

**ADDRESS: 1760 VAN DYKE**

**APPLICATION NO: HDC2023-00140**

**HISTORIC DISTRICT: WEST VILLAGE**

**APPLICANT: IRMA LOUISE AND QUINTEN HUNTER**

**OWNER: IRMA LOUISE HUNTER**

**DATE OF STAFF SITE VISIT: 11/30/2023**

**DATE OF PROVISIONALLY COMPLETE APPLICATION: 11/20/2023**

**SCOPE: REPLACE FIVE WOOD WINDOWS WITH COMPOSITE WINDOWS**

**EXISTING CONDITIONS**

The building located at 1760 Van Dyke is a 2-story home that was erected ca. 1905. The home features a hipped roof central/main mass with a projecting front-gabled wing at the primary elevation. Hipped-roof dormers with 1/1, double-hung wood windows top the roof. Windows are 1/1 wood and 1/1 vinyl, double-hung units (cream/light yellow finish color). Although the dwelling is clad with faux brick/asphalt siding (insulbrick), it does display a number of distinctive decorative details which are associated with the Queen Anne style to include the cutaway bay window with pendant brackets at the primary elevation's first story, the pedimented gable end at the front elevation second story, deep wood eaves with carved wood brackets at the main roof, and eve returns with carved wood brackets at the front porch roof. Also, it appears a portion of the asphalt siding has been removed front the front façade, revealing the presence of the original lapped wood siding. The foundation wall and front porch are brick.



**1760 Van Dyke, current appearance (staff photo taken 11/30/2023)**

**PROPOSAL**

Per the submitted materials, the applicant is seeking approval to remove five existing 1/1 double-hung, wood windows and trim/original woodwork to the rough opening and install five new 1/1 double-hung composite window units and associated trim (Renewal by Andersen). The submitted quote indicates that the new windows will be white. Specifically, the windows proposed for replacement include the set of paired 1/1 wood windows at the front elevation second story, a single 1/1 wood window at the side north elevation second story, and two 1/1 wood windows at the rear elevation, second story. Per the submitted application, the homeowner had stated that the “wood has rotted and the paint is peeling.”

The following are photos of the five windows proposed for replacement (provided by applicant):



**Rear elevation, second story**



Rear elevation, second story



Side elevation, second story



**Front elevation, second story**

### **STAFF OBSERVATIONS AND RESEARCH**

- It is staff's opinion that the five wood windows proposed for replacement are distinctive character-defining features of the property as they are original to the building's date of construction.
- Please note that the applicant contracted with Hansons Windows to replace "approximately 10 wood windows with new vinyl windows at the home in 2017. A review of Detroit building department records indicates that a permit was issued for the work. However, the building department did not forward the application to the HDC for review and therefore the work did not receive a Certificate of Appropriateness prior to the issuance of the permit. HDC staff therefore reached out to Detroit building department staff to inquire why a permit was issued for this work without HDC review and/or approval. Detroit building department staff noted that the 2017 vinyl window permit application "...was a Mail-In application that wasn't flagged as Historic, and it appears that the Permit was issued, however no inspections were performed so we can't verify whether the work was performed or completed. There wouldn't

have been a referral to HDC through the Mail-In process at that time because we hadn't set it up for that, and I believe that's a strong contributing factor for why we abandoned the Mail-In without review process.” Note that these 10 vinyl windows **are not** included in the current scope of work which is under review.

- The applicant submitted a proposal to the Commission for review at the 12/14/2022 meeting to replace the above five wood windows with new vinyl windows. Staff did note that the application did not provide the level of documentation necessary to determine if the windows were deteriorated to an extent that merited their replacement. Staff also noted that the home does retain a number of distinctive details despite its non-compatible asphalt cladding and vinyl windows and that any future window treatment should not contribute to a further diminution of the home’s historic character. The Commission issued a denial of the application to replace the five wood windows with new vinyl units.
- A review of the recording of the 12/14/2022 regular meeting indicated the following regarding the Commission deliberation/discussion of the window replacement proposal:
  - The Commission opined that the proposed vinyl windows were not appropriate to the building’s historic appearance and that their installation would contribute to the diminution of the home’s historic character as the existing vinyl windows detract from the home’s character
  - The Commission noted that repair of the existing windows or, if replacement is necessary, that new wood or aluminum-clad wood units would be a more appropriate to the home’s historic character

## ISSUES

- The five wood windows and associated trim proposed for replacement are distinctive character defining features at the home and it appears that they are not deteriorated beyond repair. As the home is clad with asphalt shingles and several wood windows have been replaced with vinyl units, it is staff’s opinion that all remaining historic-age features (to include the five windows proposed for replacement) should be retained or replaced in kind if necessary in order to forestall any further diminution of the home’s historic character.
- See the submitted materials to note that the current application only includes minimal documentation/exterior photos of the five windows proposed for replacement and a quote sheet for the new windows. Staff did reach out to the applicant to request that they provide more detailed specifications/dimensions for the new windows and more detailed photos or a condition assessment prepared by a window repair specialist so that the Commission can determine the windows’ level of deterioration and how closely the new windows replicate the existing. Staff also reached out to the window contractor directly to request the specifications for the proposed new window product. Staff has yet to receive the requested information as of the date of this report’s completion.

## RECOMMENDATION

### **Recommendation - Section 21-2-78. Determination of the Historic District Commission – Denial**

It is HDC staff’s opinion that the proposed work does is inappropriate for the following reasons:

- The application does not provide the level of documentation necessary to determine if the five windows proposed for replacement are deteriorated beyond repair. Also, detailed specifications for the proposed new window product (Renewal by Andersen) have not been provided with the current application. Therefore, it is not clear if the new windows present an acceptable replication of the existing historic wood windows and trim should it be determined that the historic windows merit replacement

Staff therefore recommends that the Commission issue a Denial for the project as proposed because it does not meet the West Village Historic District's Elements of Design or 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 historic 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.*