including the center mullion, stone sill and brick opening in their current position, while allowing infill of the new windows over wood panels in the resulting two openings. The removed sash shall be stored in the building for future reinstallation.
- The two separate infill windows shall be of casement or double-hung operation and made of wood or aluminum-clad wood materials.
- The two separate infills below the two new windows shall be designed in wood and painted according to HDC guidelines.
- The applicant provides HDC staff with an updated proposal drawing for review and approval of these conditions before work begins.